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PREFACE.

I BELIEVE that there are not many persons who read biography with interest, who have not felt a desire for a more intimate personal acquaintance, as it may be called, than is usually afforded them with those men and women whose virtues and vices joined with their natural gifts and acquired accomplishments, made them either illustrious or infamous in their own days, and still influence the world at the distance of centuries after their death. Those works in which the narrative of great public affairs is mixed up with the more minute private and personal details and descriptions, which pedants and philosophers consider to be below what they call "the dignity of history," are, I believe, in spite of learned reprehension, read with more pleasure than the more pretending volumes in which this disagreeable "dignity of history" is stiffly and proudly sustained. When the Roman historian deprecates the censure of those grave and surly readers who, as he anticipates, will charge

him with trifling for telling them who it was that gave lessons in music to Epaminondas, and for informing them that the Theban General danced excellently and played learnedly on the pipe, I believe that all readers possessed of an enlightened curiosity, will not only heartily accept his apology, but thank him for what he has told, and regret that he has not given us a great deal more of the same kind of information.

In many cases, this natural curiosity to know as much as possible of the appearance and manners of remarkable persons is heightened by the consideration that these personal matters influenced the destinies of nations and of the world. The history of the Roman empire might now exhibit a wholly different aspect from what it does if, at an intensely critical period the royal diadem of Egypt had not been placed on the brows of a woman of the most marvellous accomplishments, and possessed of the most inexhaustible arts of pleasing, persuading and seducing ; a sorceress whose chain

> "Around two conquerors of the world was cast,
> But for a third too feeble broke at last."

And as Octavius might have lost the empire of civilized Europe, if the voice and tongue of Cleopatra had been less sweet and persuasive than they were, so the Reformation of religion in England might have been delayed for many a year—though it could not have been averted—had not, as the poet tells us,

> "The Gospel light first beamed from Bullen's eyes."

The description of the personal appearance, the dress, the private habits and tastes of some of the most distinguished persons whose names figure on the page of history, as collected from every source available to me, and separated as far as possible from the often-told histories of their lives, and interspersed but sparingly, and where the temptation was irresistible, with criticism on their moral and intellectual characters—is the design which I have had before me in compiling these volumes. It would be a fatal error in a work of this kind, if the writer were to give his readers minute personal sketches of any persons but those whose names are famous enough to be familiar to all but the entirely illiterate. The Abbate Lanzi, in his History of Painting, justly reproves Vassara and others of his predecessors for giving their readers full details about the persons and habits of the inferior class of painters, but admits that all the information of this kind which can be collected about Raffaelle or the Carracci, or the other great masters of the art, is highly valuable. Montaigne, who has not left the world in ignorance of his own private life, in expressing his regret at the loss of the diaries kept by Alexander, Augustus, Cato, Sylla and Brutus, says: "Of such men we love and study the portraits even in copper and in stone." The genius of the statuary and the painter is unquestionably indebted for much of the admiration which it receives, to this natural desire to look on the likenesses of the great men who have long left this world.

In speaking of some of the personages referred to, I

have been led necessarily to discuss the ideas of beauty which have prevailed in different ages and countries; and occasional references to painting and the kindred arts have also been here and there, I hope not inappropriately, introduced.

I have found a difficulty in fixing on a title for these volumes, and the one which I have adopted is, I confess, not so clearly explanatory of their contents as I could have wished.

MAY, 1853.

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PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

SAPPHO.

Of one of the most celebrated women of antiquity, the poetess Sappho, living about six centuries before the Christian era, we have a personal description handed down, in all probability, from her own time, if not indeed through writings of her own, now lost. This description is familiar to most readers from the epistle which Ovid, in the name of Sappho, has inscribed to Phaon, the object of her unrequited and fatal love. In this epistle, Sappho is made to tell us that nature had denied her beauty but had gifted her with genius; that her fame was sung throughout the whole world, and that her countryman Alcæus, though his was a loftier strain, was not more celebrated than she was. She tells Phaon that she is of short stature and of a dark complexion; but she reminds him that Andromeda (whom Grecian fable makes the daughter of a king of Ethiopia,) with the tawny color of her country, had pleased the heroic Perseus.

When a woman otherwise famous, and living at a distant date, is spoken of, if there be no specific information respecting her person, tradition becomes gallant, and, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, gifts her with beauty in abundance. It is this consideration which gives weight to the belief that, in drawing her picture more than five hundred years after Sappho had ceased to sing, Ovid did not indulge in any wayward fancy of his own, rich and original as his fancy was beyond that of any other of the Roman poets, but embodied a well-founded and universally-received tradition, if he even did not make use of authentic historical information extant in his time. The language which Ovid puts into her mouth is so specific as to give countenance to the belief entertained by some writers that the finest parts of this epistle, one of the best in the collection, were taken from the writings of Sappho, which were in the poet's hands.

To the evidence furnished by Ovid, which is very strong, that Sappho could not boast of personal beauty, some have added a testimony which is certainly very weak. There are two verses preserved amongst the fragments of Sappho, in which she expresses her preference of the beauty of the mind to the beauty of the person.* The argument drawn from these verses—that Sappho undervalued what she did not possess—is, I think, perfectly worthless. In all ages of the world, both writers and speakers often, no doubt hypocritically enough, expressed the very decided preference which they felt for moral and intellectual over personal beauty; and this preference, in truth, is one of the most completely worn out of common-places. A volume of huge size might, without much trouble, be compiled on the praises of intellect and virtue, and the worthlessness of fine faces and fine figures. "Madame de Stael," says M. Philarete

* Sappho "Fragmenta et Elegia." Cura Jo. Christiani Wolfii, p. 72. Hamburg, 1733.

Chasles, to whom I shall have again to refer on the subject of Sappho's portrait, " whom nature had little favored, was an enthusiast for beauty; Charlotte Corday, beautiful as an angel, thought on this subject like Sappho."* I have no doubt that, whatever they might think, most beauties have been in the habit of speaking like Sappho.

In opposition to the strong testimony of Ovid, it has been urged that a series of writers, ranging from Plato, writing about four hundred years before the Christian era, down to the Princess Anna Comnena in the eleventh century, have bestowed upon Sappho the Greek epithet which signifies beautiful. In looking, however, at the passages quoted, it will, I think, be found that in none of them is the epithet used in a very positive sense, but that in all of them it is applied vaguely and loosely, the subsequent writers simply repeating the expression of Plato. In the "Phædrus" Plato represents Socrates speaking of some works "of the beautiful Sappho," (Σαπφους της καλης.) On this passage we have an important criticism by the Platonic philosopher, Maximus Tyrius, who tells us that Sappho who was "little and black," (μικραν και μελαιναν ;) and it is to be presumed that he had other authority for bringing these charges against her than the verses of Ovid, to which, it is to be observed, he makes no reference whatever. But, besides this, Maximus Tyrius supplies us with what I believe is the true explanation of the epithet which Plato has joined to the name of Sappho, and which others after him have allowed her, when he tells us that Socrates called Sappho "beautiful" on account of her poetry.† The same interpretation may, I think, be fairly put on all the other passages cited from the Greek writers. Athenæus simply speaks of "the beautiful Sappho," (ἡ καλη

* "Etudes sur l'Antiquité," p. 282. Paris, 1847.

† Maximus Tyrius, "Dissertatio," VIII, p. 90. Contab. 1703.

Σαπφω.)* Two passages are met with in the letters of the Emperor Julian, in which, while he is referring to the literary genius of the poetess, he calls her the beautiful Sappho." "Sappho the beautiful," he says in one of these passages, "tells us that the moon is silvery, and that therefore she obscures the face of the other stars."† In the other passage, writing to his friend Alypius, he acknowledges the Iambic verses which he has received from him, and which he says are such as the beautiful Sappho weaves in her odes."‡ The expression is the expression of Plato, borrowed by Julian, his disciple and enthusiastic admirer. Now Plato himself, like his master Socrates, to whom he attributes the expression about Sappho, was sensible alike to the beauties of the person and of the mind, and, indeed, considered the one to be the reflexion of the other. But anything so unphilosophical as delight in the contemplation of female beauty has never been charged on Julian whose passion was all for the charms of the cold goddesses of Olympus. In the passage in which Anna Comnena speaks of Sappho, the application of the term "beautiful" is equally vague and unrestricted. The princess is referring to the horrible heresies of the Bogomilians, and says that she could explain the whole, but that modesty forbids her, "as the beautiful Sappho somewhere says," (ως πϐ φησιν ἡ χαλη Σαπφω.)‖

In the face of such extremely loose and careless authorities —all of them it may be assumed repeating the phrase of Plato, which his follower Maximus Tyrius evidently understood and has explained in its proper sense—the description adopted by Ovid has prevailed in the general belief.

A fragment—a single line—of Alcæus, one of Sappho's

* "Athenæus," lib. XIII, p 596. Edit. 1611.

† Julian, "Epist. ad Hecebolum," XIX. Opera, p. 386. Lipsiæ, 1696.

‡ "Epist. ad Alypium," XXX. Opera, p. 403.

‖ Annæ Comnenæ Cæsariensis "Alexis," lib. XV, Venet., 1729.

lovers, has been preserved, in which he addresses her as his "dark-haired, chaste, sweetly smiling Sappho;" (Ιοπλοκαμ' αγνα, μειλιχομειδε Σαπφοι;)* a very moderate compliment from a lover.

Antipater of Thessaly, a poet of the time of Augustus, has unfairly been quoted as praising the beauty of Sappho. He merely praises the Lesbian women, whose beauty has at all times been as famous as the intensity of their passions, of which Sappho had her share with the rest. In the verses referred to, Antipater speaks of "Sappho, the ornament of the beautiful haired woman of Lesbos," (Λεσβιαδων Σαπφω κοσμον ευπλοκαμων.)†

In the Greek Anthology, there are also some verses addressed by Damocharis to Sappho, in which her beauty is commended.‡ Damocharis, like Antipator, is a poet of the era of Augustus, and the evidence of a passage in his complimentary verses to the most distinguished of the Greek poetesses, has really very little weight.

The proof that Sappho was destitute of personal beauty has satisfied Bayle, who speaks of her in the most unromantic terms. He is by no means surprised that Phaon would have nothing to do with her. "Sappho," he says, "was a widow in the decline of life, who had never been pretty, who had given occasion for being scandalously spoken of during her widowhood, and who paid no regard to decency in testifying the violence of her passion."‖

There was a statue of Sappho erected in the Prytanum of Syracuse. Her figure was cut in brass by the statuary Silanion. The people of Mytelene, it is said on somewhat doubtful authority, stamped her effigy on their coins. Her portrait, says Pliny, was drawn by the painter Leon. Ausonius has an

* "Fragmenta et Elogia." Wolff, p. 126.

† "Anthologia Græca," lib. II, p. 65. Lipsiæ, 1829.

‡ "Anthologia," lib. III, p. 304.

‖ Bayle, "Dictionnaire Hist et Crit." Art "Sappho."

epigram on the picture of Sappho, in which, following another epigram in the Anthology attributed to Plato, he calls her "The Tenth Muse." The writer who gives an original idea to the world is valuable. This fine idea of Plato has been used over and over again without any acknowledgment. The title of "The Tenth Muse," is well deserved by Sappho, but it has been somewhat lowered in having also been bestowed on Margaret, the famous Queen of Navarre—a good woman, but not a muse nor a poetical genius in any respect. A Mexican-Spanish poetess of the seventeenth century, Doña Juana Inez de la Cruz, is styled in the title-page of her works "The Tenth Muse;" and this appellation has been completely prostituted by having been awarded to that polyglott Dutch virgin, Anna Maria à Schurman, a female admirable Crichton, without one particle of genius or original talent about her. This title is bestowed on Mademoiselle Schurman by the very learned Fredrick Spanheim, in his address to the reader prefixed to her works.*

Gronovius in his splendid collection of the effigies of illustrious men and women, has engraved a sculpture of Sappho in the form of the statues called *Hermæ*.† The face is a half front, the eye full of fire, the forehead protruding as we see it in women led into crime by furious passions, the nose masculine, the mouth highly intellectual, and the whole expression of the features that of deep melancholy energy. A copy of this engraving forms a striking frontispiece to Wolff's elaborate edition of the remains of Sappho. In speaking of this portrait, M. Philarete Chasles takes notice of "the bold, masculine expression of the face, the audacious projection of the forehead, speaking of passion and vehemence of thought, the lips a little

* "Nobiliss. Virginis Annæ Mariæ a Schurman Opuscula." Trajecti ad Rhenum, 1652.

† Gronovius, "Thesaurus Antiquit. Oræcarum," II, 34. Venet 1732.

thick but well chiselled, ready to throw out sentiment and eloquence, the eye ardent and open, and animated with inexpressible energy. This is Sappho. This is that woman gifted with a masculine soul and impetuous senses, devoted to genius and misfortune, to disasters and to distinction, to a fatal glory which survives her works. In presence of this portrait we are tempted to cry out with Plutarch, 'I see the volcano from whence have issued flaming thoughts and burning hymns.'" After telling us that he rejects as spurious all the portraits extant of Sappho, except this admirable one, M. Chasles proceeds: "It would agree as well with one of the criminal heroines of Byron or of Eschylus as with the lover of Phaon. It bears the character of that organisation which consumes the life, and which delivers up a woman to all the fury of the passions, to all the remorse and all the sorrow which they carry along with them."*

In Ovid's picture of Sappho we have a portrait rescued from extreme antiquity. It is no part of my design to record the histories of the persons described in this work; and in the case of Sappho, this is a happy relief from a painful duty. Madame Dacier was good-naturedly resolved to hold that Sappho was an ill-used woman; and the German Welcker has written a book to prove her innocence. Thirlwall, the present Bishop of St. David's, in his "History of Greece," treats her guilt as a slander; and Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer appears, from a remark in his "Athens and the Athenians," in reference to Welcker's work, to be one of those charitable persons who believe in her purity. "Sappho," says Sir Edward, "(whose chaste and tender muse it was reserved for the chivalry of a northern student five-and-twenty centuries after her hand was cold and her tongue was mute, to vindicate from the longest continued calumny that genius ever endured)

* "Etudes sur l'Antiquité," p. 282.

gave to the most ardent of human passions the most delicate coloring of female sentiment."*

The evidence on the other side is, however, painfully strong. At the distance of more than two thousand years, the verses of the unhappy Sappho still breathe the very soul of that consuming passion, which called forth and lighted up the fire of her genius. There is an unconcerted harmony in the strong figurative language which has been used in describing her poetry, by all who have spoken of it. Horace celebrates the hot loves which the Æolian girl gave to her lyre; Plutarch says she breathes fire; and Byron has called her "the burning Sappho." It was by the study of her writings, we are told, that the physician Erasistratus discovered that the sickness of Antiochus arose from his love for his mother-in-law Stratonice.†

Sappho taught amatory writing to the Greek poets, and amongst her scholars are reckoned the sad Simonides and that Ibycus of Rhegium, who, of all others, appeared to Cicero to be warmest in love.‡

The ancients made this woman a heroine in their dramas and romances. The love of Anacreon and Sappho is merely a beautiful fiction, the credit of which is destroyed by chronology. "Diphilus the comedian," says Bentley, "in his *Sappho* introduced Archilochus and Hipponax as gallants to that lady, though the one was dead before she was born, and she dead before the other was born."‖ Had it been practicable for Sappho to have been courted by Hipponax, she would have had a lover, whose remarkabe person is commemorated by Ælian in his chapter on thin men, where we are told that the poet was of small stature, and deformed, and very slender.¶

* "Athens," b. I. c. 8

† Plutarch, "Demetrius."

‡ Cicero, "Tuscul." IV, 33.

‖ Bentley, "Dissertation on Phalaris." Works I. p 183. Lond. 1836.

¶ Ælian, "Varia Historia," lib. x, c. 6.

ÆSOP.

There are certain great persons in history regarding whom the traditions of fable and poetry, and the assertions of plain falsehood, have triumphed in the vulgar belief of ages over the most authentic records and the most complete evidence. That Homer was a beggar; that Belisarius became both blind and a beggar; that Shakspere had no classical learning; and that Æsop, the fabulist, was a dwarf, with a hump on his back, are at this moment historical facts with, perhaps, ninety-nine out of a hundred who have heard of these illustrious men.

The name of Æsop is amongst the most renowned that have come down from antiquity. His era is some time about five or six hundred years before Christ. He stands somewhere between Homer and the great age of Grecian literature. The story of his deformity is of comparatively modern origin, even if the broad assertion of Bentley, who holds that it was first sent forth to the world by Planudes, a Byzantine monk of the fourteenth century, should be found to be untenable.

Of Planudes, Bentley says, with cháracteristic politeness, "that idiot of a monk has given us a book which he calls 'The Life of Æsop,' that perhaps cannot be matched in any language for ignorance and nonsense."* It is somewhat curious to find Bentley resenting more warmly than he does all the other fictions in the monk's work the unfavorable representation which it gives of Æsop's person. "But of all his injuries to Æsop, that which can least be forgiven him, is making such a monster of him for ugliness; an abuse that has found credit so universally, that all the modern painters since the time of Planudes have drawn him in the worst shapes and features that fancy could invent. It was an old tradition amongst the Greeks that Æsop revived again and lived a second life. Should he revive once more and see the picture before the book that carries his name, could he think it drawn for himself or for the monkey, or some strange beast introduced in his fables?"

Since the time of Planudes, a thousand authorities have copied his description, and there is not a pictured edition of Æsop, or Phædrus, or Fontaine, which does not help to sanction and sanctify the belief. Yet the critical inquirer must reject the tale. "What revelation," asks Bentley, "had this monk about Æsop's deformity? For he must learn it by dream and vision, and not by ordinary methods of knowledge. He lived about two thousand years after him; and in all that tract of time there's not one single author that has given the least hint that Æsop was ugly."

It is said, and the remark is founded on a generous feeling amongst mankind, that when once we begin to think that the devil is not so very black as the vulgar represent him to be, we never stop till we make him as fair as an angel. In this

* Bentley, "Dissertation upon the Fables of Æsop." Works, vol. ii. p. 233.

spirit, Bentley is not content with showing that the popular notion about the deformity and ugliness of Æsop is unfounded, but adduces arguments to make us believe that he was really beautiful; and his arguments are well arranged, and not without weight. He tells us that in Plutarch's 'Convivium:' "Our Æsop is one of the guests with Solon, and the other sages of Greece; there is abundance of jest and raillery there among them, and *particularly upon Æsop*; but nobody drolls upon his ugly face, which could hardly have escaped had he had such a bad one. Perhaps you'll say it had been rude and indecent to touch upon a natural imperfection. Not at all, if it had been done softly and jocosely. In Plato's 'Feast,' they are very merry upon Socrates' face, that resembled old Silenus; and in this they twit Æsop for having been a slave, which was no more his fault than deformity would have been. Philostratus has given us, in two books, a description of a gallery of pictures; one of which is Æsop, with a chorus of animals about him. There he is represented *smiling and looking towards the ground in a posture of thought*; but not a word of his deformity, which, were it true, must needs have been touched on in an account of a picture."

This is really ingenious, and in a great degree as solid as it is ingenious. But there is still more in this line of argument in which Bentley has displayed great ability. He alludes to the statue which Phædrus tells us was erected by the Athenians in honor of Æsop, and adds: "But had he been such a monster as Planudes has made him, a statue had been no better than a monument of his ugliness; it had been kinder to his memory to have let that alone. But the famous Lysippus was the statuary that made it. And must so great a hand be employed to dress up a lump of deformity?" Bentley next refers to the epigram of Agathias upon this statue, and asks: "How could he, too, have omitted to speak of it, had his ugliness been so notorious? The Greeks have several proverbs

about persons deformed. Our Æsop, if so very ugly, would have been in the first rank of them; especially when his statue had stood there to put every body in mind of it." The conclusion of Bentley's argument is admirable. "But I wish," he says, "I could do that justice to the memory of our Phrygian to oblige the painters to change their pencil. For it is certain he was no deformed person, and it is probable he was very handsome. For whether he was a Phrygian, or as others say, a Thracian, he must have been sold into Samos by a trader in slaves. And it is well known that that sort of people commonly bought up the most beautiful they could light on, because they would yield the most profit. And there is mention of two slaves, fellow servants together, Æsop and Rhodopis, a woman; and if we may guess him by his companion and *contubernalis*, we must needs believe him a comely person. For that Rhodopis was the greatest beauty of all her age, and even a proverb arose in memory of it: Απανθ' ὁμοια, και Ροδωπις ἡ καλη."

Upon the whole, Bentley has been successful in relieving Æsop of the hump which the almost unanimous voice of mankind in modern days had fixed on his back, and the evidence brought to prove that he was really handsome is certainly respectable.

From the time that the ugliness of Æsop was asserted in the romance of Planudes, till Bentley attacked and demolished the credibility of the story, the belief that Æsop was a deformed dwarf appears to have been universal even amongst the learned. Lord Bacon makes use of this belief in his "Essay on Deformity." The author of "The Anatomy of Melancholy" also assumes it as a fact. Ritterhusius, in his Commentary on Phædrus's Fables, while his attention must have been called to the history of Æsop, in noticing the line where Phædrus says he has known many excellent persons with ugly faces (*et turpi facie multos cognovi optimos*), gives

Æsop as his first instance of a good man with a deformed person.* Bayle, who takes every opportunity of extolling the gifts of the mind over those of the body, tells us that intellect is able to overcome, in the eyes of a beauty, the ill effects of ugliness; "Æsop," he says, "the most ugly of men, nevertheless touched the heart of Rhodope."†

It is somewhat remarkable that the old Scottish poet, Robert Henrysoun, writing between 1500 and 1508, in his Prologue to his Fables, which are full of poetical beauty, represents Æsop, appearing to him in a dream—not as a little hunchback, but as "the fairest man that he had ever seen," and of stature large.

It may be worth mentioning, that Dr. Blomfield (in the "Museum Criticum") asserts that the life of Æsop, attributed to Planudes, is more ancient than his time. But what is more to the purpose, as proving that Bentley is so far wrong, though substantially in the right, is this: the Rev. Mr. Dyce, in his annotations on Bentley's works, quotes Huschke, a German critic, as referring to a passage in the orations of Himerius, a writer of the fourth century, in which Æsop is spoken of as ugly. Himerius thus becomes an authority upon the question of ugliness, standing midway between Æsop and Planudes, and reducing the wide waste of two thousand years to one thousand. But the evidence adduced by Bentley, that Æsop was not ugly, is still, I think nearly conclusive.

The notion that Æsop was ill-favored and deformed, may have originated in the vulgar belief in the wisdom of hunchbacks and crooked persons; a belief which is prevalent amongst those persons themselves, affording them more than solace for their ungainly exterior. Lord Bacon is perhaps not

* Phædri "Fabulæ," p. 359. Amstel, 1698.

† Bayle, "Dict. Hist. et Crit." Art. "Rhodope"

far wrong when he says that "all deformed persons are bold. First, as in their own defence, as being exposed to scorn; but in process of time by a general habit. Also it stirreth in them industry and especially of this kind, to watch and observe the weakness of others that they may have somewhat to repay."

The renown of Æsop has been such as might satisfy any ambition. The Athenians, we have seen, erected a public statue in his honor. Socrates versified some of his Fables, while lying in prison awaiting the executioner. Luther held these apologues to be next in value to the New Testament. And the children in all civilized countries at this day seek pleasure and wisdom in them.

PYTHAGORAS.

The extreme beauty of Pythagoras, the father of philosophy, is matter of uniform tradition, and is alluded to by all his biographers. His mother, Pythias of Samos, was the most beautiful woman of the age; her charms being commemorated by a poet of her country, who declares, in a distich which is preserved in Jamblichus, that she bore Pythagoras to the God Apollo. Pythagoras himself appears to have been not unwilling to be believed to be the son of Apollo, or even Apollo himself come in the flesh. His disciple, Jamblichus, with more respect for the honor of the philosopher's mother, denies his divine origin, but admits that his soul was from Apollo. When his mother was with child, the oracle of Delphi declared that she would bring forth a son excelling all men in beauty, and who would be a blessing to the world.* The writer of the life of Pythagoras, ascribed to Porphyry, tells us that Pythagoras had a very beautiful face and was tall in stature, and that there was much grace and comeliness in his manners and in all the movements of his body.† The

* Diogenes Lærtius, "Vit. Philos." Art. "Pythagoras." Jamblichus, "De Vita Pythagoræ," c. II, sec. 5. Amst. 1707

† Porphyrius, sec 18.

epithet "Cometes" was applied to him in allusion to his long flowing hair, and he was also called "the youth with the beautiful hair." His personal elegance was accompanied with great strength and admirable health, his life having been prolonged to nearly a hundred years, or, as some say, to more than a century. His appearance and voice fixed upon him the attention of all who ever came in his presence.*

In his eighteenth year, Pythagoras appeared at the Olympic games, where he offered himself as a boxer amongst the boys, but the judges decided that he had passed boyhood, on which he took up a match with the men, and vanquished them all.† Pythagoras is not merely the father of philosophy, but also the father of what in modern days is courteously called "the noble art of self-defence." He was the first who boxed scientifically, and the lessons which he gave to his pupil Eurymenes made him the champion of the ring. Eurymenes, as we learn from Porphyry, was of small stature, but, under the instruction of Pythagoras, was able to thresh the biggest man who appeared against him. The athletes were dieted upon cheese and figs, but Eurymenes, by advice of Pythagoras, took daily a certain allowance of animal food.‡ Jamblichus, it may be mentioned, tells us nothing of this, but he mentions another Pythagoras, a disciple of the philosopher, who wrote some books on athletics, and who directed the wrestlers to eat animal food. Pliny also appears to believe that the philosopher and the wrestler were not the same person. He tells us that the eating of figs gives strength to the body, and that hence the athletes were fed on them, and that it was Pythagoras, "the master of exercises" (*exercitator*,) who first taught them to eat flesh.‖ The notion that Pythagoras and his disciples

* Jamblichus, c. II, sec. 10.

† Diogenes Lærtius. Art. "Pythagoras."

‡ Porphyrius, sec. 15.

‖ Plinius, "Hist. Nat." l. XXIII, c. 7.

wholly abstained from animal food, has no doubt helped the belief in the distinction between the sage and the boxer. But it is not established; and Pythagoras had every qualification for excelling in the art of self-defence, being, as Bentley says, "a lusty proper man, and built, as it were, to make a good boxer.* Jamblichus tells us that amongst their other exercises, the disciples of Pythagoras were instructed in anointing, racing, and wrestling, in throwing the plummet, and in leaping, and in short, in all exercises calculated to strengthen the powers of the body.† The body was considered as worthy of education, as the soul by the sages of Greece. Cleanthes, the stoic, the strongest man of his age, was in his youth, like Pythagoras, a famous bruiser; Chrysippus shone on the race-course, while Plato and Lycon of Troas were distinguished as wrestlers.

In manhood and old age Pythagoras was remarkable for the dignity and gravity of his aspect. No one, says Porphyry, ever saw him either laugh or cry. His rebuke in one instance is said to have been followed by the fatal effect which has been attributed to the Satires of Archilochus. A young man, reproved by Pythagoras, straightway went and hanged himself. Seeing the alarming consequence of his reprimand, which there need be no doubt was conveyed with all possible mildness, the philosopher, who was of a sweet and amiable temper, and who inculcated in his disciples the duty of being gentle in censuring, ever afterwards, it is said, abstained from reproving at all.

The beard of Pythagoras was long and flowing; and as he was regarded as the first philosopher, this circumstance helped to make a long beard to be looked on as the badge of a wise man, and to lead all the quacks, who aspired to the reputation

* Bentley, "Phalaris" Works I, p. 121.

† Jamblichus, c. XXI, sec. 97.

and profits of philosophy, to take care to be furnished with this outward and visible sign of their inner wisdom, and of the genuineness of their calling. In all ages of the world evidence of wisdom and virtue, quite as equivocal as a long beard, has been received as perfectly satisfactory both by the learned and the unlearned vulgar. It is a pretty story in illustration of the reverence which the ancients paid to a long beard, which is told by Aulus Gellius of the wise and good Herodes Atticus. A person came to Herodes, wrapped in a cloak with long hair and a very long beard, and asked money of him to buy bread. Herodes inquired what he was, on which the beggar, with a frowning face and surly voice, said he was a philosopher, expressing at the same time his wonder that Herodes should ask any question about what he must see. "I see, indeed," replied the true philosopher, "the beard and the cloak; but the philosopher I do not yet see. I request you, however, with your good leave, to tell me what reason you think we have for knowing you to be a philosopher." On this Herodes dismissed the needy quack with as much money as would buy him bread for thirty days.*

Like Aristotle and Aristippus, Pythagoras delighted in the adorning of his person, and was altogether a man of elegant tastes. He wore a white robe with Persian trowsers (αναξυριδες,) and a golden crown on his head.† His robe was of linen, woollen clothes being for some reason or other avoided by him and his disciples.‡ There was a refinement about all his habits, as indeed there was about those of the best of his followers amongst the Greek philosophers. He delighted in poetry; his favorite writers being Homer and Hesiod. The verses which he used oftenest to sing were the lines in the

* Aulus Gellius, "Noctes Atticæ," l. IX, c. 2.

† Ælian, XI, c 38.

‡ Jamblichus, c XXVIII, sec. 149.

seventeenth book of the Iliad (51, 60,) describing the death of Euphorbus. Euphorbus, whose soul Pythagoras taught had passed into his body, was, like Pythagoras, extremely beautiful. Like Pythagoras also he delighted in tasteful ornaments: "His locks," says Homer, "were like those of the Graces, and were bound with gold and silver."

Like Sophocles, and the accomplished and amiable Theban, Epaminondas, Pythagoras was skilled in the science and practice of music and dancing.* The instrument of his preference was the lute. Like the fabled Minerva and the true Alcibiades, he probably objected to the pipe on account of its disfiguring the features of the player; but Jamblichus tells us that the Pythagoreans considered that the pipe had something effeminate in it unworthy of free men. Music was part of the regular discipline in the school of Pythagoras, and it was used as a medicine for physical diseases, as well as for the sufferings of the soul. "There were strains composed," says Jamblichus, "for curing the affections of the body, and others which were present remedies against sorrow and anguish of the heart;"† strains which, like the music described by Milton, could—

> "Mitigate and suage
> With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
> Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow and pain
> From mortal or immortal minds."

The disciples of Pythagoras composed their minds to sleep by soft and soothing airs played on the lyre, and were awakened in the morning by strains of a stirring spirit. Such was the use of music with the Pythagoreans; and poetry appears to have been employed also as affecting the health of the body and the mind, and the dispelling of evil passions.

Pythagoras delivered his lectures to his disciples by twos

* Quintilian, "Institut. Orat." lib. II.

† Jamblichus, xxv, sec 110.

and threes at a time, as they walked together in the shade of some beautiful grove. His instructions were sought after by both sexes; and his school was attended by several distinguished women. Amongst many other things which impress us with a highly favorable idea of the intellect and character of Pythagoras, are the traditions of the respect and kindness which he paid to women, and the lessons of practical wisdom which he taught them. But Pythagoras, it should be recollected, lived in an era when women filled their natural and proper station in Greece, and long before the Athenians learned to regard their wives as merely household drudges, and breeders of children for the service of the State, and to bestow their respectful attachment on the imported courtezans of Ionia. I am inclined to believe that it was no doctrine of the elegant Pythagoras, which is imputed to him by the ascetic Platonists of the latter ages, that no woman who did not profess unchastity ought to wear gold ornaments.

With regard to his diet, the philosopher has, without reason been sometimes claimed by the vegetarians as a member of their dyspeptic fraternity; and it has been asserted that he fed altogether like a horse, except that he would not eat beans. In more than one passage in the biographies of him by Jamblichus and Porphyry, it is said absolutely that he abstained from wine and flesh, and forbade their use to his disciples. His ordinary food is said to have been bread and honey, and honey-comb and pot-herbs. Millet also was held in much esteem by the Pythagorians. Pythagoras himself, who persuaded an ox not to eat beans, is also said to have instructed a she-bear to eat bread and apples, and to have dismissed her after taking her oath that she would never more taste animal food.* These passages, however, are inconsistent with others in the same biographies, in which it is declared that he and his

* Jamblichus, c. XIII, sec. 60. Porphyrius, sec. 23.

disciples ate the flesh of animals which it was lawful to sacrifice. Besides this, Aristoxenus, a disciple of Aristotle, left behind him a work on Pythagoras, in which, as he is quoted by Aulus Gellius, he says that of all kinds of pulse, Pythagoras preferred beans, on account of his belief in their medicinal qualities; and that he also partook of kid's flesh and sucking-pigs.* Difficulties and doubts hang over this whole subject, as indeed they do over everything connected with Pythagoras. The probability is, that the philosopher relaxed and modified his dietary laws according to the constitution and circumstances of his disciples, and according to their various stages of advancement in philosophy.

The whole history of the life and opinions of this famous man is involved in obscurity and contradiction. His character is an interesting study. If we estimate him according to the impression which he has made on the world, we must admit him to have been one of the greatest of mortals. The philosophy both of India and Egypt seems to have entered into his system. His writings have either been lost, or, according to some authorities, he left nothing in writing behind him. Yet the influence of his teaching endured directly for six centuries in Greece, and is still felt in the world. Speaking with the imperfect and confused knowledge of Pythagoras, which has reached modern times, it appears that with all the real wisdom and real philanthropy which he possessed, he mixed up much of the spirit and craft of the impostor and the juggler, and that he committed frauds on the ignorance and inexperience of his contemporaries, in order, it may be admitted, to benefit his age and generation. The author of "The Anatomy of Melancholy" gives Pythagoras the character of being "part philosopher, part magician, and part witch." Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton in his "Student" has some fine remarks

* Aulus Gellius, lib. IV, c. 11, sec. 4.

on distinguished men, who, for the sake of effect and influence, have mingled quackery with their greatness, and Pythagoras comes first on the list. "Mankind," says Bulwer, "love to be cheated; thus the men of genius, who have not disappointed the world in their externals, and what I shall term the management of self, have always played a part; they have kept alive the vulgar wonder by tricks suited to the vulgar understanding; they have measured their conduct by device and artifice, and have walked the paths of life in the garments of the stage. Thus did Pythagoras and Diogenes; thus did Napoleon and Louis XIV. (the last of whom was a man of genius, if only from the delicate beauty of his compliments;) thus did Bolingbroke and Chatham (who never spoke except in his best wig, as being the most imposing;) and, above all, thus did Lord Byron. The last three were men eminently interesting to the vulgar, not so much from their genius as their charlatanism."*

In his work on "Athens," Bulwer has some admirable remarks on the character of Pythagoras, whom he calls "a demi-god in his ends, and an impostor in his means." "Looking to the man himself," says Bulwer, "his discoveries, his designs, his genius, his marvellous accomplishments, we cannot but consider him as one of the most astonishing persons the world ever produced; and if in part a mountebank and an impostor, no one, perhaps, ever deluded others with motives more pure, from an ambition more disinterested and benevolent."†

Pythagoras seems to have perfectly understood the important use which may be made of mysterious language, of obscurity, and of pure, downright nonsense in dealing with mankind; and to have justly appreciated and turned to good

* "The Student," vol. I, p. 4.

† "Athens," lib. IV, c. 17, sec. 20.

account the popular contempt for plain and intelligible teaching. The five years silence which he prescribed to his disciples —most probably an invention which he had taken from the Indian Brahmins—was certainly the prescription of a quack. Pythagoras, more than a thousand years before Mahomet, enjoyed, if we are to believe himself, confidential communication with beasts and birds; the arts of mesmerism he understood more than two thousand years before Mesmer was born. He persuaded his followers that he had a golden thigh; and though Jamblichus assures us that he showed it to Abaris, the Hyperborean philosopher, he no doubt took good care not to make a curiosity of this kind a sight for every body's seeing. About the end of the sixteenth century of the Christian era, many people in Europe, including several men of learning, believed that a boy in Silesia had a golden tooth, which had grown naturally in his head; and in this century, the people were assured on the testimony of good witnesses that a child was to be seen with the name of Napoleon Buonaparte written at full length round the ball of his eye.

Audacity is the very soul of the art of conversion; it has the effect of fascination on the multitude, and Pythagoras practised it. He gained believers in his doctrine of the transmigration of souls by boldly relating the history of his own transmigrations. He recollected, he said, when his soul inhabited the body of Æthalides, and also when he was Hermolitus, the fisherman. At the Trojan war he was Euphorbus; and in the temple of Juno, at Argos, he pointed to the shield which he bore in battle.* His followers carried on his history. Aulus Gellius has quoted two ancient writers, Clearc husand Dicearchus, who say that Pythagoras afterwards appeared as Pyrander, then as Callicles, and then as the beautiful courtesan Alce.†

* Ovid, "Matam," lib. xv.

‡ Aulus Gellius, lib. IV, c. 11, sec. 1.

It seems also, that while in this world, Pythagoras either possessed the faculty attributed by the Irishman to the birds of being in two places at once, or kept a shadow of himself, such as the Germans call a *doppelganger* (about which kind of duplicate the reader will consult with pleasure Mrs. Crowe's interesting work, "The Night Side of Nature,") and that he was seen on the same day, and at the same hour, at Metapontus, and at the games of Crotona.*

For the successful carrying on of the business of a teacher of mankind, the value of a prepossessing personal appearance is incalculable. The fine figure and great comeliness of Pythagoras, which would justify the belief in his divine parentage, were no doubt amongst the means by which he effected the good which he did in his own time, and by which he attained the great name which has but little decayed for some five-and-twenty centuries. Some part of the influence of Mahomet may be attributed to the same cause, and there is a similarity between the men, in so far as that while both could resort to fraud and imposture, in order to establish and secure their intellectual dominion over the minds of men, both were, under Providence, great benefactors of the world; and it would be as uncharitable and unjust to the Arabian prophet, as it would be to the philosopher of Samos, to doubt that the first and habitual intentions of the one and the other were virtuous and patriotic; and that both might believe that their missions were from heaven. It is only those who are unable to conceive that the man who, when driven to it by difficulties, occasionally resorts to pious frauds and wholesome deceptions, may at the same time be guided in his career mainly by sincere enthusiasm and profound convictions, who will regard either Pythagoras, or Mahomet, or any of the great teachers of the world as a mere impostor. It may indeed be assumed as a fact that no man ever yet imposed a faith on a large portion

* Ælian, lib. II, c. 26; and lib. IV, c. 17.

of mankind, who was not himself to a great extent a sincere convert to his own revelations.

The heathen writers, Jamblichus and Porphyry, are believed to have drawn the character of Pythagoras with the view of contrasting it, in his favor, with that of the teacher of Christianity. On the other hand, the early Christian writers have most unjustly depreciated the real merits of Pythagoras. Tertullian civilly calls him a liar; and Lactantius describes him as a stupid old man, and one who talked as an idle old woman would do to a set of credulous children.

2

ASPASIA.

Aspasia, of Miletus, is the most celebrated of that class of Grecian women to which modern times and Christian nations do not furnish any exact parallel; though France, in the reign of Louis XIV., produced something remarkably similar in the famous Ninon de l'Enclos. The teacher of Socrates, and the mistress and counsellor of Pericles, is said to have been beautiful; and the circumstance that, at a subsequent period, we find a Greek woman of surpassing beauty, Milto of Phocis, assuming her name, is better evidence of the charms of the elder Aspasia than the passion of Pericles, which the wisdom, the eloquence and the varied accomplishments of Aspasia might have inflamed.

In the collection of ancient portraits by Gronovius, there is a particularly fine bust of Aspasia. She wears a splendid helmet and crest, the front of the helmet presenting the figures of horses coming half body out, as in the sculptures of the Parthenon. She has a fine corslet, and her neck, which is left bare, is encircled with a necklace. The whole armor, which is gorgeous, speaks a woman's love of finery. In all probability, we are to understand this to be Aspasia, in the character of Minerva; but, amidst all the warlike accoutre-

ments, the picture is rather that of a Venus. The hair is thick and long, and beautifully flowing; the cheeks are full, and the face is at once voluptuous and intellectual.

Of Aspasia's lover, the accomplished Pericles, we have only the vague tradition that he was of a prepossessing appearance; and it is mentioned that when the Athenians began to dread his ascendancy, and to fear that he was about to usurp supreme dominion over them, they discovered that, in his commanding person, he bore a striking resemblance to the tyrant Pisistratus.

MILTO.

Milto, afterwards called Aspacia, from her resemblance, it is said, to the mistress of Pericles, was the daughter of Hermotimus of Phocis, in Ionia, and was the most beautiful woman of her time, which is somewhat later than that of her namesake; Milto, perhaps, having been born a little before the elder Aspacia died. We have a tolerably full account of her history, and a minute description of her person. Her mother died in bringing her into the world, and her father, being a very poor man, educated her with difficulty.

While a little girl, though otherwise a great beauty, she had a tumor on her chin, which occasioned much grief to herself as well as to her doting father. A skilful physician offered to remove the tumor, but he had the cruelty—rare, certainly, in the profession to which he belonged, and which he disgraced—to demand a reward for the operation, which the poverty of Milto's father made him unable to pay. But Milto was born to splendor and greatness, and all obstacles were doomed to vanish from her path. In the meantime, while she used to sit holding her little mirror on her knees, and mourning deeply at the sight of the deformity which impaired the perfection of her beauty, she was cheered with dreams in which she found herself united in wedlock with a beautiful and good man.

One night, when, overcome with grief, she had gone to bed without supper, in a vision, a dove, the bird of Venus, came to her, and after assuming the form of a woman, of the Goddess of Beauty herself, prescribed the cure that was successful. The doubtful remedies of regular physicians are generally disgusting; but the infallible prescription of the goddess was pleasant and lovely. Milto was directed to take the rosy chaplet of Venus, when it should be withered, and having reduced it to a powder, to apply it to her chin.

Ælian, in the longest chapter of his amusing work, gives us a complete and minute portrait of Milto. Her hair was yellow, the locks a little curled; she had very large eyes, the nose a little aquiline, and small ears. Her skin was soft, and her complexion approached to the rosy, on account of which, when a child, she was called Milto. Her lips, as a matter of course, were red; and, equally as a matter of course, her teeth were whiter than the snow. Her feet and legs were handsome, and she was what Homer calls καλισφυρος, "having beautiful ankles." Her voice was sweet and tender, so that when she spoke, you would have thought that you listened to a syren. She used no curious or superfluous female ornaments, it being expressly mentioned that she was "beautiful without paint."

When she was brought before Cyrus, the other beauties of the court had their hair adorned and their faces painted; and according to the fine expression which Ælian puts into the mouth of the Persian prince, they were even more deceptive in their manners than in their faces. The elevation of Milto to be the favorite of Cyrus, was the accomplishment of her visions; and it was from him that she received the name of Aspasia, by which she is best known in history.

In the portrait of Aspasia we have an embodiment of almost all those features which went to constitute beauty accor ing to the notions of the ancients, and according to the ta which has generally prevailed in Europe in all ages. Y

hair—it is a palish flaxen yellow that has been most adored—and large eyes are ingredients in almost every picture of a beauty, whether the person be historical or imaginary. The large eyes of Helen of Troy are celebrated in every description of her person which has come down to us. Juvenal mentions as one of the inroads which old age makes on beauty, that, with the lapse of years, the eyes grow smaller.* In the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," the Vizier's daughter describes her beloved Bedreddin Hassan as "the young man who has large eyes and black eyebrows." The hair of Aspasia was a little curled. This is that crisped hair, "the smiling locks" (*crines ridentes*) of the Romans, to which there are so many allusions in the poets. This is the hair universally attributed to Helen of Troy. It was the hair of the Beatrice of Dante—

"Io miro i crespi e gli biondi capegli,"

the poet says in one of his canzoni; and in another he speaks of the fair locks which Love, to consume him, had gilded and curled—

"Biondi capelli
Ch' amor per consumarmi increspa e dora."

Small ears and elegant ankles have been in general request; and there are men whose criticism on female beauty goes no farther than the ankles. The aquiline nose, while it is considered appropriate in the face of a military commander, is not so decidedly according to orthodox taste in women's faces; but it is to be observed that Ælian has qualified the description to "slightly aquiline" (ολιγον επιγρυπος.) I am not sure what is the true meaning of the expression in Petronius, in his
h the [illegible]quisite description of Circe, where he speaks of her *nares*
beau
self un

* Juvenal, "Sat." lib. VI, 144.

paululum inflexæ, which has generally been understood to mean that her nose was rather aquiline.*

Kuhnius, the editor of Ælian, has a good note on the description of Aspasia's nose. The Persians, he remarks, amongst whom Aspasia had come, thought the aquiline nose beautiful, and the token of a generous mind, because Cyrus, the founder of their monarchy, was born with a hooked nose (γρυπος). The ολιγον, "a little," is however, he says, well added, as a crooked nose is considered base by the admirers of female beauty; as in Terence we read: "Shall I marry that red young woman with grey eyes, a wide mouth, and a crooked nose? Father, I cannot."

* Petronius, "Satyricon," p. 96. Paris, 1601.

AGESILAUS.

The ancient Spartans paid as much attention to the rearing of men as the cattle-breeders in modern England do to the breeding of cattle. They took charge of the firmness and looseness of men's flesh, and regulated the degree of fatness to which it was lawful, in a free state, for any citizen to extend his body. Those who dared to grow too soft or too fat for military exercise and the service of Sparta, were soundly whipped. In one particular instance, that of Nauclis, the son of Polybus, the offender was brought before the Ephori and a meeting of the whole people of Sparta, at which his unlawful fatness was publicly exposed, and he was threatened with perpetual banishment if he did not bring his body within the regular Spartan compass, and give up his culpable mode of living, which was declared to be more worthy of an Ionian than of a son of Lacedemon.*

In the same spirit, the Spartans imposed a fine on their king, Archidamus, for having married the little Eumolpa, to the probable lowering of the stature of the royal family. That little woman became the mother of little Agesilaus, and if her memory must suffer for having given birth to a son, in point

* Ælian, xiv, c. 7.

of height unworthy of stalwart Sparta, to her we must award the nobler praise—if it be true, as there is reason to believe that it is, that the moral and intellectual qualities of men are derived from their mothers—of having given to her country one of its greatest heroes, and one of the most accomplished and amiable men in the story of Lacedemon.

Agesilaus, in addition to his small stature, was lame of one leg, and some accounts bear that he was otherwise deformed, and that his features were disagreeable. Plutarch, however, is probably right when he tells us that the defect of his lameness was compensated by the agreeableness of the rest of his person. We must presume also that his constitution was good, as he was capable of enduring all the fatigues of Spartan warfare and the hardships of Spartan diet, and yet lived to the age of eighty-four, a period of life rarely attained by those who undergo severe bodily exercise and live sparingly.

Plutarch tells us that there was no portrait nor statue of Agesilaus, and that he would not allow one to be made. The real motive for this might be a Spartan abhorrence of refinement. We find that Plotinus, the Platonic philosopher, would not yield to the wishes of his disciples to sit for his portrait; and a much better man, Montesquieu, showed a similar aversion to having his likeness taken. M. de la Tour was extremely desirous of having the honor of making a portrait of his illustrious countryman, but failed in persuading him to give him the necessary sittings.

In the year 1752, Dassier, the celebrated medallist, was sent from London to Paris, to make a medallion portrait of the President. He for some time met with nothing but refusals on the part of Montesquieu, till at last he said: "Do you not think that there is as much pride in refusing my proposal as there would be in accepting it?" Montesquieu's delicacy was overcome, and the medallion was made.*

* D'Alembert, "Eloge de Montesquieu."

Amongst great men who would not allow their portraits to be drawn, we must reckon St. Francis Borgia. At different times attempts were made to take his likeness, but he resolutely refused to afford any sittings to the artists sent to him for that purpose. A picture of him by Velasquez is mentioned by Mrs. Jameson; and there are various engravings which represent him as a lean-faced man, with a long aquiline nose, With more true wisdom and with more kindness for posterity. some of the most famous saints have allowed their portraits to be transmitted to our day. We have the genuine fat figure of St. Theresa, and the gentle beauty of St. Francis of Sales. And what Christian is not delighted at contemplating the portrait of the blessed St. Catharine of Sienna, from the pencil of her friend and admirer, the painter Andrea Vanni?

The moral portrait of Agesilaus is that of a man of heroic spirit, of great abilities, and vast perseverance, with much humanity, admirable good temper, and a cheerful disposition. He warded off all jokes about his person by anticipating and making them himself. He is endeared to most readers by the anecdote related of him by Ælian, who tells us that, on being found by a friend riding on a stick, to amuse his son, he bade his visitor not speak about it till he was a father himself.* A similar story is told of Socrates,† and in modern times of one of the kings of France.

* Ælian, lib. xii, c. 15.

† Valerius Maximus, lib. viii, c. 8.

SOCRATES.

Sculpture has preserved to us that repulsive cast of features from which the physiognomist Zopyrus pronounced that Socrates was a man addicted to many vices, a judgment which drew from the Athenian philosopher that admirable observation, that he was indeed inclined to these vices, but had corrected his evil propensities by reason. What makes this anecdote the more interesting is, that we know that Socrates was one of those who held that the outward comeliness of the person was an evidence of the inward beauty of the soul.

Socrates in the first place was bald, and the ancients held baldness of itself to constitute ugliness. Agathocles, the tyrant of Syracuse, who according to Ælian, had "a most ridiculous and base head," out of which the hair fell by little and little, was so ashamed of his baldness, that he wore a myrtle crown to conceal it.* We know also that of all the honors conferred upon him, there was none that Cæsar accepted more gratefully than the right of wearing the laurel-crown which concealed his baldness.† With the ancients, baldness had a moral repulsiveness about it, as it was associated in their ideas

* Ælian, xi, c. 4.

† Suetonius, "Julius," c. 45.

with licentiousness of life; and the Roman soldiers, who gibed at Cæsar in the midst of his Gallic triumph, took care not to lose sight of this connexion. Amongst the other effects of his increasing years, Tacitus represents Tiberius as ashamed of his baldness.* He occasionally wore a crown of laurel on his head, but this was to protect him from the lightning.† Domitian also, who had higher pretensions to personal beauty, could not suffer any allusion to be made to his baldness; but he might be the more concerned about the loss of his locks, as he had written a treatise on the care of the hair.‡ The history of Elisha, mocked by the children, teaches us that the prejudice is of extreme antiquity.

In addition to his baldness, Socrates had a dark complexion, a flat nose, protuberant eyes, and an ungracious expression. His health and his strength, however, were good. He served as a soldier in his country's wars; and in marching and enduring the fatigues of military discipline, was without a rival. He could also suffer well both hunger and thirst; and when the time for fasting was past, and the time for feasting arrived, he was noted for being able to hold a larger quantity of drink than any of his comrades without being the worse of it.‖ As the wisest of the ancients believed occasional debauches to be commendable, the capacity for enduring them was regarded as a valuable accomplishment. So also in Christian times, thought Montaigne. In his remarks on education, addressed to Madame Diane de Foix, Countess of Gurson, and intended for the benefit of the child with which the Countess was then pregnant, and which Montaigne assured her would be a boy, as "you are too generous not to commence with a male;"¶ he recommends that his pupil should be taught to stand drink well.

* Annales IV, c. 57. † Suetonius, "Tiberius," c. 69.

‡ Suetonius, "Domitian," c 18. ‖ Plutarch, "Symposium."

¶ Montaigne, "Essais," lib. I. c. 19. Paris, 1657.

"I wish," he says, "that even in debauchery he should surpass his companions in vigor and firmness; and that he do not forego the doing evil either from want of power or of science, but from want of will." This ability for hard drinking, Montaigne thought absolutely necessary for great statesmen. Pitt, with his vast capacity for port, would have been a minister of state quite to his mind.

Socrates learned to play on the pipe in his old age; he also got himself taught singing, and danced every day. "He was not ashamed," says Seneca, "to divert himself with children, and was found one day by Alcibiades riding on a stick to amuse his boys."

A great deal of nonsense has been spoken by Coleridge and others about the profound philosophy, morality, and religion of Rabelais; but he certainly was a ripe scholar, and from him I shall borrow what I consider to be the best picture of the character of Socrates—including a sketch of his person—that I have anywhere seen. It is, in fact, an able digest of what the Cure of Meudon must have gathered from an en larged acquaintance with all that has been recorded of Socrates. The reader may take it either in the unrivalled English of Sir Thomas Urchard, or in the original of Rabelais, which I give in a note. Rabelais has described one of those boxes in the apothecary's shop with ugly figures on the outside, but filled within with precious drugs, and he goes on: "Just such another thing was Socrates, for to have eyed his outside, and esteemed of him by his exterior appearance, you would not have given the peel of an onion for him, so deformed was he in his body, and ridiculous in his gesture; he had a sharp-pointed nose, with the look of a bull, and countenance of a fool; he was in his carriage simple, boorish in his apparel, in fortune poor, unhappy in his wives, unfit for all offices in the state (this last statement, with Rabelais' leave, is a mist man and a very great mistake indeed,) always laughing, tippland took

merry carousing to every one with continual jibes and jeers, the better by these means to conceal his divine knowledge. Now opening this box, you would have found within it a heavenly and inestimable drug, a more than human understanding, an admirable virtue, matchless learning, invincible courage, inimitable sobriety, certain contentment of mind, perfect assurance, and an incredible misregard of all that, for which men commonly do so much watch, run, sail, fight, travel, toil and turmoil themselves."*

* The Works of F. Rabelais, M. D., done out of French by Sir Thos. Urchard, Kt., and others. London, 1694 : "Tel disoit estre Socrates ; par ce que, le voyant au dehors, et l'exteriore apparence, n'en eussiez donné ung coupeau d'oignon, tant laid il estoit de corps, et ridicule en son maintien, le nez poinctu, le reguard d'ung taureau, le visaige d'ung fol, simple en meurs, rusticq en vestimens, paoure de fortune, infortuné en femmes, inepte a tous offices de la republicque, tousiours riant, tousiours beuuant d'aultant a ung chascun, tousiours se gaubelant, tousiours dissimulant son diuin sçauor. Mais ouurans ceste boyte, eussiez au dedans trouue une celeste et impreciable drogue, entendement plus que humain, vertus merueilleuses, couraige invincible, sobresse nonpareille, contentement certain, asseurance parfaicte, deprisement incroyable de tout ce pourquoy les humains, tant veiglent, courent, trauaillent, nauigent, et bataillent."—ŒUVRES DE F. RABELAIS, p. 2. Paris, 1845.

st

*

‡ Sue

¶ Monta

PLATO.

Plato, who according to the superstitious belief of his times, was the son of Apollo, was a tall and handsome man. His name, he is said to have derived from his broad shoulders. He had a protuberance at the back of his head. He was of a grave countenance, and laughed but seldom. He had a shrill but pleasing voice. He was temperate in sleeping, eating and drinking, but approved of occasional intoxication. The belief of the medical faculty for more than two thousand years was, that an occasional debauch promoted good health; all the great physicians of the middle ages insisted on their patients getting drunk once a month. Plato lived in good health to the age of eighty-four. He excelled in all the Grecian exercises, having studied wrestling under Aristo the Argive. He also applied himself to poetry and painting. Being a man of wealth, he used a decent splendor in his whole style of living, and did not think the use of gold and silver plate unbecoming a philosopher. He dressed genteelly, but reproved the effeminacy and vain adornings of Aristotle, as much as he did the proud sordidness of Diogenes. Notwithstanding the dreamy nature of many of his speculations, Plato was a man of the world, had the art of pleasing in conversation, and took

particular care not to annoy his company by the introduction of philosophical discussions.

The description left us of Aristotle is, that he was a man of slender form, with spindle shanks and small eyes. He had a shrill voice, and stammered in his speech.* Diogenes Laertius, who tells us these things, as well as most of the particulars which I have gathered of Plato, quotes the authority of Timotheus, the Athenian, for the fact that Aristotle hesitated in his speech, and the circumstance is also mentioned by Plutarch. He delighted in rich apparel, wore a number of rings on his fingers, and was particular in shaving, and in trimming his hair. In the ornamenting his person, he did not neglect his shoes, which were adorned with precious materials. He was much addicted to talking, and had a sneering and fault-finding expression in his face.†

Such is the portrait of him whom Southey calls "the most sagacious man whom the world has yet produced." No man certainly has ever lived whose writings, real or supposed, have exercised so tyrannical an authority over mankind. His reputation gathered strength for at least eighteen hundred years after his death; and during fifteen centuries of Christianity his word, with the learned, held divided empire with the Gospel itself.

Amongst great men, who more or less delighted in magnificence, are enumerated, besides Aristotle, Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristippus, Demosthenes the Athenian orator, and Hortensius the Roman. Both Demosthenes and Hortensius subjected themselves to the ridicule and censure of their contemporaries for their excessive attention to elegance in dress.‡ Parrhasius, the painter, delighted in the adornment of his per-

* Diogenes Laertius, lib. v, c. 1, sec. 2.

† Ælian, lib. III. c. 19.

‡ Aulus Gellius, lib. I, c. 5.

son, and called himself Αβροδιαιτος—the delicate, the elegant. He wore a purple robe, and a golden crown on his head.* He had a staff encircled with golden rings, and wore golden clasps in his shoes.

Amongst military men, we find that Xenophon's love of beauty in every thing made him select the most splendid armor, the Argotic shield, the Attic corselet, the helmet of Bœotia, and the horse of Epidaurus. He tells us himself that he was "most elegantly adorned for war."† Xenophon, who, it may be remarked, was distinguished by great personal beauty, used to say that if he conquered the enemy, he was worthy of the most splendid adorning; and if he lost his life in battle, he would appear with grace in magnificent armor. The horse of Epidaurus alluded to, Xenophon was once obliged to sell at Lampsacus; but his friends, finding how much he valued him, bought him again, and made a present of him to the general.‡ Hannibal also delighted in splendid armor, and in fine horses. Montaigne mentions Alexander, Cæsar, and Lucullus, as generals who loved to distinguish themselves in battle by rich armor, and accoutrements of a shining and conspicuous color.§

Agis, Agesilaus, and Philip the Great, Montaigne enumerates amongst those who went to battle obscurely dressed, and without any imperial array. Agesilaus, indeed, and Epaminondas affected an extreme poverty in their dress. In his old age, Agesilaus went bare-footed, even in winter.‖ Epaminondas, otherwise a man of elegant tastes, had but one poor garment, and was obliged to keep the house whenever he put it to the fuller to get the dirt taken out of it.¶

* Ælian, lib. III, c. 24.
† Xenophon, "Anabasis," lib. III.
‡ "Anabasis," lib. VII.
§ "Essais," lib. I, c. 47.
‖ Ælian, lib. VII. c. 13.
¶ Ælian, lib. V, c. 5.

Amongst great men in modern times who have indulged in magnificent dress and ornaments, the most illustrious are Raleigh, Buffon, and Haydn.

Charles of Sweden in his taste imitated Agesilaus; Murat was a warrior like Xenophon.

ALCIBIADES.

All historians agree that the accomplished Alcibiades was by far the most handsome man of his age. On account of his beauty, says Xenophon, who knew him personally, he was "hunted" by many honorable women.* The strong expression of Xenophon (Θηρωμενος,) which is taken from the chase, I have translated literally. In ambiability of character and beauty of person, says Ælian, Alcibiades was chief amongst the Greeks, and Scipio amongst the Romans.† Of beautiful persons, Lord Bacon says, that "they prove accomplished, but not of great spirit, and study behavior rather than virtue. But this holds not always; for Augustus Cæsar, Titus Vespasianus, Phillip le Bel of France, Edward IV. of England, Alcibiades of Athens, and Ismael the Sophi of Persia, were all high and great spirits, and yet the most beautiful men of their times." This list might easily be amplified. It wants Demetrius Poliorcetes, who was beautiful beyond description; but its great defect is the omission of Alexander the Great, the most warlike of mortals.

"The beauty of Alcibiades," says Plutarch, "continued

* Xenophon, "Memorabilia Socratis," lib. I, c. 2, sec. 24.

† Ælian, lib. XII, c. 14.

with him through all the stages of childhood, youth, and manhood." He caused himself to be painted lying in the lap of the courtesan Nemea. Plato notices the loose flowing robe, which, after the fashion of the men of pleasure of these times, characterised Alcibiades. The ancients—the men at least—appear to have valued personal beauty more than the moderns do, and took greater pains in preserving it. Plutarch tells us that in learning music, Alcibiades chose the lyre, for its gracefulness. When he lived with his uncle Pericles, his tutor, Antigenis, attempted to teach him to play on the pipe; but when he looked at his face in the mirror, as he used the instrument, he dashed it on the ground, and broke it in pieces. The boy Alcibiades then led the fashion in everything; and the Athenians, when the story got abroad, gave up with one consent the use of the pipe.* Alcibiades, it has been farther said, objected to the pipe because he could not accompany it with his voice. I have noticed before that Pythagoras had chosen the lyre in preference to the pipe, most probably for similar reasons; and there is a strong resemblance between the anecdote of Alcibiades and the mythological story related by Ovid, which tells us that when Minerva, as she played on the pipe, looked into a fountain, and noticed the ungraceful swelling of her cheeks, she threw away the instrument in disgust.†

The importance attached by the ancients to the cultivation of music as a means of social improvement, appears ludicrous to modern readers. The philosophic Montesquieu has devoted a chapter of his great work to discussing their theories on this subject.‡ In his work on politics, Aristotle tells us that at the close of the Peloponnesian war, there was scarcely a freeborn Athenian unacquainted with the flute.‖

* Aulus Gellius, lib. xv, c. 17.

† "Ars. Amat." lib. iii.

‡ "Esprit des loix," lib. iv, c. 8.

‖ "Politica," lib. viii, c. 6.

From Plutarch, who quotes contemporary authority, we learn that Alcibiades had a lisp in his speech "which became him and gave a grace to his discourse." The fact is established by some lines, which Plutarch quotes from Archippus, a poet of the times, who ridicules a son of Alcibiades, for imitating the sauntering step, the loose robe, the lisp, and the bent neck of his father. With regard to the effect of a lisp in the speech, opinions both in ancient and in modern times have been very favorable. Ovid alludes to those women who, by lisping, have found in their imperfection a charm to catch mankind.* In popular belief, lisping in a woman is thought to be characteristic of a disposition to love. Thus, in Ford's "Lady's Trial," (Act iv. sc. 2.)

> AMORETTE. I do not uthe
> To thpend lip labor upon quethionths
> That I mythelf can anthwer.
> FUTELLI. No, sweet madame,
> Your lips are destined to a better use,
> Or else the proverb fails of lisping maids.
> AMORETTE. Kithing, you mean.

And the chorus of the song which is sung after this is,

> "None kitheth like the lithping lath."

In the other sex we see from other instances than this of Alcibiades, that this imperfect elocution has been admired. Thus, Chaucer tells us of the friar,

> "Somewhat he lisped for his wantonnesse,
> To make his English sweet upon his tongue."

And Barbour, the Scottish poetical historian, speaking of

* "Ars. Amat" lib. III.

the good Sir James Douglas, says that "he lisped like Hector of Troy," and that his lisping became him remarkably well. In more recent times, we learn of the Lord Keeper Coventry, from an account published by Lodge, in his "Portraits of Illustrious Persons of Great Britain," from a manuscript in the Sloane Collection, that "he was of a very fine and grave elocution, in a kinde of gracefull lisping; so that where nature might seeme to cast something of imperfection on his speech, on due examination, she added a grace to the perfection of his delivery."

That Hector lisped, Barbour, in all probability, learned from the spurious work on the destruction of Troy, attributed to Dares the Phrygian. This book, which is now utterly despised, was held to be genuine, and was highly admired in Barbour's time, and is quoted in his poem. It contains personal descriptions of most of the men and women connected with the Trojan war. Of Hector, we are told that he was "lisping fair-haired, crisp, quinting, swift of limb, of a venerable countenance, bearded, comely, great of mind, gracious to the people, worthy of and fit for love."*

Barbour, it may be remarked, declares that Hector, like Sir James Douglas, had black hair. Dares says he was fair; for, from the context, it is pretty clear that the term *candidum* refers to his hair.

It would thus appear that, along with the general tradition of Hector's comeliness and his lisp, and his proverbial acceptability to the other sex, there is a fame that he squinted. So did George Whitefield and Edward Irving, both of whom were favorites with the fair, the latter being called "the adorable Edward Irving."

Descartes admired a squint, one story being that a woman with whom he was in love looked at him obliquely; while

* Dares Phrygius, "De Excido Trojæ," p. 170. Amst. 1631.

another version, which is adopted by Southey, is that this partiality arose from his associating a squint with the recollection of the eyes of a kind nurse. There is a recent case which took place in Paris, in 1842, which is deserving of attention, and which may be a lesson to those who are not content with the eyes which heaven has given them. A young woman was about to be married to a man with whom she was deeply in love, he squinting most unmistakeably. At that time the operation of strabism was much in vogue, and the thoughtless lover imagined that by its means he would get rid of what he regarded as a blemish in his countenance. Without letting his mistress know his intention, he got the defect entirely removed, and fancied that he would now appear with increased favor in her eyes.

On his next meeting with her, however, she uttered a cry of alarm, and in spite of all explanations, refused to receive as her husband him whom she had loved and chosen under quite a different aspect.* The marriage was broken off; the separation was for ever, the lady contenting herself with cherishing in her own soul the squinting object of her young affections.

The philosophy of all this is very intricate. Where the person or the mind is on the whole agreeable, peculiarities which abstractly would be reckoned defects, by appearing as parts of the whole, come, by a natural association of ideas, to be regarded as constituent beauties. Thus we find persons endowed with a graceful lameness who would be quite spoiled if their legs were made equal, and others who would be disfigured if they were to recover a lost eye.

Anne of Brittany, the wife of Charles VIII. of France, and the Princess of Conde, were beauties who moved gracefully

* Roussel, "Systeme Physique et Morale de la Femme," (Note by M. Cerise,) p. 131. Paris. 1813.

through the world with one leg shorter than the other. Catherine des Jardins, (now nearly forgotten as a writer of poetry and dramas,) though strongly marked by small-pox, had personal charms enough to get for herself three husbands and a great many lovers beside.

Mademoiselle de la Vallière, the most amiable of Louis XIV.'s mistresses, has by recent writers generally been described as a beauty, notwithstanding her admitted lameness. But this is a mistake. Louis did not confine his admiration of the sex to those of them who had beauty to attract him. His first mistress, Mademoiselle de Mancini, was allowed to be the reverse of either beautiful or handsome. She was stout, but short and ill-shaped, and had a very vulgar air. Historians have not been able to make up their minds as to what it was that pleased the king in Mancini.

Mademoiselle de la Vallière was kind-hearted and amiable, and Louis loved her because she first loved him. A contemporary author of a life of la Vallière, written and printed in her life-time, and who is extremely favorable to her real merits, thus describes her :—" As a man in a meadow, adorned with an infinite variety of lovely flowers, is almost always embarrassed in his choice, so the king, in the midst of so many beauties, did not know in favor of whom to determine. Chance decided his choice, and Mademoiselle de la Vallière, who had nothing to recommend her in point of beauty, triumphed over all the rest. She is of middle stature and rather thin (*assez flouette* ;) she walks ungracefully, and is slightly lame ; she is white and fair (*blanche et blond*,) and marked with small-pox ; her eyes are blackish (*noiratres*,) and her look languishing. She has a large rosy mouth ; her teeth are not good. She has no bosom ; her arm is flat, and does not give too favorable an idea of the rest of her person. She is sometimes gay, and has always a great deal of wit and vivacity ; she speaks agreeably, and wants neither knowledge nor solidity. She is well

versed in literature, and has a soul great, generous and disinterested. She has sincerity and good faith; she has always had an extreme aversion for all that is called coquetry; and, above all, she has a good heart, and loves her friends as tenderly as can be."*

The dark languishing eyes here ascribed to la Vallière did not, as might be thought, redeem her face from being plain; and Louis, even after he began to regard her, on discovering her affection for himself, confessed her entire want of beauty; and his taste in everything was admirable.

One day a courtier pointed her out to the king, and said, in a jeering tone: "Come hither, fair one, with the dying eyes (*la belle aux yeux mourans*,) who are content with nothing less than monarchs." La Vallière was confused, and the king was vexed at the rudeness. He still saw nothing to admire about her, but after his gracious fashion, he saluted her with the utmost respect and spoke kindly to her; and he soon after made it known that he wished to see her married to a nobleman of high rank, and that he would compensate for her want of personal charms by the fortune which he would bestow on her. When he came, however, after this to enter more frequently into conversation with this affectionate creature, his kindness became converted into love.†

Amongst beautiful squinters is enumerated the Greek poet, Menander. A modern writer on the calamities of genius, mentions the squint of Menander.‡ The poet is described as living the life of a Sybarite. "Flowing with unguents and with a loose robe," says Phædrus, describing his appearance before

* "La Vie de la Duchesse de la Valliere," par. . . . p. 90. A Cologne, chez Jean de la Verité. The place of publication is as fictitious as the assumed name of the bookseller.

† "La Vie de la Duchesse de la Vallière," p.96

‡ D. Josephus Barberius, "De Miseria Poetarum," p. 54. Neap 1686.

the tyrant Dionysius, "he came forward with a delicate and languid walk." His passion for female beauty is described as a perfect madness, his love for the courtesan Glycera being much celebrated amongst the Greeks.

Some there have been who inflamed all hearts by the fire of a single eye, notwithstanding the almost universal prejudice in favor of two. The Princess of Eboli, the mistress of Philip II., of Spain, who was deprived of the sight of one of her eyes, was, notwithstanding, a perfect miracle of beauty. "Nature," says the Père la Moyne, "had finished with extraordinary care both the mind and the body of this princess, but had only given her one eye; whether it was that she despaired of being able to make a second equal to the first; or that, in this respect, the princess might resemble the day, which has but one eye; or, as Perez said to Henry the Great, that Nature was afraid that if she had had two eyes she would have set the whole world on fire."* Mrs. Jameson, in her "Memoirs of Early Italian Painters," notices a picture by Titian, called "Philip II. and the Princess of Eboli," in the Fitzwilliam Museum, at Cambridge.

According to Dr. Joseph Warton, it was upon the Princess of Eboli and Luis de Maguiron, the most beautiful man of his time, and the favorite of Henry III., of France, who lost an eye at the siege of Isore, that the famous epigram about Acon and Leonilla—the finest of modern Latin epigrams, as it is justly allowed to be—was written. It has been translated, but with little success, into various languages.

> "Lumine Acon dextro, capta est Leonilla sinistro
> Et potist est forma vincere uterque deos;
> Blande puer, lumen quod habes concede sorori,
> Sic tu cæcus Amor, sic erit illa Venus."

* La Galérie des Femmes Fortes," par le Pére le Moyne, partie II, p. 25. Paris, 1663.

"Acon is deprived of his right eye; Leonilla of the left; and either of them in beauty is able to vanquish the gods. Sweet youth, yield up to your sister the eye that you have; so you will be blind Love, and she will be Venus." Warton believed this renowned epigram to be anonymous. It is, however, the production of an obscure Italian poet, Girolamo Amaltheo, (in Latin, Hieronymus Amaltheus,) and is to be found amongst his pieces, in a collection of the beauties of two hundred Italian poets.* Only one other epigram by Amaltheo has obtained celebrity. It is the epigram *Galla tibi totus sua munera dedicat annus, &c.* "Oh, Galla, the whole year dedicates its gifts to thee; the spring has painted with its red thy rosy cheeks and lips; the summer has placed a thousand fires in thy radiant eyes; the autumn hides its fruit in thy bosom, and the winter has sprinkled all the rest with its snow."

* "Delitiæ C C Italorum Poetarum, hujus, superiorisque ævi Illustrium." Collectore Ranutio Ghero, 1608.

HELEN OF TROY.

HAVING brought forward a traditional portrait of Hector, I may be allowed to refer to the pictures which have been given of Helen of Troy, the most illustrious name in the history of beauty. Helen, according to the author of the work which bears the name of Dares, and which is believed to have been written during the decline of the Roman literature, resembled her brothers, Castor and Pollux, who had yellow hair and large eyes. "She was besides," says Daws, "beautiful, of a simple mind (as no doubt she was,) pleasant, with very fine legs, having a mark between her eyebrows (*notam inter duo supercilia habentem;* this, I suspect, is the small space admired by antiquity,) and a very little mouth."*

I have not met in any writer in any period when good taste flourished, with a commendation of little mouths.; a little mouth being condemned by all good judges, as being the almost unfailing accompaniment of want of intellect and taste

In the enumeration of the thirty points of female beauty, which are said to have all met in Helen, a small mouth is enumerated. There are other serious errors of taste in that production, to which I shall afterwards have occasion to refer.

* Dares Phrygius, p. 170.

It appears to have been written about the commencement of the sixteenth century.

Homer, it has been observed, has told us nothing specific about Helen's person or face. With him she is "the divine woman," and Helen "with the face like that of the immortal gods." In one place, he tells us that she was wrapped in an ample robe. In Homer's great poem, Juno, with her white arms, and her ox-eyes, is less of an abstraction than Helen. What Homer has omitted to do has, however, been done by writers of less fertile imagination. The picture drawn by Constantine Manasses, a Byzantine writer, is the most detailed and curious account. If it serves no other purpose, it is authentic enough as a specimen of the Byzantine ideas of beauty. Artopæus, the commentator on Dares, notices the tautology of this description by Constantine, but I give it entire.

"She was a most beautiful woman, with beautiful eyebrows, of a very fine complexion (ευχρουστατη) with beautiful cheeks, a good face, large eyes, whiter than the snow, with curved eyebrows, delicate, a grove of graces, with white arms, given to pleasures, breathing beauty, of a fair and agreeable complexion, her cheeks rosy without paint, the rosy blush setting off her great whiteness, as if one mingled the splendid purple with the ivory, with a long and very white neck, whence she was said to be the daughter of a swan." The description of Helen by Cedrenus, another Byzantine writer, agrees in the main points with this by Constantine Manasses. "Helen," says Cedrenus, "was most beautiful." "One day when Paris looked into her garden, he saw that she was of incomparable beauty for she was tall (ευστολος) with beautiful breasts, white as snow, with beautiful eyebrows, an elegant nose, her hair crisp (ουλοθριξ,) and half yellow,* (υποξανθος,) and with large

* Georgii Cedreni, "Compendium Historicum," tom I, pp. 121, 124. Paris, 1647. The passage from Constantine Manasses, I have been obliged to take from Artopæu's "Commentary on Dares."

eyes." I have translated the word ευστολος, "tall," by advice of Artopæus. He declares that those who have translated ευστολος, "elegant in her dress" are wrong, as an elegant dress is no part of the gifts of the person; and as besides Helen never was elegant in her dress till she ran off with Paris. Ευστολος, he contends, is "tall, or of a deep waist." I have seen it translated slender, but I cannot believe that a writer of Constantinople would have praised slenderness; and I did not wish to place Cedrenus in direct opposition to Constantine on this point. Cedrenus is not unsupported by venerable authority when he calls Helen ευμαστος, "of a beautiful bosom." In ancient days, Euripides, the woman-hater, who has bestowed the most opprobrious epithets on Helen, has particularly referred to the singular handsomeness of her bust. Helen herself appears to have been perfectly sensible of her merits in this respect, if it be true, as Pliny relates, that she presented as an offering to Minerva, a cup made of the precious metal called *electrum*, modelled after the form of her breast.*

The fine passage, in which Homer speaks of the effect of Helen's beauty, even upon those who had reason to hate her, has drawn forth something like a feeling of the spirit of poetry, even from Bayle. He tells us that all the descriptions of her person which have come down to us, do not give us an idea of her charms equal to that which we form when we hear that the aged chiefs, when she made her appearance on the walls, burst out into the exclamation, that the Trojans and the Grecians were "not to be blamed for having so long endured so much suffering for such a woman; for in countenance she is altogether like the immortal goddesses." Marlowe, I think, has taken a hint from this really beautiful pas-

* Plinii, "Hist. Naturalis," lib. XXXIII. c. 23. The electrum, according to Pliny, was a composition of gold with a fifth part of silver, and had the properties of shining brightly and of detecting poison.

sage in the outburst which he puts into the mouth of Faustus, when the devil brings before him the shade of Helen—

> "Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
> And burnt the topmost towers of Illium?
> Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss!
> Her lips suck forth my soul! See where it flies!
> Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again!
> Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
> And all is dross that is not Helena.
> I will be Paris, and, for love of thee,
> Instead of Troy shall Wittenberg be sack'd;
> And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
> And wear thy colors on my plumed crest;
> Yea, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
> And then return to Helen for a kiss.
> Oh! thou art fairer than the evening air—
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
> Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
> When he appeared to hapless Semele;
> More lovely than the Monarch of the sky
> In wanton Arethusa's azure arms,
> And none but thou shalt be my paramour."

Some writers have asserted that the charms of Helen did not fade in old age. But the moralist, who wishes to withdraw the soul from the contemplation of that beauty which is but dust and ashes, to that comeliness to which increase of years only gives increase of brightness, will be better pleased with Ovid, who represents Helen looking in her mirror with tears, and asking herself why first Theseus and then Paris had stolen her away.

> "Flet quoque ut in speculo rugas conspexit aniles
> Tyndaris; et secum cur sit bis rapta requirit."

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

The common modern notion of Alexander the Great is, that he was a man of short stature, wry-necked, and otherwise deformed. I could quote many testimonies to this effect. Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy," tells us that the Great Alexander was a "little man of stature." We are assured by Pope that—

> "Great Ammon's son one shoulder had too high;"

and Gillies, in his "History of Greece," says "he was of low stature, and somewhat deformed." These statements are all erroneous. The ancients knew Alexander only as beautiful alike in face and form.

We have, most unfortunately, no history of Alexander by any contemporary writer, but we have the relations of authors, who had the contemporary writers in their hands. Our accounts of Alexander's person are from authors of the second and third centuries of the Christian era; Arrian, Plutarch, Tacitus, Ælian, and Solinus. There is a complete harmony amongst all these authorities; all are agreed on the beauty of Alexander; and out of their statements, put together, we have a detailed account of his person and appearance. The faithful and accurate Arrian, who had before him the writings of

Ptolemy and Aristobulus, who had fought with Alexander, tells us that he was in person most beautiful (το δε σωμα καλλιστος.)*

The curious and inquisitive Ælian gives Alexander as an instance in his chapter on those who have excelled in beauty, ranking him in this respect with Alcibiades, Scipio, and Demetrius Poliorcetes, the comeliest of men. "His hair," he says, "was yellow and flowing."† Solinus says his stature was lofty beyond the common, with a long neck, large and lustrous eyes, his cheeks gracefully ruddy, and beautiful in all other points with a certain air of majesty.‡

Tacitus, in speaking of the death of Germanicus, tells us that the people were led to compare his beauty, his youth, the manner of his death, on account of the near neighborhood of the places in which both died, with the fate of Alexander the Great; "for both," adds the historian, "with great beauty of person, and illustrious descent, at the age of little more than thirty, had fallen amongst foreign nations by the treachery of their own people."§ The beauty of the amiable Germanicus is matter of established history, though in the proper place I shall have to notice the defect which Suetonius describes in his person.

There is no contradiction to these concurring accounts in any ancient writer; and Plutarch furnishes us with information, from which we may see in what way the modern belief that Alexander had a wry neck has arisen. Alexander had the fashionable Greek habit, as the beautiful Alcibiades had, and as others beautiful and not beautiful had, of leaning his head gently and gracefully to one side; perhaps not more than a painter would have desired him to do, if he wished to draw

* Arrian, lib. VIII, c. 28.

† Ælian, lib. XII, c. 14.

‡ Solinus, "Polyhistor," c. 14.

§ Taciti, "Annales," lib. II, c. 73.

him in an easy attitude. The fashion was in practice with tho Greek women as well as the men; and is mentioned in a fragment of the comic poet Alexis, quoted by Athenæus, as one of the means which they took to make themselves amiable.

Montaigne, who thoroughly admired and perfectly understood Alexander, has stated this matter well. "It was," he says, "an affectation arising from his beauty which made Alexander lean his head a little to one side."* This habit of Alexander is also well described in an amusing passage in the "Spectator." "If we look further back into history, we shall find that Alexander the Great wore his head a little over the left shoulder; and then not a soul stirred out till he had adjusted his neck-bone; the whole nobility addressed the prince and each other obliquely; and all matters of importance were carried on in the Macedonian court with their poles on one side."† In this attitude, and looking up to heaven, Lycippus the sculptor, designed the statue of Alexander. "It was," says Plutarch, "Alexander's posture while he lived." Lycippus showed himself a true master of his art by taking Alexander in his favorite attitude; as we frequently see painters and statuaries destroy the whole spirit and character of a work, otherwise possessed of merit, from want of attention to this point.

Lycippus, Plutarch tells us in this same treatise, expressed in brass, the vigor of Alexander's mind, and the lustre of his virtues; while others, imitating the bend in the neck, and the rolling of the eye, failed to express the lionlike fierceness of the face. In his life of Alexander, Plutarch tells us that he had a terrible countenance, which struck and disturbed those on whom he cast a look in anger—a description in no way inconsistent with the idea of his great beauty. Plutarch further tells us that Alexander was fair and ruddy in the face

* "Essais," lib. II, c. 17.

† Plutarch, "De Fortuna Alexandri," lib. II.

and breast, though Apelles, in painting him holding the thunderbolt, had made his face darker than it was. This I should conjecture to be an ignorant criticism on a noble stroke of art in the great painter.

In short, we have a superfluity of evidence that Alexander had all that form which charmed antiquity; and in his time he was considered to be a living representation of the divine Achilles, with whom he was pleased to be compared. A striking proof of the idea of Alexander's person, universally prevalent amongst the ancients, is furnished by the historian Herodian. The mad emperor Caracalla had a passion for imitating Achilles and Alexander; and Herodian tells us that the people laughed at seeing a man of his small stature aping these very valiant and large [μεγιστους] warriors.*

The head of Alexander on his silver coins is bound with a fillet; the hair is richly curled, the eyes large and open, the nostrils wide, and the mouth finely shaped.

There are two circumstances in the history of Alexander, as it is usually written, which may have helped to confirm the fable of his being of small stature. In his Indian expedition, he is said to hav ecaused suits of armor of a gigantic size to be buried in the earth, in order that on their being afterwards dug up by the people, they might give them an idea that the Macedonian invaders were men of marvellous stature. This, it has been said, is not like the expedient of a tall man.

Another story, or rather a romance, told by Quintus Curtius, would, when ignorantly read, convey an impression of the small stature of Alexander. He tells us that Thalestris, Queen of the Amazons, out of desire to see the conqueror, left her country at the head of three hundred of her women. When she saw the king, however, she was much disappointed with his appearance, and looked at him with an unterrified counte

* Herodian, "Hist." lib. IV, c. 16

nance; for, says the historian, with all the barbarians, veneration is paid to majesty of person; they do not consider any one capable of great things, except those whom nature has endowed with an extraordinary appearance.*

If all this, and all the love affair between the warlike queen and Alexander, as related with much simplicity by Curtius, were matters of real history, and not of romance, they would prove nothing farther than that the Amazonian queen expected to meet with a regular giant, which, in her case, would have been a very natural expectation, and was disappointed. The idea of a great conqueror, even in the minds of those who are not barbarians, is that of a giant. See, in Shakespeare, how the Countess of Auverny is disappointed when she finds that the fierce Talbot, the scourge of France, is not a perfect ogre.

"Is this the scourge of France?
Is this the Talbot, so much fear'd abroad,
That with his name the mothers still their babes?
I see report is fabulous and false
I thought I should have seen some Hercules,
A second Hector, for his grim aspect,
And large proportion of his strong-knit limbs.
Alas! this is a child, a silly dwarf."†

The sweet odor which Plutarch, referring to the memoirs of Aristoxenes as his authority, tells us issued from the body of Alexander, and perfumed his dress, is, in all probability, a fable for which we are indebted to the idolatry of his admirers, or the deceit of his flatterers; perhaps to an innocent fraud on the part of Alexander himself. This was a gift attributed to his heathen goddesses; and if we are to believe a thousand legends of the Christian Church, was a virtue possessed by the bodies of great saints, both during their lives and after

* Quintus Curtius, lib. vi, p 133. Amst. 1671.

† Henry vi, Act ii, sc 2.

their deaths. Of Polycarp, the early martyr, many respectable Christians believed at the time, and at this very day, I have no doubt, many Christians still believe, that when he was fastened to the stake, his body emitted a delightful fragrance like that of frankincense to the senses of all present. Eusibus is the authority for the tale.

The sensible Dr. Jortin has given a very reasonable conjectural explanation of the miraculous perfume felt at the pile of Polycarp. "Scented wood," he says, "is common in hot countries, and the odor might proceed from the fuel, for the people ran about the baths and other places to get wood; and a Christian might also join with them, and bring a bundle of wood with aromatics enclosed in it to honor the funeral of his bishop. The Christians, however frugal in other respects in their expenses, were very profuse in the interment of their brethren."*

With regard to this alleged property of Alexander's, I do not think it is calculated to raise our admiration of him; and I cannot help agreeing with Montaigne that the Macedonian hero would have been as well without this singular endowment. "The sweetness of the purest breaths has nothing more perfect than to be without any odor like those of healthy children. Hence says Plautus:

"'Mulier tum bene olet, ubi nihil olet.'

The most exquisite odor of a woman is to smell of nothing. And as to the fine strange odors, we have reason to believe that they are employed to cover some natural defect in that way."†

The private habits of Alexander are well known. He delighted in splendor and magnificence, and like Cæsar had a fine taste for literature and the arts, and was a judicious patron

* Jortin, "Rem. on Ecclesiastical History.'

† Montaigne, "Essais,' lib ɪ, c 55.

of both. His great vice was the vice of his father and of his country, the drunkenness which was as truly national in Macedonia in ancient times as it is in Sweden and Scotland in modern days. Ælian has placed the name of Alexander amongst those of distinguished drunkards. In a familiar line, Pope has called Alexander "Macedonia's madman." This wonderful young man, who died at the age of thirty-two, besides being a perfect master of the art of war, was a man of cultivated and elegant tastes, a sagacious politician, and a benefactor of the human race. We may safely leave his character to the enthusiastic praises of such men as Montesquieu and Schlegel, and, above all of Bacon. All these men of genius regarded Alexander as amongst the greatest of mere men.

Trebellius Pollio, the Augustan historian, in his account of the Macrian family, tells us that the men had the figure of Alexander sculptured on their rings, and their silver plate; and that the women wore his figure in the net-work on their heads, and in their bracelets (*dextrocherium* is the word, meaning the bracelet worn on the right arm,) and on every sort of ornament, so that there were gowns and fringes and mantles in the family at the time when Pollio wrote, which showed the figure of Alexander in various fashions. He had seen Cornelius Macer when he gave a supper in the temple of Hercules, present to the chief magistrate a goblet of electrum (*paterum electrinam*,) which in the centre had the face of Alexander, while the whole history of Alexander was sculptured in minute figures round its border. The cup, he says, was carried round the whole company; all of them very fond of so great a man. The historian adds, that it was considered lucky to carry about the person the figure of Alexander in gold or silver.*

The horses of great warriors—of Alexander, Cæsar, and

* Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores," tom. ii, p. 296 Lugd. Bat. 1671.

the Cid of Spain—have had their appearance and characters noticed in history. Alexander's Bucephalus has been supposed to have derived his name from his head being like that of an ox; but Montaigne is in all probability right, when he says that the name of "Ox-head" would merely denote that he had a large head. In the same way, it is probable that when Homer speaks of the "ox-eyes" of Juno, he merely means that the eyes of the imperious queen of heaven were large and round. A large head is not reckoned handsome, either in a horse or in a woman; but the numerous virtues of Bucephalus would atone for his want of personal beauty. He had belonged to Philip, for whom he had been purchased for thirteen talents.

When armed and adorned for the battle, he would allow no one to mount him but Alexander. In the Indian war, he carried his master into the heart of the enemy's ranks; and being mortally wounded in the neck and side, by a great effort he brought him out again, and then fell down and died. Alexander buried him with military honors, built a city on the place where he was interred, and called it after his name.*

The Arabs attribute all the virtues of a horse to his mother. The intellect of men is in general an inheritance from the maternal side. If, however, intellect be hereditary, Alexander on the side both of father and mother was singularly fortunate; and he seems to have inherited the great and good points of both parents, with but little share of their vices. The great abilities, splendid wit, beauty and intolerable arrogance of Olympias, are matters of history. There is nothing in the records of sarcasm finer than the reproof which she wrote to her son when, in the intoxication of vanity, he asserted his divine parentage, commencing his letter to his mother with,

* Aulus Gellius, lib. v, c. 2.

"Alexander, the son of Jupiter Ammon, sends health to his mother."

"For my love," said Olympias in reply, "be quiet about that, and do not bring me into trouble with Juno, who will do me a mischief, if you represent me as her rival."*

What a world of satire on her son, on the pagan religion, and on the jealous character of the queen of heaven! and what a diverting religion it was which gave fair room for such satire! Another saying of Olympias is better than witty; it is great and generous. Phillip had fallen in love with a woman of Thessaly, who, in the popular belief, was thought to have made use of the magical arts, for which her country has always been renowned, to inflame the king's passion. Olympias caused her rival to be brought before her. She found nothing to marvel at in her beauty, but after conversing with her, she exclaimed: "Let slanders cease! your witchcraft is in yourself!" What a compliment for a woman to receive from a woman, and from such a woman as Olympias!

Alexander, besides his intellectual obligations to his mother, was indebted to her for the beauty of his face. All the coins and medals represent Alexander as bearing a striking resemblance to Olympias. Olympias has, in addition to a fine double chin of her own, the large open eye, the fulness of face, the Greek nose, and the exquisitely chiselled month of Alexander.

In a very fine medal published in Snakenberg's Quintus Curtius, Olympias has her hair beautifully arranged with some leaves gracefully intertwined, and an ornament of a crescent shape in front. In another coin or medallion the heads of Alexander and his mother are placed together, and the resemblance is very remarkable.

Olympias has gained pardon from posterity for many great

* Aulus Gellius, lib. XIII, c 4.

faults by the courage and calmness with which she met her death, "submitting to her fate in such a way," says the historian, "that you might recognise Alexander in his dying mother." Like Polyxena before her, and Cæsar after her, in her last moments she adjusted her robes and her hair, so as to be graceful in death as she had been in her lifetime, carefully covering her bosom and limbs as she would wish to be seen.*

* Justin. Hist. xiv, c. 6. The reading has been much tortured by the commentators: "Insuper expirans capillis et veste crura contexisse fertur, ne quid posset in corpore ejus indecorum videri." I have adopted the reading of Grævius: "Insuper expirans papillas et veste crura contexisse fertur.'

DEMETRIUS.

Demetrius of Macedonia, called "the besieger of towns," was so very beautiful, that it was said no painter or sculptor could do justice to the mingled grace and dignity of his face and form, with which also his manners and conversation admirably harmonized. This beauty he strove to improve, according to the taste of his time, by art. Being naturally pale, he used pigments to heighten his color.*

It is not improbable that, like the Roman Heliogabalus, he in reality impaired his natural beauty by such effeminate applications. To meet the requirements of his age, he dyed his hair yellow by arts known in his time. The demand for golden locks has not only led to the adoption of false hair, but to the invention of scientific means of converting other colors into the desired hue.

We know that Massalina, for the purpose of carrying on her infamous amors, hid her black hair with yellow locks.† Black hair was considered becoming in a matron, and yellow hair was the color for youth. Those who imitated youth, therefore, put on yellow hair, and hence it became the fashion

*Ælian, lib. ix, c. 9.

† Juvenal, "Sat." lib. vi, 120.

adopted by unchaste women under the empire. The same notion has prevailed in many ages in Europe. Mary Queen of Scots wore false yellow hair. In the "Merchant of Venice," Bassanio, in an extremely beautiful passage, says:

> "Look on beauty,
> And you shall see it purchased by the weight
> Which therein works a miracle in nature,
> Making them lightest that wear most of it;
> So are those crisped, snaky, golden locks,
> Which make such wanton gambols with the wind
> Upon supposed fairness, often known
> To be the dowry of a second head—
> The scull that bred them in the sepulchre."

The art of making the hair yellow or fair, has been known and practised from a very remote period, and is familiarly spoken of by ancient writers. Besides what he says about Demetrius, Ælian, speaking about Atalanta, tells us that "the color of her hair was yellow, produced, not by any womanly art or by tinctures or drugs administered, but altogether natural."* Ælian could not have spoken in this way if the art had not been well known in his time. It is particularly noticed by Tertullian in his interesting work on the ornaments of women. "I see some of you," he writes to his "very dear sisters in Christ," his black-haired countrywomen, "constantly occupied in giving their hair a fair color. They are almost ashamed of their country; they are vexed at not having been born in Gaul or Germany."†

As it has always been considered lawful to draw people to what is right by appealing to the motives by which they are most likely to be influenced, Tertullian leaves the high ground of denouncing these arts as inventions of the fallen angels, and

* Ælian, lib. XII, c. 1.

† Tertullian, "De Cultu Fæminarum," lib II, c. 6; Opera i, 156. Lut. Par. 1664.

tells his countrywomen that by these processes the hair is lost, and that the brain itself is enfeebled by the use of the liquors employed, and "by the excessive heat of the sun in which you take pleasure, in inflaming and drying your heads." The notion that black hair became matronly years is alluded to by Tertullian in this treatise. "There comes a time, however," he says, "when they strive to change their fair hair into black —when, arrived at a fatal old age, they are grieved at having lived too long."

St. Jerome, writing nearly two centuries later, notices the dying of hair red. "Thou shalt not," says this vehement father, "turn your hair red, making it ominous of the fires of hell" (nec capillum inrufes et ei aliquid de gehennæ ignibus auspiceris.)

The strange art of converting black or dark-colored hair into fair has been practised in modern times. The following extract is from Mrs. Jameson's "Memoirs and Essays illustrative of Art, Literature, and Social Morals." It is an interesting commentary on the extracts from Tertullian, and shows that what was known to the Venetian ladies in the sixteenth century, was also familiar to the women of Carthage in the second, as it was also to the Greeks long before the Christian era! Truly, there is nothing new under the sun in human vanity.

"With regard to the Venetian women, every one must remember, in the Venetian pictures, not only the peculiar luxuriance, but the peculiar color of the hair, of every golden tint, from a rich full shade of auburn to a sort of yellow flaxen hue, or rather not flaxen, but like raw silk, such as we have seen the peasants in Lombardy carrying over their arms, or on their heads, in great shining twisted heaps. I have sometimes heard it asked with wonder, whether those pale, golden masses of hair—the true *biondina* tint—could have been always natural?

On the contrary, it was often artificial—the color, not the hair.

"In the days of the elder Palma and Georgione, yellow hair was the fashion, and the paler the tint the more admired. The women had a method of discharging the natural color by first washing their tresses in some chemical preparation, and then exposing them to the sun. I have seen a curious old Venetian print, perhaps satirical, which represents the process. A lady is seated on the roof, or balcony, of her house, wearing a sort of broad-brimmed hat without a crown. The long hair is drawn over these wide brims, and spread out in the sunshine, while the face is completely shaded."

Besides the coloring of the hair by what may be called a chemical process, destroying the original color, the ancients resorted to the less artificial and mechanical mode of making their hair of the desired yellow by sprinkling it with a golden powder. The elder Galenius, the emperor, used this powder.* I do not know whether it be from a notion of its being beautiful that many of the Arabs of Aden make their hair yellow by the use of clay of that color.

Ælian uses a very strong expression, which reminds us of the terms in which the use of ointments on the person is spoken of in the Hebrew Scriptures, when he says that Demetrius himself and his pavement flowed with unguents. The fresh flowers of every season were strewed below him that he might walk among them. This use of flowers, as it has something in it of a passion for the charms of nature, is certainly the most defensible, as it is the most refined and elegant of Sybarite luxuries.

Heliogabalus, otherwise a contemptible creature in comparison with Demetrius, according to the Augustan historian,

* Trebellius Pollio, "Hist. Aug. Scriptores," lib. II, p. 232.

strewed his seats, his beds, and the porticos of his houses with roses, and walked amongst lilies and violets, hyacinths and narcissuses. When the younger Dionysius revelled with the women of Locria, he filled the insides of his palaces with roses and wild thyme. The Emperor Galienus, the elder, lay on beds of roses, which he procured even in spring.

Ælian has devoted a chapter to the history of two Sybarites —Straton of Sidon, and Nicocles of Cyprus—who contended with each other who should be most magnificent, luxurious, and delicate; and when the one heard of any great exhibition of splendid voluptuousness on the part of the other, he made it his business to throw it into the shade by something still more extraordinary. At his suppers, Straton was surrounded with beautiful women, singing, playing on instruments, and dancing. "Yet," says Ælian, gravely, "neither of these princes could indulge in these pleasures for ever; but both were removed from the world by a violent death."*

Polyænus tells us that Nicocles hanged himself. Of Straton we learn that fearing to fall into the hands of the Persians, he wished to slay himself, but got frightened at the sight of the naked sword, and resolved to await his fate, when his wife, snatching the weapon from his trembling hand, pierced him through with it, and then stabbing herself mortally, threw herself into his arms and died. The ancients would have called this a good wife.

But Demetrius could unite the character of the warrior and the politician with that of the voluptuary. The union is not common, but is not unexampled. In well-authenticated history, the Roman Emperor Otho is the most perfect example of this strange mixture of the most luxurious effeminacy and the utmost heroism of soul. Surena, the Parthian general, who conducted the war against the Romans, was an Otho on

* Ælian, lib. VII, c. 2.

a less conspicuous field. History pronounces him to have been the greatest warrior, the ablest politician, and the tallest and most beautiful man of his time amongst the Parthians.* In his expeditions he had a thousand camels bearing luggage, and two hundred carriages conveying the women of his harem. Though always the foremost man in the field or in the assault on the fortified city, Surena's beauty was distinctly of a feminine cast; and while it was the Parthian custom to let the hair grow wild and shaggy, in order to strike terror into their foes, their heroic general, the most warlike amongst them, painted his face, and parted his locks effeminately on his forehead, after the luxurious fashion of the Medes. On the part of Surena, who carried with him in all his marches a train of the most beautiful Parthian women, and spent his nights with them in feasting and licentious singing and dancing, it was bitter mockery when he showed his court the indecent books of Aristides, which had fallen into his hands amongst the baggage of the Romans, as evidence of the luxuriousness of their enemies, who could not travel without such things.

Amongst warlike and energetic monarchs who were at the same time addicted to those soft vices which usually break down all manliness of character, the History of England gives us Edgar, Henry II., and Edward IV. France presents us with Francis I. and Henry IV., and the German empire gives us Frederick, the great opponent of ecclesiastical despotism in the thirteenth century. Ladislaus, king of Naples, who was murdered by a young woman of Florence by means of a poisoned handkerchief, was a man of this stamp. "This good captain," says Montaigne, "courageous and ambitious, proposed to himself, as the chief end of his ambition, the completion of his pleasure and the enjoyment of some rare beauty.†

* Plutaıch, "Crasuss."

† Montaigne, "Essais, p. 537.

In the other sex this character is not so rare as amongst men. From the Semiramis of Assyria to the Semiramis of the North, Catharine of Russia, there is a well filled up list of women, illustrious for their heroic spirit and infamous for their licentious passions.

Beauty, voluptuousness, and valor were met in the famed queen of Assyria. "Semiramis," says Ælian, "was of all women most beautiful, but careless of her charms."* There is amongst the portraits of Gronovius† a full-length figure of this remarkable woman, robed closely to the feet, with a slender coronet on her head, and attended by a dove. Ancient fable relates that as her mother, Dercete, was after death changed into a fish with the face of a beautiful woman, so Semiramis was metamorphosed into a dove, which hence became the Babylonian emblem. The dove is the bird of Venus, the representative of tenderness and love; and the transmigration of the soul of Semiramis was characteristic of the softer passions of that warlike woman.

Justin tells us something about her person. When she passed herself off as the son and not the widow of Ninus, Semiramis was aided by the circumstance that both were about the same stature, both had the same slender voice, and both in features resembled each other. She covered her arms and legs with her robe, and placed a tiara on her head; and in order that she might not appear to be concealing any thing under this dress, she commanded the whole people to be attired in the same way, in consequence of which this dress became national.‡ This is the dress in which she appears in the picture in Gronovius.

Ælian tells us that Semiramis did not exult when in the chase she captured a lion, but was proud when she took a

* Ælian, lib. VII, c. 1.

† Gronovius, "Thesaurus Antiq. Græcarum," tom I. Note.

‡ Justin, lib. I, c. 1.

lioness, the danger of the feat being esteemed as much greater.*

It is really a pretty story which is told of Semiramis by Valerius Maximus. She was one day dressing her hair when tidings reached her that Babylon had revolted. She had got the curls on one side of her head to her mind, but the tresses on the other were still in loose disorder. But she threw herself, as she was, at the head of her soldiers, and flew to the siege, and did not complete her toilet till she had first reduced the city to obedience. Her statue in Babylon represented her as she appeared on that day before its walls.†

It is somewhat remarkable that Sir Walter Raleigh, who, in his melancholy and grand history, has more than once expressed the most false opinions about the wickedness of woman, refuses to believe the voice of all history regarding the licentiousness of Semiramis. "For her vicious life," he says, "I ascribe the report thereof to the envious and lying Grecians." His reasons for disbelief are, however, such as cannot be allowed to invalidate a historical relation. "For delicacie and ease," he continues, "do more often accompanie licentiousnesse in men and women than labour and hazzard do."‡

I have already shown that this rule, as regards men, is not without its exceptions; as regards women, it is still less to be looked on as universal. The licentiousness of Semiramis is established by constant and uniform historical tradition. Thus Juvenal, speaking of the effeminate arts of the Emperor Otho, who applied plasters of bread to his face to make it delicate, declares that this was what neither Semiramis nor Cleopatra did.§ Diodorus represents her as building a palace, and constructing gardens in one of her cities, and making her habita-

* Ælian xii. c. 39.

† Valerius Maximus, lib. ix, c. iii. sec. 4.

‡ Raleigh, "History of the World," book i. c. 12, sec. 4. Lond. 1614.

§ Juvenalis, "Sat." lib. ii. p. 108.

tion remarkable in the same way as in modern history the tower of Nesle is by the amors of the French princesses.* Procopius, in his "Anecdota," in which he has so many things to tell of the wickedness of women, refers as to an undoubted fact to the dissolute life of Semiramis (Σεμιραμιδος ακολαστου βιου.)† And our own Shakspere has embodied the spirit of ancient history regarding this famous woman—

> "Or wilt thou sleep? we'll have thee to a couch,
> Softer and sweeter than the lustful bed
> On purpose trimm'd up for Semiramis."‡

* Diod. Siculus," lib. II, c. 13.
† Procopius, "Anecdota," p. 5. Lipsiæ, 1827.
‡ "Taming of the Shrew." Ind. sc. 2.

SCIPIO AFRICANUS.

The younger Scipio Africanus, according to the testimony of his friend the historian Polybius, which is followed by Livy and Ælian, was extremely beautiful. His person appears to have indicated his amiable and elegant mind. He studied the Greek literature, and anticipated the cultivation of the age of Augustus. "He had nothing of the old Roman severity about him," says Michelet; "his was rather a Greek genius resembling that of Alexander."

Livy has a passage about Scipio, which gives us a high idea of his prepossessing personal appearance, from the impression which it made on Massanissa. He tells us that Massanissa, being desirous of entering into an alliance with the Romans, had formed a great admiration of Scipio from the fame of his actions, and had conceived in his mind that the hero was vast and stately in his person. Scipio, says the historian, had much majesty in his nature. His hair was long and flowing. His person was not scrupulously adorned, but manly and truly military. Being then just recovered from a sickness, he appeared as if he had been in the flower of his youth.* From a passage in Tacitus, in reference to Germanicus, we learn that Scipio walked without retinue, with uncovered feet, and in a similar dress with his soldiers.†

* Livius, lib. XXVIII.

† Tacitus, "Annales," II, c. 59.

SYLLA.

The famous dictator Sylla considered himself, and was regarded by others, as a beauty. He had yellow hair, with a complexion in which red and white were strangely contrasted. His eyes were of a lively blue, and fierce and threatening. Owing to the mixture of colors in his face, Plutarch, from whom we have these particulars about Sylla's person, tells us that a satirist of the time compared it to a mulberry strewed with flour. Sylla, who believed himself to be the handsomest man of his time, grounded his claims mainly on his fine hair. When the soothsayers announced that the troubles of Rome were to be settled by a man of courage and superior beauty, Sylla declared that this could be none other than himself;—"for my golden hair," he said, "sufficiently proves my beauty—and after what I have achieved, I need not hesitate in avowing myself a man of courage."*

Sylla was reckoned the most fortunate man of his times; and we find from the excuse which a woman made for touching him with her hand, as he sat in the theatre, that it was with the ancients, as it is with the moderns, considered lucky

* Plutarch, "Sylla."

to touch a lucky person. From youth to age, he was an indiscreet admirer of female beauty, and was passionately beloved by the sex. Plutarch appears to be right in believing that he was not naturally cruel, notwithstanding the crimes into which his position and desire to rule drove him. His passion for a country life, and his actual retirement from the city, and his pursuit of rural sports and fishing, are curious traits in his character.

CLEOPATRA.

The charms of Cleopatra, the renowned Queen of Egypt, are more celebrated than the beauty of any other woman named in history, with the exception of Helen of Troy. Historians, hearing of her fascinations, have attributed them all to mere face and form. Thus Dion assumes that she was the most beautiful of all women. Yet, though her perfections affected the course of this world's history, there is reason to believe the testimony of Plutarch, that the beauty of her face and figure was not remarkable beyond that of women of whose attraction less has been said and written. In stature she was small. Michelet calls her "a little wonder;" and, in his usual picturesque style, in allusion to her having got herself conveyed to Cæsar when he was in Alexandria, in a bundle of clothes, says, "The height of her who was carried to Cæsar, wrapped up in a bundle upon the shoulders of Apollodorus, could not have been very imposing." The heads of Cleopatra, on medals and coins, represent her as bearing a considerable resemblance in features to her second lover, Antony. As in him, the chin and nose are rather hooked,

threatening an unpleasant approximation at an early age. The nose of Cleopatra is also not so decidedly feminine as a sound taste would demand.

All accounts, however, agree in attributing to Cleopatra an infinite variety of accomplishments, the rarest literary acquirements, a knowledge of languages only equalled in ancient times by that attributed to Mithridates, the marvellous king of Pontus, the finest taste in the arts, an unexplainable grace in her manners, the most bewitching powers of conversation, and a tone of voice which made those powers irresistible. Dion, who says that she excelled all other women in elegance of form, tells us that there was such a grace in her voice, that with whatever man she spoke, she could wheedle him with this charm, and could draw any one, however averse to love by nature or years, to be enamored of her.*

Cleopatra was in her twentieth year when she captivated Julius Cæsar; and she was twenty-five when Antony became her admirer. Antony, however, it is stated by Appian, when he was general of the horse in Egypt, under Gabinius, had seen Cleopatra, then a child, and conceived a love for her.† At her death she was in her fortieth year, and it is evident that at that age she did not despair of charming Augustus; and if she failed there, it is not fair to attribute her want of success to any decay in her powers of pleasing, but to her having, in that selfish and cold-blooded politician, the very worst subject possible to work upon.

The amors of Cleopatra with Julius, are forgotten by the general reader in the greater celebrity and greater historical consequences of her love of Marc Antony. As I shall notice in the sketch of Julius, Merivale attributes a deteriorating influence over his mind from his passion for the Egyptian Queen. I am not able to trace a false step in all the splendid

* Dion Cassius, "Hist. Rom." lib. XLII, c. 42, p. 201.

† Appian, "De Bell. Civ." lib. V, c. 8.

career of Cæsar. Dion, however, gives support to the opinion of this excellent historian, and alludes to actions of Cæsar which he did purely out of love to Cleopatra; and he tells us that on their first meeting, Cæsar became her slave. It is a strong expression to apply to one of the most vigorously minded men that ever lived; but Cæsar was also the most refined man of his time, and experience testifies that all cultivation of the mind only weakens its powers of resisting the fascination of beauty and graceful manners.

> "On women, nature did bestow two eyes
> Like heaven's bright lamps in matchless beauty shining,
> Whose beams do soonest captivate the wise,
> And learned heads made rare by art's refining."

I have noticed the introduction of Cleopatra, by stealth, into the presence of Cæsar. When Apollodorus laid down his precious burden, there took place a remarkable interview. It was an interview between the two most intellectually gifted persons who perhaps ever met together, the two most accomplished persons of their age, perhaps of any age. Never in this world, either before or since, did such a pair meet in one apartment, in one city, in one country. Nature had prodigally lavished all her graces on both the man and the woman, and both had cultivated all the faculties of their minds with the utmost assiduity and the most splendid success. As has been observed of others who have fallen in love together, there were several points of resemblance between the two. Both were amongst the most learned persons of their times, both had a passion for an elegant, refined, and magnificent voluptuousness, both had an ornamental Greek cast of mind, both were of high courage, both were fearless of danger and death, and both were irreligious, or rather the religion of both was of that kind which prevailed amongst the Egyptians and the Greeks, and

which taught that the certainty and quick approach of death, and the thick darkness which hung over the nature and the very existence of the future and unseen world, were the most powerful reasons for making the best use of the present; motives calling on them to eat, drink, and be merry, and particularly to love; that spirit which gives its bright lights and its deep shades to the finest ode of Catullus: "Vivamus, mea Lesbia, et amenus."

The conversation between Cæsar and Cleopatra, in all probability, was carried on in Greek, being the court language of the time; and being also, as we learn from Martial and Juvenal and other authorities, the language of love amongst the Romans.

Plutarch represents Cleopatra at twenty-five, as feeling certain that when she appeared before him, Antony would not be able to resist her in the ripeness of her beauty and understanding, seeing that when an inexperienced girl, and ignorant of the world, she had made a conquest of Cæsar and of the son of Pompey.

Bayle is extremely pleased with this reasoning of Cleopatra's, and has in more than one place taken an opportunity of enforcing his doctrine of the powerlessness of mere beauty of face and person when not supported by intellectual resources. "This argument," he says, "is much better than those persons imagine who only talk about girls of fifteen, of roses half blown, and with whom twenty is an entrance upon old age—impertinent persons, who might easily discover, both by what is passing in their own times, and by the history of former ages, that the women who have most charmed great princes, and have made the greatest disturbances in courts, were of an age which enabled them to acquire an experience in business, and to perfect their understanding, and that there are few

whose empire is of long duration if the graces of the mind do not second those of the body."*

And again, in speaking of Cæsonia, the wife of Caligula, Bayle says: "It is strange that this woman, being neither young nor beautiful, and having already had three children to her husband, was able to inspire a passion so ardent and so constant in this barbarian; but, however much may be said about the first flower of youth, it will be seen, if the matter is carefully considered, that the address and practice of a woman of from thirty to forty uphold her reign better when she is mistress of a prince, than the mere beauty of a girl would do."†

Plutarch lets us know that Cleopatra was neither younger nor more beautiful than Antony's virtuous wife Octavia; and founding upon this information, Brantome has gone the length of nearly disallowing any beauty whatever to Cleopatra, and of asserting that Octavia was a hundred times prettier, and that it was entirely Cleopatra's talk that seduced Antony. "It was on this account," he says, "that Marc Antony loved Cleopatra so much, and preferred her to his wife Octavia, who was a hundred times more loveable (*aimable*) and beautiful than Cleopatra; but this Cleopatra had so delicate a discourse (*la parole si affectee,*) and her words were so much to the purpose, with her loose fashions and graces, that Antony forgot every thing for her love."‡

Cleopatra's voice has been compared to an instrument of many strings. There is a voice in some women, which, by some not easily explainable sympathy between it and those who listen to it, will do almost any thing; it will atone for the want of youth and beauty, and has a power which may

* Bayle. Art. "Dellius."

† Bayle. Art. "Caligula."

‡ Brantome, "Dames Galantes," Œuvres, tom. III, p. 279.

without a figure of speech be called magical. It will make a set of insipid verses appear in the reading to be the poetry of the heart; it will carry through a worthless drama, and make it pass for a fine tragedy.

It is one half the battle with an actress if she appear on the stage with a voice of this kind. To such a voice as this it is said Madame Roland owed in a great measure the strange fascination which her e oquence exerted on all who came within the circle of her attractions.

Miss Kavanagh, following the contemporary authorities, has attempted to describe it. "Great as was the power of her personal charms, it yielded to that of her voice. Those who had heard it once could never forget it again. The low, clear tones—so mellow and so deep—haunted them like a strain of exquisite melody through years, long after she who gave them utterance had perished on a scaffold."*

Madame Roland herself was sensible what a gift this is, and has left it on record that the voice of her husband, "Roland the Just," was not a well-modulated one. To this voice of hers, and the infectious nature of political fanaticism, Madame Roland's influence in her day is chiefly to be attributed. Her character is not an amiable one. I can never read the fate of Marie Antoinette without sorrow; but I confess that I think that the death of Madame Roland was just a piece of retributive justice, and I have no pity to afford her.

The Roman writers have used the strongest terms to describe the madness of Antony's passion for Cleopatra—that passion for which it is not an heroic exaggeration to say that he lost the empire of the world; for he undoubtedly entered on the contest for the prize with an amount of favor and popularity with the Romans, both citizens and soldiers, of which his successful rival Octavius was destitute.

* "Women of France," vol. II, p. 141.

"After the death of Cassius and Brutus," says Appian, "Cæsar went to Italy, and Antony proceeded to Asia, where Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt, having met him, instantly conquered him at first sight; and their love brought destruction on themselves, and after them entailed numerous ills on all Egypt."* "Antony," he says in another place, "wounded in soul at the sight of her, presently began to love her as if he were a boy, although he was then forty years of age, having, as is said, always had a disposition for such passions."†

The historian represents him as throwing aside all the former energy of his nature, following only the commands of Cleopatra, with an utter disregard to all laws, human and divine. "All the great army," says the same writer, "with which Antony terrified the Bactrians and the Indians more remote than these, Cleopatra alone rendered of no avail, for out of his desire for her he did not commence the war at the proper time, and he did every thing without consideration, not being master of his senses, and so enslaved by the witchcraft of that woman, that he thought not so much of victory as of a speedy return to her."‡

Dion speaks in a similar manner. "Antony, seized with the love of Cleopatra, cared nothing henceforth for honour, but served the Egyptian woman."§ Our own Dr. South, in his admirable sermon on "ill-disposed affections the cause of error in judgment," has noticed the weakness of Antony with his usual vigor of language and closeness of logic. "Show me," he says, "so much as one wise counsel or action of Marcus Antonius, a person otherwise both valiant and eloquent, after that he had subdued his understanding to his affections, and his affections to Cleopatra!"

* Appian, "De Bell. Civ." lib v. c. 1.

† Ibid. lib. v. c. 8.

‡ Appian "Parthica." Opera, lib. IV, p. 276. Lipsiæ, 1829.

§ Dion, lib XLVIII, p. 371.

Cleopatra was certainly no model of purity, but her wickedness has been exaggerated by the Roman writers. Dion speaks of her extreme general licentiousness.* Her wickedness and her beauty have been exaggerated in the purest spirit of romance by Aurelius Victor.† Yet her amors with Cæsar and with Antony, and her unsuccessful attempt upon Octavius, appear to have been mingled in her mind with a desire to preserve the independence of her sovereignty. Women are generally religious, and much worse women than Cleopatra was—for she was a saint in comparison with many of the Roman queens, even Christian queens—have been devout. This alleviation or aggravation of her guilt, whichever it may be called, it does not appear that Cleopatra could plead.

Amongst her other wild freaks with Antony, Cleopatra, the queen of a deeply religious people—the people who had torn in pieces the Roman soldier who, by accident, had killed a sacred cat—appeared in the garb and character of the awful Isis—whose veil, the ancient inscription said, no mortal had ever removed—while the graceless Antony acted the part of her Osiris.

Our notions of a charming woman are terribly shocked when we hear of Cleopatra, even in the presence of Octavius, flying at one of her slaves, and tearing his face with her nails. I do not know if we are more or less shocked at this than at hearing how the philosophical Cato, before proceeding to meditate with Plato on the immortality of the soul, gave his attendant a blow on the mouth because he had considerately removed his sword, fearing that his master was about to do himself a mischief.

But the ideas of different ages and countries are very dis-

* Dion, lib. LI, p. 453.

† S. Aurelius Victor: "Hæc tantæ libidinis fuit, ut sæpe prostiterit; tantæ pulchritudinis, ut multi noctem illius morte emerint."

similar in matters of this kind. Even in fiction, where the writer has it in his power to make all his great people decorous and amiable, we find, in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," the most accomplished ladies doing as Cleopatra did. Badoura, the charming Princess of China, seizes her nurse by the hair of the head, and beats her till her face is covered with blood.

But even in Cleopatra's days, it is gratifying to find that Ovid, in that book of his "Art of Love," which is devoted to instructing the fair sex how to make themselves agreeable, expresses his repulsion to a woman who loses her temper, and beats or scratches her maid-servant.

There was a Lucrezia Gonzagua, a learned woman of the sixteenth century, whose name has descended to the present day with the warmest commendations of her erudition, virtue and piety. Her injudicious admirers published her epistolary correspondence as far as it could be collected, including the letters which she wrote on her purely household affairs. A quotation is made from one of these letters by Bayle, the effect of which is to destroy all the reputation for goodness which her friends have endeavored to rear up for her. She is writing to Lucia, who appears to have been at the head of her domestic establishment, about a maid, Livia, and says: "If Livia is not obedient to you, lift her petticoats to her head, and whip her till her flesh be blue, and the blood run down to her heels." Such letters as these, Bayle calmly says, might have been suppressed without doing injury to the writer.* I believe Lucrezia Gonzagua was an impudent woman, and a hypocrite in morality and religion.

Plutarch has given us a great part of the information which we have about Cleopatra. He had, he tells us, picked up from

* Bayle. Art. "Gonzague," [Lucrece.] "Se Livia non vi e obbediente, alzatele in capo i drappi e datelene tante che le carni si facciano livide e il sangue le scorra sino alle calcagne"

his grandfather all that could be learned of the history of her and Antony; and whilst Plutarch is censurable for inaccuracy in dates, and in the drier parts of history, this was just a subject on which this peculiarly interesting writer would be desirous of being correct, and well-informed.

The arts which Cleopatra had practised through life did not desert her in her final unsuccessful struggle. "She played boldly," says Merivale, "with the loaded die, and threw her last cast with a hand that had never faltered."* Her last effort to preserve her independence is well described by Dion. When she received Octavius, she was lying on a splendid couch, highly adorned, but in mourning-weeds; which, the historian tells us, became her wonderfully well. She was surrounded by the portraits of Julius, and had the letters of her illustrious lover in her bosom. She wept and kissed the letters, and threw herself down before the bust of Cæsar, and adored it. She then turned her eyes towards Octavius, and spoke to him in those tones which had melted the souls of Julius and Antony, but they were lost upon the heartless triumvir, who afterwards in cold blood murdered the boy whom Cleopatra was pleased to call the child of Julius.

The queen was vexed that Octavius said nothing about her kingdom, and spoke not a word of love; she threw herself at his feet, but drew from him nothing but harsh reproaches. This was not the language which she had been accustomed to hear, when she chose to exert her powers of seducing and pleasing. Octavius, who was anxious to prevent her from committing suicide, left her in what he believed to be safe custody.

But Cleopatra disappointed the insolent conqueror of the gratification which he had proposed to himself in dragging

* Merivale, "History of the Romans under the Empire," III, p. 336. Lond. 1851.

along the great enchantress in his triumphal procession. She had learnedly studied the nature of various poisons, in order to ascertain which produced the easiest death. "The true euthanasia," says Merivale, "she discovered, it is said, in the bite of the asp, which suffused the brain with languor and forgetfulness, and extinguished the faculties without any sense of suffering."

The bite of the asp of Egypt, according to the ancients, is followed by a desire of sleep, and a death without pain. An asp was brought into the queen's apartment, concealed in a basket of figs. The sight of her deliverer filled her with joy. Cleopatra died in a manner characteristic of her elegant tastes —and the Roman writers, hired to load her memory with execration, are unable to speak of her last moments without admiration. She adorned herself in her richest robes, and had the dead body of Antony placed beside her on a golden couch. She anointed herself with perfumes, while her maids placed the royal diadem of Egypt on her head. She then applied the asp to her veins, and slept into death.

The anointing of the body with perfumes was an ancient mode of preparing for death. Frenshemius, in a note on the passage in Florus, in which the historian notices the death of Cleopatra, remarks that the practice is not condemned by our Saviour. The reference of the commentator is to that pathetic and beautiful passage in the Gospel where, when the disciples murmured against the woman who poured the alabaster-box of precious ointment on his head, our Lord says, "Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my head, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this which this woman hath done be told for a memorial of her."

The scene after Cleopatra's death is described by Plutarch

with great picturesque beauty. When the officers of Augustus burst into the apartment, Cleopatra was dead, and her maid Iras had also expired at her feet. Charmion, the other maid, half-fainting, was placing the diadem aright on the queen's brow. "Was this well done?" said one of the officers. "Perfectly well," said Charmion, "and worthy the daughter of the King of Egypt," and Charmion then fell down dead.

There were no discolorations or spots, the usual indications of poison, to be found on the body of Cleopatra. The marks of two small punctures were, it is said, discovered on her arm —and Octavius employed the Egyptian serpent-charmers in the vain attempt to bring her to life again.

In the triumphal procession of the conqueror, the image of Cleopatra had two serpents twined about the arms. A golden statue of her was placed in the temple of Venus, round the walls of which several ornaments, which belonged to her, were suspended.

Mrs. Jameson, in describing the Cleopatra of Shakspeare, has described the real Cleopatra. "Her mental accomplishments, her unequalled graces, her woman's wit and woman's wiles, her irresistible allurements, her starts of irregular grandeur, her bursts of ungovernable temper, her vivacity of imagination, her petulant caprice, her fickleness and her falsehood, her tenderness and her truth, her childish susceptibility to flattery, her magnificent spirit, her royal pride, the gorgeous Eastern coloring of her character—all these contradictory elements has Shakspeare seized, mingled them in their extremes, and fused them into one brilliant impersonation of classical elegance, oriental voluptuousness, and gipsey sorcery."*

* "Characteristics of Women," vol. II, p. 123.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

We have, fortunately, a complete-enough portrait of Julius Cæsar, and we know a good deal, though not nearly so much as it would be desirable that we knew, of his habits and mode of life. He was a tall, slender, well-made man, with a long pale face; his brow was high but not broad; he had dark, sparkling eyes, and his mouth was rather large. "A slight puffing of the under lip," says Merivale, "which may be traced in some of his best busts, must undoubtedly have detracted from the admirable contour of his countenance." Yet he was still reckoned handsome, and in his moments of vanity he delighted to trace his descent through his ancestor, Iulus, to the love of the goddess of beauty for the mortal Anchises; while the name of his ancestress, Venus, was actually stamped on some of his coins.

His features, it is said, had something of the feminine grace which afterwards appeared in his nephew Octavius. Velleius Paterculus, who, however, is accused of flattering the emperors, tells us that Julius was the most eminent in beauty of all the citizens.* His coins and busts represent him

* Velleius Pater. "Hist. Rom." lib. II, p. 149. Lugd. Bat. 1653.

in his declining years, when his brow was furrowed with deep and painful thought, and when the alternate military severity and licentious indulgence of his early life had brought on premature decay. In youth he had in a great measure deserved the praise of Velleius. It was then that he affected that carelessness in dress, in reference to which Sylla was constantly urging the aristocracy—none of whom, with the exception of himself, was capable of measuring the grandeur of Cæsar's soul, or the vastness of the ambition by which it was devoured —to beware of "the ill-girt boy" (*puerum male præcinctum.*)*

Julius, however, when a youth, might, out of policy indulge in the loose dress of the debauchees of the time, while he was secretly meditating schemes of future greatness; or, possibly, while pursuing his pleasures, a negligence in matters of dress might be part of his system. Ovid, living very near his time, has expressly recommended carelessness of costume as a means of attraction, alleging that it was by a total neglect of hair-dressing, and such like fopperies, that Theseus had won the beautiful Ariadne; and that the greatest achievements in conquering hearts had been made by men who took no pains in adorning their persons.†

Michelet, in his history of Rome, has a fine picture of Cæsar. "I should like," he says, "to have seen this white and pale figure, faded before its time by the debauches of Rome, this delicate epileptic man, marching under the rains of Gaul, at the head of his legions, swimming over rivers, or riding on horseback between the litters in which his secretaries were carried." Seutonius, in a short chapter, (the fifty-seventh,) has furnished the idea so beautifully brought out here.

In manhood, and in his latter years, the once "ill-girt boy" paid attention to the neatness of his attire. He shaved carefully—there is no bust or coin of Cæsar with a beard—he was

* Seutonius, "Julius," c. 45.

† Ovid, "Ars. Amat." lib. I.

fond of gems and jewels, and loved a becoming magnificence in his houses.

Cæsar, though his health was generally good, was subject to starting in his sleep, to fainting, and to the falling sickness, having twice been seized with epilepsy in public. This latter malady is generally found in connection with feebleness of mind, or rather tends to induce mental weakness. Merivale, in noticing the case of Cæsar, mentions that Napoleon had attacks of epilepsy. Cæsar's intellect certainly is amongst the very highest that ever shone upon the world. The story that Mahomet, a man of the most vigorous mind, was subject to falling sickness, is unknown to genuine history, being a fable invented by his Christian opponents.

Cæsar's baldness, with the notion which the ancients attached to the falling of the hair from the head, subjected him to much ridicule. His soldiers, when they accompanied him in his Gallic triumph, with the license accorded to them on such occasions, did not fail to jeer him on this score.* He tried as far as he could to conceal this defect by bringing forward his hair; and, as I have elsewhere noticed, of all the honors conferred upon him by the Senate, that which most delighted his heart was the right of continually wearing the laurel wreath round his brows.

The historians who have most severely censured Cæsar's want of chastity, have allowed that he was temperate in eating and drinking.†

Cæsar's eloquence was of the very highest and most effective order. Cicero confessed that he did not know any orator to whom Cæsar ought to give place. He spoke, we are told, with a shrill voice, and used much gesture, but with great gracefulness. His language was just what might have been expected of him—the image of his mind. It was, according

* Suetonius, "Julius," c. 51.

† Ibid. c. 53.

to Cicero, "elegant, and splendid, and magnificent, and generous."*

The horses of great warriors become the subjects of history. Cæsar's favorite horse, it is gravely said, had feet almost like those of a man, the hoofs being divided into toes. He had been reared with great care, as the augurs had predicted that the owner of this strange animal would become the master of the world. Amongst the presages of Cæsar's death, we are told by Suetonius, that the horses which he had let loose to graze refused to eat their food, and shed tears abundantly; as Homer, in a very tender passage, represents the horses of Achilles weeping bitterly for the death of their charioteer. In some of the poems about the Cid, the Cid's horse, Babieca, comes to see his master die, and sheds tears as he follows his funeral.

Julius, says Velleius, had "a soul elevated beyond human nature and belief." Certainly, after allowing all the defects which the most severe criticism has been able to discover in his character, it still remains one of the most wonderfully great and symmetrical in history, presenting a union of strength and energy with gracefulness, elegance and refinement, such as have neither before nor since been met with in one man.

From the time that, when a mere boy, he—and he alone—offered resistance to the tyranny of Sylla and the aristocracy, till he rose to the head of the empire, it is difficult to detect one single error, or one false step in the whole of his splendid career. He gathered together the fragments of the popular party, scattered and down-trodden after the death of Marius, and led them on, without a single repulse, to the final overthrow of the aristocracy. Though no one on whom it was ever bestowed better merited the title of the "father of his country," which a grateful people bestowed upon him, it is

* Suetonius, "Julius," 55.

his higher praise that in him the feelings of patriotism were mingled with aspirations for the good of all mankind. He protected the peaceable citizen from the tyranny of the noble, and the inhabitant of the most remote province of Rome justly regarded Cæsar as his friend.

Strangers of all nations bewailed his death; his tomb was visited, with lamentations, night after night by the Jews, abhorred by the Romans, and oppressed by them all but by Cæsar. He may even be said to have, by anticipation, taken a generous revenge on his cowardly assassins. There was scarcely one of them whom he had not overwhelmed with favors. He had spared the life of Marcus Brutus, and taken him to his bosom after he had forfeited pardon by appearing against him in arms. Decimus Brutus he had made one of his heirs.

Michelet powerfully describes the sensation created in Rome by his death, accomplished with such treachery. "The conspirators thought that twenty poignard stabs had sufficiently killed Cæsar, yet never was Cæsar more alive, more powerful, more terrible than when his old and worn-out body, his withered corpse, lay pierced with wounds. He appeared then, purified, redeemed, that which he had ever been, despite his many stains—the man of humanity. An actor having pronounced in the theatre this verse of a tragedy—'Men' men' servasse ut essent qui me perderent,' every eye was filled with tears, and a storm of sobs and cries burst forth."

The greatest soldier and the most profound statesman of his age, was eminently, as Michelet calls him, "the man of humanity."

Merivale, who has done justice to his virtues, imagines that he can trace in the conduct and temper of Cæsar a change for the worse after he became acquainted with Cleopatra. This excellent historian expresses himself strongly on this point—misled, as I think, by a laudable desire to "point a moral."

"If from henceforth," he says, "we find his generosity tinged with ostentation, his courage with arrogance, his resolution with harshness; if he becomes restless and fretful, and impatient of contradiction; if his conduct is marked with contempt for mankind rather than with indulgence to their weaknesses, it is to this impure source that the melancholy change is to be traced." Now Cæsar did not become acquainted with Cleopatra till the power of the aristocracy, against which he had contended, was broken for ever on the field of Pharsalia.

After he had attained to the utmost height of greatness that even his splendid ambition could have sighed for, he appears to have been filled with a sad feeling of the unsatisfactory nature of all earthly glory, and to have experienced the sure disappointment which awaits the fulfilment of human wishes—the curse which falls on the man who has all his desires gratified. He became melancholy, careless of his now declining years, and regardless of his personal safety. He expressed his desire for death rather than life, preferring to fall by treachery to being troubled to guard against it.

His life, he said with truth, was of more value to his country than to himself, and he obstinately refused to take any precautions whatever against the designs of his enemies and false friends. When warned particularly against Brutus, he said, "Brutus will wait for the end of this weak body." His murder, calamitous to the empire, could scarcely be called unfortunate to himself. His prayer had been to be saved from a slow decay, and that his death might be sudden, quick and unforeseen.* Heaven, which had granted him success in every action of his life, might be said to have gratified him in the manner in which he terminated it.

Merivale remarks that on the coins which Brutus stamped

* Suetonius, "Julius," c. 87.

with his effigy on one side, and a cap of liberty between two daggers on the other, "the tyrannicide's face is thin, and bears out the famous saying of Cæsar regarding both him and Cassius."

Michelet says that Brutus had "a narrow forehead." I presume the expression is used as a figure of speech for a slender understanding, which that weak tool of the aristocracy certainly had.

AUGUSTUS.

The great personal beauty of Augustus is matter of established history. Suetonius has used the strongest terms in describing the comeliness which distinguished him at every period of his life. In his entertainments, at which he and his friends appeared in the characters of the gods and goddesses, the part of Octavius was to represent the graceful Apollo. From an affectation of modesty, Octavius melted down all the silver statues that were erected in his honor, and dedicated the value of them in the form of golden tripods to the Palatine Apollo. He could act the humble patriot like Julius, and when the people were violently forcing the dictatorship on him, he fell on his knees, and uncovering his shoulders and breast, refused the honor.

Augustus was of rather short stature, but this was so far concealed by his extremely symmetrical figure, and was not, as Suetonius tells us, well perceived except when a tall man stood beside him. Besides this, he wore high shoes in order that he might appear taller than he was—a fashion which we learn was universal amongst the ancient princes of Persia, where great stature was considered an attribute of royalty. The features of Augustus were full of majesty, with something

of a feminine delicacy in them, particularly in the mouth and chin, and their expression was that of great calmness and tranquillity. His complexion was between brown and fair. His yellowish hair was slightly curled, and he was careless of dressing it, as he was of his toilet altogether. His beard he sometimes had clipped and sometimes shaved, and these operations were performed while he was engaged in reading or writing.*

Suetonius has noticed the lustre of the emperor's large eyes: Pliny tells us that they were blue. Aurelius Victor, following Suetonius, has referred still more distinctly to the emperor's belief in their dazzling brightness. "In all his person," says the historian, "he was beautiful, but particularly so in his eyes. He darted their light like that of the brightest stars, and was willing that others looking at him should be struck by his glance as by the rays of the sun. A soldier having turned away from him, on being asked by the emperor why he did so, replied, 'Because I cannot suffer the lightning of your eyes.'" Such compliments have been but rarely paid to men; but this was a prudent soldier, and I have no doubt that he got rapid promotion.

Augustus's eyebrows were joined, a feature delightful to the ancients and repulsive to the moderns. The passion of the ancients was for eyebrows between which the separation was barely perceptible. "Do not," says Anacreon, in his directions to the painter how to paint his mistress, "do not separate the eyebrows nor fairly join them, but let her picture have, as she has, the eyebrows indiscernibly running into each other."†

The emperor's ears were of the middle size; his nose was elevated in the upper part, and drawn more slenderly below. With all the points of beauty which were met in him, the pictorial Suetonius, like a faithful artist, tells us that Augustus's

* Suetonius, "Octavius," c. 79. † Anacreon. Od. XXVIII.

teeth were few, small, and uneven; that in his latter years he partially lost the sight of his left eye; that he had a weakness in his left side, and often halted on the left leg, and sometimes had not the use of the forefinger of his right hand. The health of Augustus was weak; he was afflicted with gravel; he could neither endure great heat nor great cold, and never went out of doors even under the winter sun without a broad covering on his head. There were some roughnesses on his skin arising from prickling, which by the assiduous use of brushing were gathered together in the form of ringworm. We need not credit as any thing better than a mere story, as indeed Suetonius calls it, that the emperor had spots on his breast and belly disposed in the order and number of the stars in the constellation of the Bear.

Augustus excelled all who preceded him in the frequency, variety, and magnificence of the public spectacles with which he entertained the people. In his youth he loved to have about him the most splendid Corinthian furniture, but in his mature years he studied plainness in every thing. His beds and tables scarcely equalled the elegance of those in private houses. He wore the clothes that were spun for him by his wife, his daughter, and his nieces. His toga was neither tight nor loose; his robe was not narrow, neither was it broad, like those of the nobles.*

Augustus caused his too famous daughter Julia, and his nieces Julia and Agrippina, to be taught spinning—no doubt from a sincere desire to keep them in the paths of virtue. In Rome, from the days of the chaste Lucretia, the practice of spinning was considered an evidence of virtue; and the eulogium inscribed on a matron's tomb was, that she kept the house and spun wool. But Augustus, fortunate in every thing else, was unhappy in his family. The daughters of

* Suetonius, "Octavius," c. 73.

Charlemagne had been brought up in the same way, and yet their good names have not escaped the breath of scandal.

An industrious life, such as Augustus assigned to the women of his household, is generally an innocent one; and love in particular has been called by a wise ancient "the affection of an indolent soul." Nevertheless, the two Julias and Agrippina became the most abandoned women in Rome; the conduct of the Julias having in after-times been referred to as confirming the belief that women of that name are unchaste. The profligacy of the learned and philosophical Julia, the wife of Septimus Severus, gave additional authority to this silly notion. Upon this point, Brantome tells us that the virtuous Severus, when reproached with the frailty of his queen, used to say that "her name is Julia, and therefore she must be excused, as all women of that name, from the remotest antiquity have been subject to great weakness."*

Brantome goes farther, and declares that there are certain names amongst Christian women, which subject those who bear them to the fate of becoming licentious; but that from the reverence which he owes to our holy religion, he will not mention what these names are.

Augustus ate little, and only of the plainest food; using bread of a coarse quality, with fish, cheese, and green figs. He was moderate in the use of wine, preferring that of Rhætia. To quench his thirst he made use of bread steeped in cold water, or a piece of cucumber, or young lettuce-sprouts, or a fresh and acid apple with a winy juice.

During supper, Augustus loved to have plays acted, or to see other entertainments of an amusing character. He is charged with being too much addicted to playing at dice. On the ground of this passion for gambling, Cardan, in his

Brantome, "Dames Galantes." Œuvres, tom. III, p. 35. Bayle, who has noticed this remark of Brantome, says that he has not found it in any ancient historian —DICTION. HIST. ET CRIT Art. JULIE,

Eulogium of Nero, contends that Nero was a much better man than Augustus, as he did not gamble, but played on the harp.*

After his mid-day meal, the emperor was accustomed to retire to rest with his dress and shoes on, covering his eyes with his hand. Before retiring for the night, he finished his daily writing. His sleep never exceeded seven hours; and in the course of that rest, he would awake three or four times, and call his attendants to read to him, or tell him stories.†

Augustus, who constitutionally was a coward on the field of battle, was from superstition terribly frightened at thunder and lightning, and constantly wore about his person the skin of a sea-calf, as a protection against them; while at the least token of an approaching storm, he used to shut himself up in a concealed place. He attended carefully to his own dreams, and those of others, and acted upon the interpretation of them by the soothsayers. During spring, it has been remarked, his dreams were frequent, and very terrible; at other times they were rarer, and less wild. He studied seriously all auspices and omens; if a dew fell as he set out on a journey, he felt assured that it boded success; if he put on his left shoe instead of his right of a morning, he looked for evil fortune for that day.‡

The habits of Augustus, as a man of business and of literature, as they are recorded by Suetonius, are exceedingly interesting. In the earlier part of his reign, we are told he used as his seal a sphynx (highly characteristic certainly of his ambiguous character;) afterwards he adopted a figure of Alexander the Great, and lastly his own portrait. In dating his

* Hier. Cardani. "Neronis Encomium," p. 42. Amst. 1640.

† Suetonius, "Octavius," c. 74, 76, 77, 78.

‡ Suetonius, "Octavius," c, 16. 90, 91, 92.

letters, he marked upon them not only the day or night, but the hour and the minute at which they were dispatched.*

A remarkable circumstance is related in reference to the propriety and precision of his discourse. When he had to speak even in private on important matters, he wrote down and read what he had to say; and he practised this kind of discourse even with his beloved Livia. He studied elocution under a master; his voice was sweet, but occasionally, from sore throat, he was obliged to make his public harangues through a crier.†

I do not know whether or not he read his lectures to Julia from a paper, but they appear to have all the inefficiency popularly charged upon written sermons. He forbade her the use of wine and of fine clothes, and kept a strict watch over all of the other sex who had access to see her. But all was in vain; and after deliberating whether he should not use the Roman father's right of putting his child to death, he sent her into perpetual banishment. His daughter and his nieces he used to call, by a strong figure of speech, his three misfortunes his three cancers.‡

Augustus's eloquence was elegant and chaste. Tacitus and Aulus Gellius have joined with Suetonius in praising its excellence. He avoided the offensiveness (*fœtores*, as he called it) of recondite words, says Suetonius. It is this passage in Suetonius, I have no doubt, that has led Rabelais to attribute to Octavius the saying of the greater Julius, who, in the first book of his lost work, "De Analogia"—"Avoid as a rock all unheard and unusual words."§ The passage from Cæsar is

* Suetonius, "Octavius," c. 50.

† Suetonius, "Octavius." c. 84.

‡ Ibid. c. 65.

§ "Habe semper in memoria atque in pectore ut tamquam scopulum, sic fugias inauditum atque insolens verbum."—Caesar, quoted by Aulus Gellius, lib. i, c. 10.

quoted from Aulus Gellius, to whom Rabelais expressly refers; but this very learned man had trusted to his memory, without looking at his authority.*

The style of Augustus, as described by Suetonius, would serve as a criticism on Cobbett. He used to ridicule the niceties of Mæcenas, and the obsolete and out-of-the-way language of Tiberius; and accused Antony of writing in such a way as to excite wonder rather than to be understood, and of using an eastern profusion of language. It appears, also, that he felt called on to correct the slovenly literature and elocution, as well as the loose morals, of his niece Agrippina.†

Suetonius has given us a minute account of the peculiarities used by Augustus in his hand-writing, and of the singularities which he affected in orthography.

Augustus, who had often prayed for a sudden and easy death, had his prayer granted. When he felt his end approaching, he called for his mirror, and caused himself to be adorned and have his hair dressed. Then asking his friends if the farce of life had been well played, he bade them, quoting a Greek verse, give him the due applause. Only once in the course of his short illness, his mind exhibited any wandering, when he started in terror and complained that forty young men were carrying him off. The impression, says Suetonius, was prophetic; his body was removed by forty of the Prætorian soldiers. He expired kissing Livia, with the words on his lips, "Live mindful of our marriage, and farewell."‡

* "Ce que dict le philosophe et Aule Gelle qu'il nous conuient parler selon le languaige usité. Et comme disoit Octauian Auguste, qu il faut euiter les motz espaues, en pareille diligence que les patrons de nauire ouitent les rochiers de mer."—Rabelais, "Pantagruel," lib. ii, c. 6.

† Suetonius, "Octavius," c. 86.

‡ Ibid. c. 99.

TIBERIUS.

Tiberius, the most cold-blooded and hateful of the Roman emperors, was a man of tall stature, with broad shoulders and chest, and well proportioned limbs. He was a left-handed man; and with a finger, we are told, he could pierce through a fresh apple, and could inflict a wound on the head of a boy with a filip. This is the picture of Tiberius drawn by Suetonius, and referring to the best days of his manhood. In old age, as he is described by Tacitus, he grew thin. His complexion, Suetonius tells us, was fair, and his face handsome, though disfigured by blotches. His eyes were very large, but dull and heavy during the day; while, like the treacherous beasts of prey, which in his character he so much resembled, he could see in the dark.

Causaubon, quoting Photius, tells us that such eyes had Asclepiadorus, the philosopher. And Scaliger says that his father could at times see in the dark, and that he himself had this faculty from boyhood, till his twenty-third year. Tiberius's hair was gathered at the back of his head, as was the case also with Caligula, covering his neck, a feature which appeared, says Suetonius, to belong to his family. He was bald in front, and in his latter years the sight of the hated deformity, with his reduced figure and the blotches on his face, afflicted him greatly.

The coins and medals of Tiberius represent him with a very large neck—that is, a neck at once long and thick. He carried his neck stiff, says Suetonius, with his face contracted. It was characteristic of the calm wickedness of his character that he spoke but little, and that little slowly. It is added that he made use of certain effeminate gestures with his fingers.

The notices of the private habits of Tiberius are not interesting, but simply disgusting.

GERMANICUS.

SUETONIUS unites with Tacitus and Dion in praising the great beauty of the amiable Germanicus, the father of Caligula; but Suetonius, whose delight it was to be critical even in the praise of comeliness, tells us that the slenderness of the legs of Germanicus detracted from the perfection of his person.* He appears to have propagated slender legs amongst his descendants, both Caligula and Nero having been distinguished for this peculiarity.† So was Domitian afterwards; though it must be observed that the line of the Cæsars by family extraction was broken by the accession of Galba to the empire.

The descent of personal features through successive generations is readily noticed in royal families. The thick upper lip of the royal house of Austria, thence called "the Austrian lip," which has appeared in all the sovereigns, is an inheritance not from the Emperor Maximilian, as is sometimes said, but from Mary of Burgundy, who was married to him in the year 1478. The features of Maximilian were extremely regular; but in Mary the development of the upper lip was enormous. When, in the course of time, it became known that a

* Suetonius, "Caligula," c. 3.

† Ibid. c. 50. "Nero," c. 50.

thick upper lip was an attribute of royalty, it came to be regarded as a beauty in Austria, as the aquiline nose, the prominent characteristic of the descendants of Cyrus, was in ancient Persia. An Austrian writer is quoted by Amelot de la Houssaye, speaking to this effect: "The princes of the house of Austria have received great graces from God and nature; from nature, in having all long chins and thick lips, which show their piety, constancy, and integrity; from God, that in giving with their hands a glass of water to a person afflicted with goitre they cure him, and when they kiss a stuttering person, they loosen his tongue."*

Germanicus, we are told by Suetonius, cured himself of the slenderness of legs, which has been as much condemned in modern as it was in ancient times, by constantly practising riding on horseback after his meals. Mandeville, the author of the Fable of the Bees, in his "Treatise on the Hypochondriack Diseases," has noticed the slender legs of Germanicus, and corrects a medical writer, Fuller, who in his "Medicina Gymnastica" had taken it upon him to interpret the *crurum gracilitas* of Germanicus as meaning that he laboured under atrophy. "I would have everybody," says Mandeville, "make the most of his argument; but I hate a man should wilfully pervert the sense of a good author merely to serve his turn. The matter of fact is this; Suetonius describing the person of Germanicus from head to foot, tells us that in his youth he had spindle legs, but that by frequent riding this defect had been much remedied. From this, what mortal could suppose that he had an atrophy?"†

The criticism of Mandeville as against Fuller is perfectly sound, but it is remarkable that this ingenious writer does not

* Amelot de la Houssaye, "Memoires Hist. Polit. Crit. et Littéraires," tom. I, p.146. Amst. 1731.

† Mandeville, "Treatise on the Hypochondriack and Hysteric Diseases," p. 310. London, 1721.

notice the singularity in the cure; the riding being "after meals" (*post cibum*,) which, if we are to believe what doctors say, is like all exercise whatever after meals—whether of body or of mind—most unhealthy.

Germanicus died under suspicion of being poisoned by Tiberius. Suetonius records some curious appearances about the dead body. There were spots all over it, and froth at his mouth; and when his remains were burned, the heart was found still entire. It was the popular belief that the heart of a person who had died of poison could not be consumed by fire.

If the personal appearance of Germanicus improved with his years, so it appears did that of his sister Livia (the wife of Drusus,) of whom Tacitus tells us that, in early life, she was of indifferent comeliness, but afterwards excelled in beauty.*

I have not discovered where Montaigne learned that Germanicus was unable to endure either the sight or the crowing of a cock.†

* Tacitus, "Annales," lib. IV, c. 3.

† Montaigne, "Essais," lib. I, c. 19.

CALIGULA.

Caligula, the son of the beautiful Germanicus, was by far the ugliest of the Cæsars. He was tall and large in person, with slender neck and legs, of a pale complexion, with hollow eyes, and a broad and stern forehead; and though otherwise a rough, hairy man, the locks on his head were scanty, and the crown was entirely bare.*

This is the substance of the picture by Suetonius. It is, in every respect, borne out by the description of Caligula given by Seneca, who must have been well acquainted with the emperor's person. He describes his paleness as of a horrible kind, and indicative of madness—his crooked eyes lurking under a wrinkled forehead (*sub fronte anili*;) and the expression is strange when we recollect that at his death the emperor was only twenty-nine. Though his head was destitute, his neck was thick set with hair; his legs were slender, and his feet very large.†

This ill-made man had a particular delight in jeering at the deformities of others, and in the most minute criticisms on their personal appearance.‡ He would cause any good-looking

* Suetonius, "Caligula," c. 50.

† Seneca, "De Constantia," c. xviii.

‡ Seneca, ut supra.

person whom he met with to be disfigured, by ordering his hair to be cut in a ludicrous fashion. His own horrid and dismal countenance he studied to make more frightful than it naturally was, by practising the making of terrible faces before a mirror.

The health of Caligula from his boyhood was bad. He was frequently seized with fits. He could not sleep above three hours at a time, and this short slumber was agitated by horrid spectres. He would then awake, and sit up in bed, or walk about the corridors calling for the daylight.*

Caligula sometimes appeared in the costume of a man, and sometimes of a woman, and frequently as one of the gods or goddesses. Sometimes he was Alexander the Great with his breastplate, sometimes Jupiter with his golden beard and thunderbolt, and sometimes Mercury with his caduceus; and sometimes the ugliest man of the age appeared in the character of the goddess of beauty.†

Caligula was addicted to literary pursuits. His criticisms on Homer, Virgil, Livy, and Seneca, are preserved by Suetonius. He paid much attention to the study of eloquence. Besides this, he was a singer and a dancer, a fencer and a chariot-driver.‡

* Suetonius, ut supra.

† Suetonius, "Caligula," c. 52.

‡ Ibid c 53, 54.

LOLLIA PAULINA.

The beauty of Lollia Paulina, the second wife of Caligula, whom he divorced for the sake of his beloved Cæsonia, is less noticed in history than her extravagant luxury. The probability is, that she was not deficient in the graces of the person, though the reason given by the historian as that which led Caligula to take her from her husband, "because he had heard that her grandmother had been very beautiful,"* is far from being conclusive on this point. Caligula should have recollected that neither beauty nor virtue always runs in the blood, and that he himself, a monster of wickedness, and the ugliest young man of his age, was the son of the comely and virtuous Germanicus.

Pliny, who had seen Lollia, gives a description of her gorgeous attire. Not merely on grand public occasions, but on ordinary days, she carried on her person the spoils of whole provinces, being covered with emeralds and pearls in alternate rows in her hair, and hanging in her ears and about her neck, her wrists, and her fingers, to the value of forty sesterces.†

It is to Lollia Paulina that Rabelais refers inaccurately under the name of Pompeie Pauline, "who attracted the admi-

* Suetonius, "Caligula," c. 25.

† Plinius, "Hist. Nat." lib IV, c. 58

ration of the whole city of Rome, and who was called the ditch and magazine of the robber conquerors of the world.*

Pliny's description of Lollia carrying on her person the spoils of whole provinces, has a parallel in Tertullian's account of the ornaments of some Christian women of his time. "From the smallest parts of the body a large patrimony is exposed. Ten sesterces are held by one thread—one tender neck carries about it forests and islands. The delicate lobes of the ears cost a whole book of expenses, and the left hand carries, in sport, a bag of money on each finger. Such is the power of ambition, that it makes one little person, and that of a woman, able to carry all these treasures."†

Ovid, who distinctly warns the fair against attempting to charm by rich dresses, complains of an ostentatious young woman that her person is the least part of herself; and Thompson has taught many a one to repeat after him that beauty

> "Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
> But is when unadorned adorned the most."

It is rather remarkable that St. Chrysostom, in various passages of his works, in which he inveighs against the adornings and rich dresses of the women of his time, is not contented with denouncing the sin and the extravagant expenditure, but insists upon it that rich dresses and gold and pearls detract from the personal appearance of the wearer. Thus, in one passage in his Treatise on Virginity, he states that if a woman is beautiful, she loses the charm of nature by these ornaments, as their great abundance does not permit any part of her to be seen naked; and if she is ugly, it makes the matter worse, as what is in itself uncomely becomes still more so by contrast with the splendor of what is around it. "Pearls," he

* Rabelais, "Pantagruel," lib. IV, c. 42.

† Tertullian, "De Cultu Fæminarum," lib. II, c 8.

says, "make the blackness of the body blacker, and varied colors make the ill-favored face still more ill-favored."*

It is, however, to be suspected that there are more people who admire richly-dressed women than are willing to own it. In fact, the love of dress would not be so prevailing a passion in women as it is, if it was not their understanding that it had some avowed and a great many concealed admirers in the other sex. Even writers of fiction have admitted its attraction. In the Greek romance of "Daphnis and Chloe," by Longus, the writer tells us how much external ornaments help to set off beauty, and assures us that Chloe, when she was dressed for her marriage with her hair twisted up into a net, was so much improved that Daphnis, who had courted her in her shepherdess's weeds, was hardly able to recognise her.

Brantome also, it is clear from most of his criticisms, thought that rich dresses, as well as high titles, added unspeakably to natural beauty; beauty being a gift which he appears to have believed to be entirely monopolised by queens, duchesses, and countesses, and which he scarcely recognises in persons of low degree.

In this way he has celebrated the beauty of Queen Elizabeth of England, of which no other person, except those intending to benefit themselves by flattering her, has spoken favorably. But Elizabeth dressed gorgeously, and it is but fair to add that she had fine hands, of which Brantome was a fanatical admirer. He can, however, scarcely describe beauty of face or form without mixing up his portrait with passionate details about fine robes. It is not easy to discover whether he more admired the beautiful legs of which Catharine de Medici was so vain, or the charming stockings in which she invested them. In his accounts of some other

* St. Chrysostom, Opera, lib. I, p. 320. Paris, 1718. And again, lib. VIII, p. 412.

princesses, the description of their clothes occupies more space than the picture of their natural beauty.

Of the person of Lollia Paulina we have only one particular. According to Dion, there was something peculiar about her teeth; perhaps she had the gift of a complete and even set. When Agrippina caused her to be murdered, she made the assassin bring the head of Lollia to her, and she opened the mouth in order to ascertain from the teeth if it was really the head of her victim.

CÆSONIA

The third and favorite wife of Caligula was the remarkable woman Cæsonia. Pliny notices that Cæsonia was an eight months' child. The circumstance is not remarkable, were it not for the venerable superstition, which has stood its ground firmly from the days of Hippocrates to the present hour, in the face of abundant contradiction from facts, that though a seven months' child often lives, an eight months' child always dies within eight days from the time of its birth.

Though, as Suetonius tells us, neither young nor beautiful, and having had three children to her former husband, and with no recommendation that the world could see but her licentious character, Cæsonia was constantly and ardently loved by this monster, who scarcely loved any thing else. For her sake he divorced Lollia Paulina. Caligula used to dress Cæsonia in a military cloak and helmet, and show her to the army as she rode by his side. It is said that he also—though he alone was sensible of her beauty—was led by vanity to make the same display of the charms of his wife to his private friends as in former days cost the indiscreet King of Lydia the loss of his crown and his life.

The daughter whom Cæsonia bore to Caligula, and whom he named Julia Drusilla, appears also to have been loved by her father. After carrying her through all the temples of the divinities, he placed her in the bosom of Minerva, recommending her to the care and instruction of the goddess of wisdom. As soon as little Julia began to scratch and tear the faces of the children with whom she sported, the delighted emperor expressed his satisfaction with this unequivocal evidence of her being papa's own daughter.

The immense affection which Caligula bore to Cæsonia, as well as the insanity which appears in his conduct, were in his time attributed to a philtre given to him by the queen to make him love her,* as the madness and suicide of the poet Lucretius have been charged on a potion administered to him by his wife for the same laudable purpose.

According to Juvenal, the charm administered to Caligula was the *hippomanes*, as it was called, taken from the forehead of a foal at its birth,† and which Virgil represents Dido as having recourse to in order to secure the affections of Æneas. Concerning the notions of the ancients about this drug, or the various articles to which the name *hippomanes* was applied, the inquisitive reader will get every satisfaction in the special dissertation by Bayle on the subject.‡ The most remarkable thing in that curious essay is a quotation made from a romance of Bayle's own day, the "Avantures de Henriette Sylvie de Moliere," in which certain ladies of Paris are represented as having recourse to the use of *hippomanes*, in order to secure a return of affection from some gentlemen with whom they are in love.

* Suetonius, "Caligula," c. 50.

† Juvenal, "Sat." lib. vi, 614. Bayle seems to give credit to this story. Dict. "Hist. et Critique," Art. Caligula."

‡ Bayle, "Dissertation sur l'Hippomanes," Dict. lib. iv, 593. Basle, 1738.

Caligula was playful in his atrocities; and when he kissed the necks of his favorites, he would say, "What a beautiful neck! but as soon as I give the order, it will be cut asunder," and he said he would inquire by the torture of the rack why he loved Cæsonia so passionately.*

* Suetonius, "Caligula," c. 33.

BOADICEA.

I WISH to avoid all affectation of being curious in a matter of so little consequence as the correct and best spelling of this woman's name, which may be met with in a great variety of forms. Boadicea, Bouduca, Bonduca, Boundouica, and so on; all of them perhaps far off from her ancient British designation, and I have therefore adopted a very common spelling. We have a striking and faithful portrait—for such it may without much difficulty be admitted to be—of the warlike Queen of the Iceni in the reign of Nero—a queen who, at the head of her countrymen, captured from the Romans two of their towns lying on the banks of the Thames, and in the neighborhood of London. For this portrait we are indebted to the picturesque Dion Cassius, living sufficiently near her time to have collected his specific description of her person and address from the Romans, whose possession of Britain had been threatened and endangered by her valor and patriotism.

When Boadicea appeared at the head of her army, she is described as of gigantic stature, of a beautiful figure, a terrible aspect, and a sharp voice; with yellow hair, which fell in rich profusion down to her thighs. She wore round her neck a large golden collar or chain, and about her body a robe

of variegated colors, twisted into folds, and over this a thick heavy mantle or cloak. As she addressed her countrymen, she brandished in her hand a spear, in order to excite them to valor.*

The Roman historians, who have described the terrible vengeance which the heroic widow of Prasutagus took on the inhabitants of the Roman cities which fell into her hands, have not disguised her terrible wrongs, and the wrongs of her husband and her race. Prasutagus had made the emperor the heir of his great wealth—great it is called by Tacitus, it is to be presumed with reference to what might be expected of a British prince in that age—in the hope of averting the Roman hostility, and securing the quiet possession of his own dominions. His kingdom was ravaged, his palace pillaged, as if he had been a conquered foe; his relatives were made slaves, his wife, the heroic Boadicea, was scourged, and her daughters were ravished.†

The fate of Prasutagus is not noticed by historians. After the events which I have mentioned, Boadicea appears as the Queen of the Iceni and the leader of the army, and her abilities in both capacities are spoken of with respect.

Both Tacitus and Dion give—the former briefly and the latter at some length—a speech which they represent Boadicea to have delivered to her countrymen. The eloquent address which Dion puts into her mouth is no doubt, in the main, the composition of his own closet, yet he may have had information or recent tradition of the substance of what she said. It abounds in eloquent passages, and warlike as it is, it is yet pervaded by a womanly spirit. Dion makes her draw a contrast between the simple lives of her countrymen and the vices of Rome, and it is drawn with much beauty. The sighing

* Dion, "Hist." lib. LXII, p. 701.

† Tacitus, "Annales," lib. XIV, c. 31.

after a simple and savage life is characteristic of ages of over-refinement and vicious cultivation.

In early and rude ages when poets, writing in refined times, would have us to believe that men employed themselves in lying on the banks of rivers and under the shades of trees, playing on pipes, and sighing out their souls in love,—while the women, on their part, were similarly disengaged and similarly subjected to all the softer and sweeter influences,—the real occupation of the men, in which they were often heartily joined by the women, if any reliance is to be placed in the songs of contemporary bards, was fighting battles, cutting throats, giving and taking of hard blows and knocks, and kicks and cuffs, besides abusing each other vehemently with their tongues, and telling and swearing to all manner of horrible lies, and taking every possible advantage of each other. Such is the true picture of early and primitive times, and such are the subjects of the first records of all nations, of the songs of all really ancient poets. It is amidst the corruption and decline of over-civilized states, in the most sophisticated and artificial and unpoetical condition of society, in the atmosphere of courts and palaces, that men begin to dream of the existence of a happy pastoral life beyond the boundaries of wicked cities; and that poets over their claret set about describing as a reality what never had and never can have an existence, except in poets' brains.

These visions will steal gently over the soul of even the blood-stained murderer. In the midst of his terrible proscriptions, Sylla sighed to leave Rome, and longed for the simple enjoyment of his rural cot, his country diversions, and a loved and loving mistress; but he had so much massacreing work on his hands, that he could never get to this fancied Elysium, where his active mind would have been completely miserable in three days' time.

It was either in the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus, or in

the marble palaces of Syracuse, while wallowing in wealth and luxury, and robed in purple and fine linen, that Theocritus, who is allowed to be the simplest and the most natural of all rural poets, the father and unapproached model of all succeeding writers of pastorals, wrote those idyls which are regarded as the truest, most faithful, and most exact pictures of that country life which the aristocratic and courtly poet knew nothing about.

Virgil was once, it is true, a bit of a farmer, and I have no doubt a very bad and unimproving one, but it was after he had forgotten what the country was like, and had become the courtier and the flatterer of Octavius, and the man of wealth, that he set about making the shepherds Melibœus and Tityrus talk such stuff as mortal shepherds never talked on this earth. The inventors of the pastoral romance, Heliodorus, Longus, and Xenophon of Ephesus, were men living under the corruption of literature, taste and morals, which characterised the Byzantine empire. Tasso and Guarini were courtiers; they lived in no primitive or pastoral ages, and were entirely unacquainted with sheep and cattle.

Our own poet Pope, the companion of debauched lords in powdered wigs, embroidered coats and breeches with golden buckles, and the sickly fondling of ladies made up of elongated stays, hooped petticoats, steel and "ribs of whale," distorted spines and unnatural waists—odors and perfumes, neither of the violet nor the hawthorn, but of the civet cat and the apothecary's phials, and faces superficially composed of a mixture of glaring carmine, contrasted with spotless ceruse and provoking black plaster—this poet of the city, the poet of art, and the most artful of poets, was truly a pretty gentleman to sit down after a night of as much dissipation with his profligate and prosaic companions as his feeble body could endure, to tell us honestly and faithfully, and to the best of his knowledge what it was exactly that the love-sick Strephon sung in

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praise of Delia ; and what, on the other hand, Daphnis, equally deep in tenderness, was able to warble in commendation of the sprightly Sylvia ; and how Damon, the pastoral umpire, had his judgment so completely confounded by having listened to both sides, that in consideration of what both had done for love and poesy, he was obliged to award the poetical premium—which fortunately was a double one—to both of them !

To return to Dion, the governor of a Roman province in the age of Rome's most unmanly and most vicious emperors —a man who had been conversant with such extremely unpastoral persons as Caracalla and Heliogabalus—would feel much relief to his soul in drawing the fanciful picture of the virtuous barbarians of Britain—a remote region, cut off from the civilized world—" penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos," with which the utmost acquaintance that Dion is likely to have possessed would be derived through his palate, which would no doubt often be gratified by the delicate flavor of those sincerely esteemed oysters, for the sake of which the Roman nobility sent ships and sailors to England's coasts, and for which many of Rome's epicures thought the conquest and dominion of the island alone valuable.

Historians have celebrated Boadicea's knowledge of the art of war ; and in this speech the mode of warfare best adapted for her soldiers, and the means of safety in the event of being compelled to a temporary retreat, are ably laid down. The superiority of the Britons in a skirmishing warfare, in which the enemy might be cut off in detail, is insisted on. " In all these things," she says, " they are much inferior to us, and particularly because they cannot bear hunger, thirst, cold and heat, as we can. They stand so much in need of shade, coverings, kneaded corn, wine and oil, that if any of these things fail them they die. To us, any herb or root is bread, any juice is oil, all water is wine, any bush is a house. To us, all

places are familiar and, as it were, friendly to us in carrying on the war; to them they are unknown and hostile; we can swim the rivers naked, while they can only with difficulty cross them in their boats."

She is made by the historian to understand the true interests of the inhabitants of Britain, owing to its sea-girt situation, to be one family united against all foreign invasion—a discovery which the inhabitants did not till after many long centuries of bitter experience of the fruits of internal warfare discover for themselves. "Citizens, friends, and relatives, (συγγενεις,)" she says, "for I regard you all who inhabit this island in common as my relatives." This is a powerful and pathetic stroke of true eloquence.

In the midst of her address, Boadicea took an omen on the event of the war after the fashion of her country. She drew from her bosom a hare, and let it loose; and it would appear that the course which it took in running was hailed by the Britons as a presage of victory. Boadicea is then represented as lifting her hands to heaven, and thanking the goddess whom she worshipped for the favorable omen, and imploring her, as a woman, to grant to her—a woman called to rule over men—victory, safety, and liberty. And here the historian makes the warlike queen pour out a strain of invective on the effeminate life of Nero, whose dominion she hopes will be confined to the people of Rome, who are worthy to serve this woman (as she terms him,) since they have borne with his tyranny so long. "But thou, O divine lady!" she concludes, "I earnestly pray thee, be ever alone present with us."

The Roman writers have, in general, not shown much justice—not to say generosity—in estimating the character of those of their enemies whose prowess and obstinate patriotism offered a dangerous resistance to the conquering career of the imperial arms. The terms "cruel" and "perfidious" have been liberally heaped on Hannibal, their most formidable foe;

and according to the measure of their opposition to the Roman power, have been the invectives poured out on other lesser enemies, whose spirit of independence rose in rebellion against the Roman lust for universal dominion.

The Roman writers, in this respect, no doubt faithfully echoed the voice of the contemporary Roman people; and something of this unfair spirit has at all times pervaded the minds of warlike nations in the heat of great struggles. When the hosts of Hyder, with his French allies, threatened the existence of the British dominions in the East, there was no story which ingenuity or imagination could invent of the horrible crimes attributed to the Mussulman prince, which was not greedily received and believed at home by all who had one spark of patriotism left in their bosoms.

And in the days when the whole of Europe appeared about to fall into the hands of Napoleon, the spirit of that country which effectually resisted him, and finally overthrew him, led her sons to regard the conqueror of kings as not merely a villain of the blackest dye—which was a judgment not very unnatural—but to caricature him in songs, and prints, and plays, as a fool and a coward, and to believe any incredible crime which any patriotic British subject was good enough to invent against him, for the purpose of keeping alive at home the noble flame of national independence.

In the whole descriptions of the Roman historians, however, there is discernible something of a generous admiration of the courage of Boadicea; and they have not concealed the recognition that if her vengeance was terrible, her injuries were equally dreadful. Her appearance in the field evidently threw the Romans into great alarm, as is testified by the signs and wonders by which it was said to be announced by Heaven. The blue waters which roll between Britain and Gaul displayed the color of blood, preternatural sounds of barbarian shouts and laughter were heard where no barbarians were

present, the image of the goddess of victory fell down on its face as if it yielded to the enemy, and the appearance of a submerged city was seen in the Thames.*

The first outburst of undisciplined valor is generally attended with decided success. Boadicea marched hastily on the two Roman cities, and captured them without difficulty, putting the inhabitants to the sword; the number of the slain being, according to Dion, eighty—according to Tacitus, seventy—thousand.

It may be believed that, under the command of a justly-infuriated woman, thirsting for vengeance, the usages of ancient warfare were carried out in all their stern ferocity; but we may attribute to Roman invention the narrative of the revolting cruelties which Boadicea is said to have exercised on her own sex, as, unfortunately, the Romans have here the advantage of telling both sides of the story, as they generally have against all their enemies. The British reader will be justified in disbelieving Dion when he tells us that Boadicea seized upon Roman women of rank and hung them up naked, and having cut off their breasts, fastened them to their mouths "as if they might seem to eat them," and afterwards impaled their bodies.

The sequel of the history is shortly told. Paulina was hastily called from the Isle of Man to check the progress of Boadicea. Had the Britons now scattered themselves and retreated to the fastnesses, which might have defied the strength of the enemy, the Romans would have been deprived of their retaliation. But Boadicea was now at the head of a huge army, animated with enthusiasm and flushed with triumph, and she hazarded a pitched battle. She drew up this vast force, which Dion tells us amounted to two hundred and twenty thousand men—in all probability the fighting women are included in this number—in one long line.

* See Dion, LXII, p. 700; and Tacitus, "Annales," lib. XIV, c 32.

Paulinus divided his army into three divisions. The wives of the British soldiers accompanied them in battle, and Boadicea appeared in a chariot with her two injured daughters—the sight of whom would inflame the thirst for vengeance amongst the Britons. It was not till after a protracted resistance that the wild valor of the Britons gave way before the steady discipline of the Roman legions; yet it may be gathered, even from the Roman historians themselves, that the victory of Paulinus was far from being complete. The great prize, which would have been hailed with rapture at Rome, escaped him, as Cleopatra did Octavius.

Whether, as Tacitus says, Boadicea poisoned herself, or, as Dion tells us, died naturally of disease, it is gratifying to know that she did not fall into the hands of the enemy, to be sent to Rome to grace an imperial triumph—for Nero would have willingly taken the whole credit of her overthrow to himself—and that this heroic woman did not appear like Zenobia in after days, loaded with burdensome ornaments and jewelry, walking behind the chariot of the effeminate emperor whom she had ridiculed as "a lady" and a "singer," an object of pity to the people whom she had described as scarcely to be called men—"creatures reproachful, wicked, insatiable and criminal, bathing themselves in hot water, eating dishes of dainty cookery, drinking wine, besmeared with unguents, lying on soft couches," and such other effeminacies which the ancient queen would name openly, and the ancient historian records faithfully, but which must not be alluded to here.

NERO.

The Emperor Nero was about middle size; his body was spotted and dark; his hair yellowish; his face was beautiful rather than handsome. It was, to use the distinction of Suetonius, *pulcher* rather than *venustus.* I can make nothing more of this than one of the commentators on Suetonius (Schildius) has done. He conceives that *pulcher* refers to the complexion, and *venustus* to the form of the features. His eyes were grey and heavy; his neck thick; his belly prominent, and his legs slender.* This slenderness of legs was inherited from Germanicus. Nero, it will be observed, closed the direct line from Augustus; in the belief of the Romans, he was the last lineal descendant of the Trojan Æneas. His voice, according to both Dion and Suetonius, was husky and extremely feeble.

In his dress, and in the care of his hair, Nero adopted various effeminate fashions which the Romans considered indecent. He loved great splendor, and like our good Queen Elizabeth, never wore the same dress twice. The Romans made a feast on the occasion of a young man first undergoing the operation of shaving. Nero celebrated this event in his

* Suetonius, "Nero," c. 51.

own life with peculiar splendor. At the entertainment which he gave on the occasion, it is noticed by Dion as something very remarkable that a lady of noble rank and great wealth, in the eightieth year of her age, danced amongst the company.* Nero preserved the hairs of his beard, and presented them in a gold casket to the Jupiter of the Capitol. This is good reason to believe that Petronius, in his singular work which presents us with so vivid a picture of the manners of the times, has described Nero under the name of Trimalchio. In noticing the articles in Trimalchio's house, Petronius mentions the household gods made of silver, a marble figure of Venus, and a golden casket in which it was said that Trimalchio's beard was preserved.† It has been asserted that there was a medal of Nero—a satirical one—which bore on one side the words, "C. Nero August. Imp." and on the reverse, "Trimalchio."

This famous criminal, whose murder of his mother has given to his name a proverbial pre-eminence in wickedness over all the other bad emperors, was a young man of varied accomplishments. He was a poet, a sculptor, and a painter; in music he was both a vocal and an instrumental performer; and besides all this he was a dancer, an amateur actor, and a chariot driver. He would sit far into the night practising singing with Terpnus the harp player, and he made use of all the means then known for strengthening and improving his voice, which was so very weak and indistinct, says Dion, that to listen to him provoked both laughter and tears.

Suetonius describes some of the arts which Nero adopted under the direction of a Phonascus, or voice doctor. Our English poet, Nathaniel Lee, in his tragedy of "Theodosius," has embodied the information furnished by the historian.

* Dion "Hist." lib. LXI, p. 698.

† Petronius, "Satyricon," p. 22. Paris, 1601.

Marcian upbraiding Theodosius, says:

> "But for you,
> What can your partial sycophants invent
> To make you room among the emperors?
> Whose utmost is the smallest part of Nero;
> A pretty player, one that can act a hero
> And never be one. O ye immortal gods!
> Is this the old Cæsarian majesty?
> Now in the name of our great Romulus,
> Why sing you not, and fiddle too, as he did?
> Why have you not, like Nero, a Phonascus?
> One to take care of your celestial voice?
> Lie on your back, my lord, and on your stomach
> Lay a thin plate of lead—abstain from fruits."

The dramatist enumerates others of the luxurious follies of Nero.

> "Build too, like him, a palace lined with gold,
> As long and large as that to the Esquiline;
> Enclose a pool too in it, like the sea,
> And at the empire's cost let navies meet.
> Adorn your starry chambers too with gems,
> Contrive the plated ceilings to turn round
> With pipes to cast ambrosial oils upon you;
> Consume with his prodigious vanity,
> In mere perfumes and odorous distillations,
> Of sesterces at once four hundred millions;
> Let naked virgins wait you at your table,
> And wanton cupids dance and clap their wings."

Nero, when he appeared as a singer upon the stage, was called "The Celestial Voice, a circumstance to which the poet alludes. He first came out as a vocalist in the theatre at Naples, where he used to sing for whole consecutive days. By an imperial edict no one was permitted to leave the theatre when the Emperor was singing or acting; so that, it is

said, women were delivered of children within its walls. There is some humor in the story told by Dion that some courtiers, in order to get away, feigned suddenly falling dead, and were carried out by their servants. At these performances this historian tells us that Seneca and Burrhus used to applaud with their hands, and by lifting their robes in order to lead on the rest; but Nero had a body of five hundred soldiers paid for the purpose of applauding. Of all his courtiers, Thrasea alone refused to applaud, and Thrasea for this and other similar offences paid the penalty with his life. As a tragedian, Nero's favorite characters were those of Canace in labor, (in which he used to be delivered on the stage,) Orestes, Œdipus, Alcmæon, Thyestes, and Hercules in his rage. As a woman he used to appear dressed as his departed and loved Poppæa.

According to Pliny, Nero was the first to set the example of cooling water by immersing it in a glass vessel amongst snow.

The reader of Roman history does not, I think, hate Nero so much as he does some of the other emperors, certainly not so much as Tiberius. Gibbon tells us that he was not so much repelled by him as by Tiberias, Caligula or Domitian.* There is reason to believe that he had some popular virtues, though he would no doubt raise himself in the estimation of the mob by his cruelties to the Christians. He was not universally execrated after his death. He appears to have been capable of loving and of being loved. "Nor," says Suetonius, "were there wanting those who for a long time after adorned his tomb with the flowers of the spring and the summer."

* "Dois-je le dire et dire ici? Nero ne m'a jamais revolte autant que Tibere, Caligula ou Domitien. Il avait beaucoup de vices mais il n'etait pas sans vertus. Je vois dans son histoire peu de traits d'une mechancete etudiee. Il etait cruel, mais il l'etait plutot par crainte que par gout."—GIBBON, JOURNAL.

The eccentric Cardan, as I have elsewhere noticed, has written a treatise on "The Praise of Nero." From the title it might be supposed that the work was satirical, but it is not so; it is a serious eulogium, and has not the merit of the least ingenuity. In order to set off the virtues of Nero in high relief, Cardan is liberal in the censure of every other person mentioned in his work, and the first reprobates whom ne notices are the historians Tacitus and Suetonius, who have transmitted to us the records of Nero's life. Tacitus, he says, was an idolatrous priest, and a man of the greatest ambition and wickedness.

Cardan does not admit that there was one good emperor in the whole series from Julius to his own day, except Alexander Severus, and he mentions that even he was voracious and ambitious. The philosopher Seneca we know was no practical moralist, and Cardan calls him the worst of all men, (*mortalium improbissimus*) and commends Nero for ridding the world of him. He would rather that Nero had not murdered Octavia, but contented himself with banishing her, as she was guilty of sterility; but as regards his mother, he thinks that Nero was to blame for allowing her to live too long—an endurance which leads him to think that he was the most patient of men. He contrasts the innocence of Nero in many respects with the guilt of the other emperors. Augustus, Claudius, and Caligula played at dice, and Nero did not. "What is worse," asks Cardan, "what can be worse than dice?" "Is there," he repeats, "or can there be imagined anything worse than dice?" As an evidence of the amazing goodness of Nero, Cardan begs to inquire, what man is there so patient that he could live with the most sweet-tempered woman for four whole years without a quarrel, as Nero did with Poppæa, the most peevish of all women (*omnium fæminarum morosissima?*)

AGRIPPINA.

I HAVE met with nothing recorded of the person of Agrippina beyond the general praise of her great beauty, which is spoken of in the strongest language by Dion. At the public spectacles, this historian describes her as wearing a cloak interwoven with gold. The Roman people, who appear to have tolerated much of Nero's wickedness, were evidently struck with horror at the murder of his mother; caricatures, rhymes, and satirical pictures were fixed up in public places, reviling the matricide. Nero himself appears to have been distracted by his accusing conscience. He leaped in terror from his bed in the night, and was alarmed by the sound of trumpets heard over the spot where she was buried. The murder was preceded by every circumstance of treachery and hypocrisy. On taking leave of his mother on the night when his first attempt at her death by drowning was made, Nero embraced her, says Dion, and kissed her eyes and her hands. The remark which he made on looking at her dead body, says the historian, was more wicked than the murder itself: "I did not know that my mother was so beautiful."*

* Dion, "Hist." lib. LXI, p. 696. Ουκ ηδειν οτι ουτω καλλην μητερα ειχον.

Of all the lost works of the ancients, the loss most to be deplored is that of the commentaries of Agrippina, to which Tacitus refers as his authority for matters which he had not found elsewhere. He describes the work as a history of her own life, and of the fate of her relations.* The loss of a work of history is a positive loss of wisdom to the world which cannot be supplied; in the case of a history written by a woman of the great abilities of Agrippina, and who had mingled so much as she had done in scenes of blood and licentiousness, the loss is felt with double acuteness.

* Id ego a scriptoribus annalium non traditum, reperi in commentariis Agripinnæ filiæ; quæ Neronis principis mater, vitam suam et casus suorum posteris memoravit."—Tacitus, Annales, lib. iv, c. 53.

POPPÆA SABINA.

Poppæa Sabina, the mistress and second wife of Nero, according to Tacitus, inherited great beauty from her mother. She had, like her lover, yellow hair; and Nero, who amongst his other accomplishments was a poet, wrote verses in praise of her amber locks (*capillos succineos.*)* The extreme whiteness of her skin, the usual accompaniment of golden hair, she preserved by bathing every day in asses' milk, and wherever she went, she had along with her a troop of five hundred she-asses to furnish her bath.†

In a curious little volume called "Abdeker, or the Art of Preserving Beauty," written by Camus, a French physician, in the middle of the last century, the practice of Poppæa is referred to, and the writer asserts that "this kind of milk, as well as goats' milk, takes away the wrinkles of the skin, and gives it a certain gloss that pleases both the senses of seeing and feeling."‡

The receipt is probably as good as another which Camus gives for procuring a white skin, and is certainly much safer, where he advises walking by the side of a river in a fog.

* Plinius, "Hist. Natur," lib. XXXVII, c. 12.

† Ibid. lib. IX, c. 96.

‡ Abdeker, p. 75. Lond. 1754.

Wrinkles, he says, are removed by laying slices of veal on the face before going to bed.

D'Israeli, in his "Curiosities of Literature," has noticed the work of Camus, and speaks of the author as "a French physician, who combined literature with science, the author of 'Abdeker, or the Art of Cosmetics,' which he discovered in exercise and temperance." It is quite clear from this erroneous description of the book, that D'Israeli had never gone beyond the title-page of "Abdeker." It is a collection of ridiculous and nonsensical receipts for preserving beauty such as those that I have quoted. Where fatness is not fashionable, for instance, Camus tells us that a woman may cure herself of it by wearing a girdle of salt about her waist. Where fatness is admired, as in Egypt, he tells us a rather more natural process which is had recourse to in order to obtain the desired beauty.

"The women of Egypt," he says, "in order to acquire this degree of fatness, bathe themselves several days in lukewarm water. They stay so long in these baths, that they eat and drink therein. During the time they are in the bath, they take every half-hour some broth made of a fat pullet, and stuffed with sweet almonds, hazel-nuts, dates, and pistachio nuts. (These, it may be remarked, are the identical materials with which pullets are stuffed in Mussulman houses in Cairo, at this day.) After taking this sort of broth four times, they eat a fat pullet all but the head. When they come out of the bath, they are rubbed over with perfumes and sweet-scented pomatum, and after that, some of them take myrobalans before they go to bed; others take a draught prepared with gum tragacanth, and sugar-candy."

Besides this famous bath, Poppæa had other cosmetics which have obtained celebrity. Juvenal, in noticing the coatings of bread which the Roman women and Roman voluptuaries, like the Emperor Otho, laid on their faces to improve the

delicacy of their complexions, mentions the ointments of Poppæa—*pinguia Poppiæna.* These ointments were removed when the Roman women prepared for company. The bitter satirist tells us that the licentious wife smeared the lips of her husband with plasterings and grease, but went to her paramour with these coatings removed, and her skin purely washed and perfumed.*

Besides bathing in asses' milk, and using the famous ointments which continued long after to bear her name, Poppæa, it is believed, sought, like Otho, her second husband, to improve the fairness of her face by the application to it of bread steeped in milk.

The luxurious life of Poppæa was encouraged by Nero, whose passion for her was fanatical. It is said that he caused to be made for her a golden comb, and when one of her amber hairs fell out, he made it be fastened in gold, and placed it on the head of Juno's statue in her temple. It is to this circumstance, which is mentioned somewhere in one of Plutarch's treatises, though I am unable to give the reference, that Jeremy Taylor evidently alludes, in a passage in his beautiful treatise, "The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living," and where he is speaking of persons who, in the midst of great enjoyments, pine away on account of trifling vexations. "Such a person," he says, "is fit to bear Nero company in his funeral sorrow for the loss of one of Poppæa's hairs, or help to mourn for Lesbia's sparrow."†

Besides her expensive bath, Xiphelin tells us that the mules on which Poppæa rode were led by golden cords. It appears that she did not trust altogether to the powers of her mind, excellent as they were, for preserving her influence. One day, observing as she looked in her mirror, some traces of

* Juvenal, "Sat." lib. IV, 460.

† Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Living," 149. Lond. 1840.

the decay of her beauty, she expressed a desire that she might die rather than grow old. When Anne of Austria, the wife of Louis XIII., noticed during her last sickness that her beautiful hands had begun to swell, she said, "It is time for me to depart!"

All historians agree in ascribing to Poppæa the most consummate art in the management of her beauty, and in attracting admiration. She could be licentious, Tacitus tells us, with an appearance of modesty. She seldom went abroad, and when she did she so, veiled the half of her face, in order not to satisfy the desire of gazing at her; or, as he maliciously adds, because this fashion became her best. Tacitus has described with great skill the arts by which she captivated Nero, professing herself to be overcome by the emperor's beauty. Her skill in heightening, by every artifice, the effect of her charms, has become almost proverbial.

Our great dramatist, Massinger, has in more than one of his plays, referred to Poppæa as an accomplished mistress of the arts of attraction and seduction. Thus, in the "Duke of Milan," (Act ii. sc. 2.)

> "And she that lately
> Rivalled Poppæa in her varied shapes."

In the "Picture," (Act ii. sc. 2.)

> "And in corrupting him I will outgo
> Nero's Poppæa."

And again, in "A very Woman," Leonora says of Almirah,

> "But so adorned as if she were to rival
> Nero's Poppæa or the Egyptian Queen."

Poppæa's practice of bathing in milk as well as bathing in wine, has not been unknown in modern times. Milk, it appears, is used for preserving beauty; wine for recovering it. D'Israeli refers to a complaint of the Earl of Shrewsbury, who

had the custody of Mary, Queen of Scots, during her imprisonment at Fotheringhay, of the expenses of the Queen for wine to her bath. "A learned Scotch physician," says D'Israeli, "informed me that white wine was used for these purposes. They also made a bath of milk. Elder beauties bathed in wine to get rid of their wrinkles; and perhaps not without reason, wine being a great astringent. Unwrinkled beauties bathed in milk to preserve the softness and sleekness of the skin."*

The celebrated Diana of Poitiers, who is described as still very beautiful in old age, according to a story preserved by Brantome, though she used no painting, took the *aurum potabile* and other drugs every morning, to keep her charms fresh.†

The Lady Venetia Stanley, the wife of Sir Kenelm Digby, by advice of her husband, who dived into all kinds of mysteries, and was filled with every sort of superstition, was put on a diet of capons fed with vipers, which the knight had ascertained to be a certain method of preserving beauty to extreme old age.

An amiable desire to please has led to yet more heroic efforts on the part of women. Montaigne tells us, as of a thing well known in his time, of a lady in Paris who caused herself to be flayed, in order to acquire the freshness of a new skin;‡ and in the works of the Duchess of Newcastle, where she speaks of ladies pulling the hair out of their eyebrows, and leaving only a thin row, she tells us of others "peeling the first skin off the face with oil of vitriol, that a new skin may come in its place, which," she adds, "is apt to shrivel the skin underneath."

* "Curiosities of Literature," p. 82. Lond. 1843.

† Brantome, "Dames Galantes," Œuvres, IV, p. 179.

‡ Montaigne, "Essais," lib. I, c. 40.

Josephus, "the learned and warlike Jew" and unprincipled politician, made use of the influence of Poppæa to advance his own interest, and is pleased to call her "a worshipper of the gods," (Θεοσεϐης.) Tacitus has, after his usual manner, drawn her character by a few vivid strokes. He allows her every accomplishment, beauty of person, excellent powers of conversation, and a good understanding, but denies her the possession of virtue.

The burial of Poppæa was unusual. Her death is attributed to her receiving a kick from Nero, when she was great with child. The emperor had lost temper at a joke which she made. "The body," says Tacitus, who is willing to admit, what appears to be the truth, that she was really loved by Nero, "was not burned with fire, after the Roman fashion, but interred with perfumes in the tomb of the Julii."* At the celebration of her obsequies, Nero pronounced an eulogium on her beauty.

Poppæa was deified, and a temple was erected to her honor bearing the inscription "Sabinæ Deæ Veneri, Matronæ fecerunt."

* Tacitus, "Annales, lib. xvi, c. 6.

OTHO.

The Emperor Otho appears in well-authenticated history as the realisation of what we read in those imperfect and dreamy but interesting records, on which romance and poetry have had room and encouragement to work, of the Assyrian monarch Sardanapalus. Otho was brave in war, habitually calm in soul, benevolent and kind, and wholly given up to the most effeminate luxury. His reign was like a dream—it lasted just ninety days. In his boyhood, he was much given to wild midnight frolics, for which he was often beaten. He became the favorite of Nero, and took Poppæa from her husband, but was obliged reluctantly to yield her up to the emperor. In his banishment, which he owed to the jealousy of Nero, he is allowed to have administered the affairs of the province committed to his charge with moderation and forbearance.* Like all the Roman emperors about that time, he believed in magic. Galba, before him, had had his elevation to the throne predicted to him by a soothsayer; and Vitellius, after him, had his fortune also foretold him. Seleucus, the magician, prophesied to Otho that he would survive Nero, but

* Suetonius, "Otho," c. 3.

would only reign a short time. He helped the fulfilment of the prophecy by his extreme liberality to the soldiers of the guard,* who soon began to see clearly, and to declare plainly, that Otho was worthy of the empire.

In person, Otho was like a woman, and he paid more than a woman's regard to his toilet. His father is said to have resembled in face the Emperor Tiberius,† and scandal reputed him his son. It would be desirable, for the sake of poetic effect, that we could believe that this elegant voluptuary, this effeminate but heroic creature, was perfectly graceful in his figure. But alas, the evidence of Suetonius destroys the dream of his being a sort of Apollo—the embodiment of a Greek sculptor's conception of a beautiful Sybarite; and we learn with pain that Otho was badly formed in the feet, and besides was bandy-legged (*male pedatus, scambusque.*)‡

The emperor was of the middle size. He used adornings, says Juvenal, such as were not used either by the Assyrian Semiramis, or by the sad Cleopatra at Actium.§ Like Sardanapalus, he painted his face; and like the brave Parthian Surena, he prepared for battle by dressing himself before a mirror. His body was smoothed, and freed from hairs; and he practised shaving daily, preventing the growth of any appearance of a beard by the use of certain medicaments known in his time. To make his face fair and soft, he applied to it a paste made of bread. To conceal the thinness of the hair on his head, he wore a false head-dress. Yet this voluptuary could fight like a lion, and could cheerfully endure misfortune and smile in the face of death, and could feel tenderly for the sorrows of others, and could desire to see the whole world happy.

* Tacitus, "Hist." lib. I, c. 13.

† Suetonius, "Otho," I.

‡ Ibid. 12.

§ Juvenalis, "Sat." lib. II, c. 107.

The death of Otho—if suicide were in any case permissible—must be allowed to be much finer than that of the younger Cato; and even Christian writers have not been able to refrain from admiration of some of the circumstances of his last moments. After hearing of the victory of Vitellius, he parted with his friends as night came on, kissing them as usual. He also furnished those who wished to leave the country with money sufficient to carry them off; and he destroyed all letters and papers which after his death might point out his friends and followers to the vengeance of the conqueror. He restrained the exercise of any force on those who wished to desert to Vitellius. He wrote two consolatory letters to his sister, and another to Messalina, the widow of Nero, whom he loved, commending to her his memory. He then, in the true Greek spirit, said, "Let us add this night also to our lives," and threw himself on his couch, directing that free admission should be given to all who wished to see him.

At midnight he made choice of a poignard, and placing it below his pillow, fell into a sound sleep. At daybreak, he awoke and stabbed himself fatally under the left breast. The soldiers, aroused by the noise of his fall, rushed in and washed his hands and his feet, as well as the wound, with their tears, giving way to the most passionate grief. Several of them stabbed themselves, and threw themselves on his dead body. Others, at a distance, on hearing of his death, also slew themselves. The body was quickly interred. It had been Otho's request; he feared that his remains might be mutilated by the brutal Vitellius, and he desired that his mangled body might not be a disagreeable object.

The ancients admired fine deaths; and the contemporaries of Otho were in raptures at the details of his last moments. Tacitus has dwelt with undisguised pleasure on the particulars which we have on record. Suetonius tells us that even those

who hated the living Otho, now praised him dead, and allowed that he had slāin Galba not for the sake of reigning, but to restore liberty to Rome. And Dion, who is more severe on the general character of Otho than the other historians, concludes the history of his life by saying that "though he had lived most wickedly, he died most beautifully (χαλλιστα απεθανε); and the government which he had most criminally usurped, he laid down with the greatest virtue."

COMMODUS.

There are some of the Roman emperors whose wickedness assumed so revolting a character that, in describing their manners, it becomes necessary not so much to collect together, as to make a selection from, the ample materials furnished by the plain-speaking and, to modern notions, indelicate narratives of their historians. Such a man as I have already noticed was Tiberius; and such a man was also the infamous and hateful Commodus, the undoubted son of the wicked Faustina, and the reputed and legitimate son of the philosophic Marcus Antoninus.

The faithful and elegant Herodian, the Augustan historian Ælius Lampridius, and Dion Cassius all join in great harmony in presenting us with a complete portrait of this very singular and very wicked man.

Commodus was eminently handsome and beautiful. Herodian calls him the most beautiful man of his age. His person united dignity and elegance. His face, he says, was at once beautiful and manly; his eyes were shining; his hair was of that kind which the ancients admired either in man or woman, yellow and crisped. When he walked in the sun, this historian tells us, his locks glittered like fire, so that some believed they were sprinkled with gold-dust.

Ælius Lampridius was one of those who held this belief—for he tells us that Commodus's hair was always dyed and illuminated with filings of gold. It is well known that some of the emperors about this period sprinkled their hair with gold-dust. Those, however, who thought that the glitter in his hair was natural, regarded it as an evidence of his divine origin. Commodus, monster of wickedness as he was, was deified by the senate; but those who were learned in court scandal believed the Roman emperor to be the fruit of his profligate mother's love for one of the common boatmen.

Ælius, who tells us that Commodus was of middle stature, detracts somewhat from the extreme beauty attributed to him by Herodian, when he tells us that his face was like that of a drunkard; but this remark has been thought to refer to the gleaming of his eyes. Commodus was both a glutton and a drunkard. Dion tells us that he drank largely, and Herodian much more impressively conveys the same fact to his readers in relating the last scenes of the emperor's life. He represents his mistress Marcia, when she finds her name standing first on the emperor's tablets in the list of persons to be put to death, exclaiming, "Ah! well done, Commodus! And are these the rewards of my kindness and love? Is it this I have deserved of thee for having for so many years borne with thy reproaches and thy drunkenness. But these things shall not succeed with thee, a drunken man, against a sober woman."

In speaking farther of his extreme beauty, Herodian tells us that there was a soft down on Commodus's cheeks like that which appears on flowers. Ælius informs us that this monster, who was in the habit of cutting off people's noses and ears for his amusement, was afraid to trust himself in the hands of a barber, and used to burn his hair and beard.

Commodus received the highest education which the most learned teachers of the age could impart to him. His father, the philosophic emperor, had spared no expense in engaging

the most eminent masters in every kind of knowledge for the instruction and cultivation of the mind of this strange young man.

It is historically true, that, like Nero, he commenced his reign with the universal love of his people in his favor. All Rome met him on his entrance after the death of Marcus, and strewed his path with garlands and flowers. Ælius represents him as abominably wicked from his very childhood. On the other hand, Dion tells us that, at the age of nineteen, when he became emperor, he was of an open, simple, and somewhat timid disposition, and easily led to evil; and Herodian, in one part of his narrative, so far confirms this statement when he says that "sometimes the memory of his father, and then reverence for his friends, restrained this young man, but presently a certain malignant and invidious fortune overthrew the rectitude and moderation of his mind."

What progress he made in the learned studies prescribed to him by the pedants with which his boyhood was surrounded, does not clearly appear. Ælius says his discourse was unpolished. He was, however, like Nero, whom in so many respects he resembled, the master of a variety of accomplishments more or less becoming a prince. He danced and sung, and played on the pipe; but these were also accomplishments of the amiable Epaminondas. Commodus was, besides, a chariot-driver, a gladiator, and a mimic or buffoon. He frequented taverns, and places lower than taverns, and there made himself generally useful. It is mentioned, to his deep discredit, that he played at dice. The ancients attached to playing at games of chance something like the same infamy which the Mussulmans do. The eulogists of Augustus notice as a crime in him that he played at dice.

Jeremy Taylor, in his treatise on "Holy Living," has an enumeration of kings who degraded themselves by exercising callings otherwise useful, but unsuitable to their stations.

"Some there are," he says, in the section on "Care of our Time," "that employ their time in affairs infinitely below the dignity of their persons; and being called by God and by the republic to help to bear great burdens, and to judge a people, do enfeeble their understandings and disable their persons by sordid and brutish business. Thus Nero went up and down Greece, and challenged the fiddlers at their trade. Æropus, a Macedonian king, made lanterns. Harcatius, the king of Parthia, was a mole-catcher; and Biantes, the Lydian, filed needles." He does not mention that Commodus practised the art of the potter and made cups.

Commodus was the strongest man of his time, and his dexterity in killing wild beasts in the arena made him a favorite with the populace, as, indeed, he continued to be during the greater part of his reign. His delight was to personate Hercules, and he went about with a large club in his hand and a lion's hide thrown over his shoulders. The people, who delighted in seeing him slaying ferocious animals, and even exercising his great strength in killing the harmless cameleopard, were disgusted when they saw their emperor enter the arena as a naked gladiator.

Amongst his other wild freaks, in which he reminds us of Nero and Caligula, Commodus offered sacrifices to Isis in his palace, and appeared dressed as one of her priests, with his head shaved. In her processions he was accustomed to carry the image of "the dog Anubis," and to beat the bare heads of the other priests with the snout of the beast.

This man, with the beauty of Apollo and the strength of Hercules, indulged in every sensuality and effeminacy. He was at once a glutton and a drunkard. He used the bath seven or eight times a day, and was in the habit of eating in the bath—a fashion amongst Oriental women which induces that fatness which is regarded as beauty. In

the theatre, Commodus sat in female attire and drunk before the whole audience. A woman, says Dion, presented him with the most delicious wine artificially cooled; and when he took the draught, the whole audience wished him "health."

There was a resemblance in three points between Commodus and Cæsar Borgia: both were extremely beautiful, prodigiously strong, and enormously wicked.

CARACALLA.

This contemptible man, who was killed at the early age of twenty-nine, was even at that age disgraced in the eyes of his subjects by his baldness, besides being otherwise by nature ill-favored and of small stature. In mere boyhood the Augustan historian represents him as gentle, pleasant, affable, benevolent, shedding tears or turning away his eyes from sights of cruelty.* Writers and readers delight in strong contrasts, and especially in making wonderful and unnatural contrasts between the boyhood and the maturity of celebrated men. These stories about the amiable virtues of the monster Caracalla, are, I suspect, fictions and imaginations created to feed the popular love of romance. Thus a thousand stories are told about the stupidity, in boyhood, of men who afterwards displayed the greatest genius. Sir Walter Scott is given as an instance. Yet that a boy could be stupid at ten years of age and intellectual at twenty, may be safely pronounced to be, if not an impossibility—because there is nothing that mortals are entitled to pronounce impossible—yet certainly a circumstance that never once happened in this world.

* Ælius Spartianus, "Hist. August. Scriptores," lib. i, 706. Lugd. Batav. 1671.

These monstrous fables issue from the cloudy brains of schoolmasters, the most ignorant of all judges of character and intellect. A schoolmaster calls that boy clever who is dull enough and mechanical enough and sufficiently devoid of a mind of his own, to diligently imbibe the generally worthless instruction which he communicates to him; and he bestows the name of dunce on the other boy who has enough of intrepidity about him to select his studies for himself, and to regard his master's intellect with anything but unquestioning veneration.

However it may have been with the boyhood of Caracalla, the same historian who speaks so highly of his early virtues, represents him as a most ferocious and bloodthirsty youth—and at the same time in his aspect severe, gloomy, and truculent. Herodian describes with much minute detail and great fidelity to nature, the rise, progress, and manifestations of the hatred between him and his half-brother Geta. Dion gives us a strange and most picturesque account of the murder of Geta in the arms of his mother, the beautiful Julia. The brothers, at the instance of the treacherous Caracalla, had agreed to meet in the empress's bed-chamber, to be reconciled in her presence. Caracalla surrounded the palace with soldiers. The picture is not complete unless we recollect that Geta was a youth of twenty-five years of age. He was killed in his mother's arms, while "he hung on her neck and clasped her breasts, and weeped, and cried 'Mother! mother! parent! help me—I am killed!' while Julia was bathed in his blood."* The words given below may be received as the real language used by Geta, which might be learned by Dion, living at the

* Μητερ μητερ, τεκουσα, τεκουσα, βοηθει, σφαξομαι. Dion, "Hist. Rom." lib. LXXVII, p. 871. (Leunclavius) Hanoviæ, 1606. A language like the English, without the terminational distinctions of gender, cannot do justice to this curious passage. In the Latin it is pretty faithfully rendered—Mater mater, genetrix, genetrix, &c.

time. Both Caracalla and Geta were well instructed in Greek in their childhood. It will be observed that Herodian represents Caracalla as stabbing Geta with his own hand. Dion attributes his death to the hired soldiers. Throughout his after-life, Caracalla used to make jokes on the murdered Geta; at other times to shed tears when his name was mentioned, or when he happened to cast his eyes on an image or statue of him.

Caracalla's want of hair would have subjected him to ridicule with the Romans even if he had been a man of virtue. On one occasion in particular, it made him the subject of contemptuous laughter to the rabble. This mean-looking man had a passion for imitating and acting the characters of Achilles and Alexander, both famous with the ancients for their beauty. Amongst his other wild frolics, Caracalla proceeded to Troy, and visited what was believed to be the tomb of the swift-footed son of Thetis, magnificently decked with crowns and flowers. Then, in the character of Achilles, he made a funeral of his deceased friend Festus, as his beloved Patroculus. The pile was reared, the sacrifices were offered, the wine was poured out, and the winds were invoked. But when, after the fashion of Achilles and the rites of mourning amongst the Greeks, he had to cut off his locks and throw them into the flames, the spectators burst out into a shout of laughter, when he could only get a few scattered hairs to sacrifice.*

This degraded monster's favorite, however, was the heroic Alexander. In order to keep alive the memory of the Macedonian hero, as if it were in danger of perishing without his care, Caracalla busied himself in erecting statues and images of him in all the temples. He had, Dion tells us, armor

* Herodian, IV, 14.

such as was worn, and cups such as were used by Alexander. Amongst other monuments of the emperor's folly, Herodian had seen a double-faced image, one side of which was the portrait of Alexander, and the other that of Caracalla. The emperor himself wore the Macedonian dress, and had a chosen band of young men in his army whom he called "the Macedonian phalanx," all the captains of which he caused to be called by the name of Alexander's generals. Dion remarks that Caracalla, cruel to all else, was kind and generous to his soldiers in imitation of Alexander.

He proceeded to Alexandria, and there he visited the monument of Alexander, on which he deposited his rich vestments, his rings, and other ornaments. All this, of course, served not to promote his glory, but just to provoke the ridicule of the people of Alexandria, who, says Herodian, as I have mentioned before in the sketch of Alexander, laughed at him, that he, a man of small stature, should ape Alexander and Achilles, those very valiant and great warriors.

Caracalla labored under ill-health, arising, says Dion, from manifest and secret diseases. Like Caligula, he was troubled with visions of spectres. In his delirium he was terrified by the apparitions of his father and his brother brandishing swords. In order to learn a remedy for his malady, he invoked the spirits of the dead, and especially of his father and of Commodus, and Commodus is said to have given him answers by no means of a soothing or cheering kind. He consulted also the magicians, who predicted his death by the hand of Macrinus.

Various prodigies foretold his fate. He was in the habit of keeping tame lions about him. His favorite lion was called Acinax. This beast used to dine at his table, and at night to lie in bed with him, and the emperor was observed frequently to kiss him in public. Shortly before his death, as

he was passing through a certain gate where Acinax was, unobserved by him, the favorite lion laid hold of his robe and tore it.

In the repositories of this hateful criminal, a variety of poisons, procured by him at great expense from the East, were discovered and consigned to the flames.

HELIOGABALUS.

We have a profusion of materials regarding the person, habits, and fashions, as well as the follies and vices of Heliogabalus, that strange compound of Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, Vitellius, and Commodus, with the Assyrian Sardanapalus—for there was a more Oriental taste about this effeminate creature than about any other of the Roman emperors. The circumstance was observed by the populace, who, as we learn from Dion, amongst the other epithets which they bestowed on him, called him Sardanapalus and Assyrius.*

This boy, for he was but a mere youth when he was killed, had before his death rivalled the varied wickedness of all the worst of his predecessors. The Augustan historian Ælius Lampridius is copious to overflowing in all manner of details about his daily life, and between him and the curious Dion and the elegant Herodian, which two last historians may have seen the emperor, we have the complete picture of this monster of depravity. Lampridius in his narrative refers to many records which he says were compiled of the private life of Heliogabalus, and especially to a biography of him by Marius Maximus. In the midst of all the horrible details with

* Dion, "Hist." lib. LXIX, p. 906.

which he furnishes us, Lampridius professes to have made merely a decent selection out of the materials before him, omitting the more infamous particulars, and veiling in as modest language as he could command what he was obliged as a faithful historian to relate. From his selection, a re-selection is all that can be made fit for presentation to modern readers.

Lampridius, in his voluminous description, does not allude to the figure and face of Heliogabalus. This we have, however, described by Herodian, who more than once alludes to the great beauty of his countenance, regreting that he spoiled it with painting and unguents. Herodian's description of the appearance of the young emperor as the priest of the god Heliogabalus, whose name and honors he afterwards assumed, is exceedingly striking and picturesque. Bassianus (Heliogabalus's name was Bassianus Antoninus) and his younger brother, Alexianus, afterwards Alexander Severus, were both priests of the Assyrian god Heliogabalus, or the Sun.

"Bassanius, as the elder," says Herodian, "discharged the office of chief priest. He walked in the Eastern dress, wearing a cloak interwoven with gold, having long sleeves—and which, falling down to his feet, covered all his limbs to the toes. His other robes were of purple, entwined with gold. On his head he bore a coronet, glittering with precious stones of various colors. He was then in the flower of his youth, and the most beautiful man of the times. Hence, with his personal charms, his boyhood, and the remarkably effeminate dress which he wore, he was naturally compared with the most beautiful pictures of Bacchus."*

It will be observed that the historian censures as effeminate the close dress of Heliogabalus. It is probable that the emperor, who indulged in every art and device of lasciviousness, entertained the Eastern notion that a close dress is the cos-

* Herodian, lib. v, c. 5.

tume of indecency, and that virtue and innocence are betokened by looseness of garments and an approach to nudity.

It is somewhat curious, that the figures of the effeminate Sardanapalus, and of the licentious Semiramis, and the statues and medals of the Byzantine Theodora, who rivalled the wickedness of the most wicked of the ancients, represent them as completely wrapped up in their robes, from the throat to the toes. At this day, the virtuous Malabar woman goes all uncovered above the waist, whilst almost everywhere in the East, the dancing-girl, who is unchaste by religious obligation —is loaded with clothes.

It was while celebrating the worship of his god, and leading his chorus round the altar, in Oriental fashion, to the sound of flutes and pipes, and other musical instruments, that the Roman soldiers beheld their future emperor, and were struck with his extreme beauty.

The directors and guides of Heliogabalus's youth were his mother, who is called Semiriama, or Soæmis, and his grandmother, Mæsa, and both of these women he seems to have honored and loved. His mother, who is described as the most profligate woman in Rome, rivalling in licentiousness the Messalina of a former age, instructed him in all manner of wickedness.

The emperor introduced both his mother and his grandmother into the senate; and there was then a senate occupied with legislation on women's interests and affairs. This senate declared what dress women were to wear, what orders of them should give place to other orders, who should salute each other with a kiss, which classes should be carried on a horse, an ass, a mule, or an ox, or on a couch, or in a chair; and whether the chair should be covered with skin, or bone, or ivory, or silver, and who should or should not wear gold

and gems in their shoes. These golden shoes were afterwards prohibited in the simple reign of Alexander Severus.*

When he became emperor, Heliogabalus forbade the worship in Rome of any other god, except that Syrian divinity whose name he bore, and whom he represented. All the other worships he treated with contempt, profaning the altars, violating the vestal virgins, and seeking to extinguish the sacred fire.

The election of the emperor took place when he was in the East. He proceeded to Nicomedia, and there spent the winter. Here we have a vivid picture of his mode of life by Herodian. "He presently began to riot in licentiousness, celebrating the worship of his god with dances, clothed in a luxurious robe interwoven with purple, and wearing bracelets and necklaces, and other golden ornaments and coronets, after the form of the tiara, and adorned with gold and precious stones. The fashion of his robe was compounded of the sacred stole of Phœnicia and the soft attire of the Mede. The Roman and Greek garments being made of wool, 'the vilest of things,' as he used to say, nothing pleased him but the webs of Syria; and in celebrating the worship of his god, he walked abroad to the sound of pipes and drums."†

All this is intensely Oriental. Heliogabalus had completely understood and assumed the Eastern character.

The following account from Herodian gives a complete picture of an Oriental religious festival. Heliogabalus had resolved to lead out his god in a splendid procession, and made great sports, and spectacles, and feasts for the people on the occasion. The deity was placed on a chariot, ornamented with gold and precious stones, and in this way was drawn from the town to the country.

* Ælius Lampridius, "Hist. August. Scriptores," lib. I, 798.

† Herodian, lib. v, c. 11.

In the chariot were yoked horses of great size, and of a spotless white color, and conspicuous from their splendid trappings. Heliogabalus held the reins, but he did not ascend, nor did any mortal mount the chariot, which appeared to be driven by the god himself. So in the Indian processions of Vishnu, the car pulled by his worshippers, appears to be guided by the divinity himself. Heliogabalus, with the reins in his hands, ran backwards, with his eyes fixed on the idol, and in this way completed the whole procession. To prevent his slipping his foot, gold-dust was sprinkled on the road, and the soldiers guarded him on each side for ear he might fall. The people, in the meantime, ran in crowds, with torches in their hands, scattering about flowers and garlands.

The images of the gods, and all the ornaments and furniture of the temples, and the soldiers with the Roman ensigns, accompanied this exhibition. Lofty towers were erected, which, after the procession, the emperor ascended, and threw down amongst the people gold and silver cups, and garments of every kind. In the crushing made to lay hold of these prizes, many were suffocated, others were trodden under foot, and others fell on the spears of the soldiers. The emperor, in the meantime, was seen driving about, or dancing in the most effeminate manner, with his eyes and his cheeks painted; "disfiguring," says the historian, "his naturally beautiful countenance with disgraceful colors."*

Dion represents Heliogabalus as obtaining the empire through the valor of his mother and grandmother, who appeared in the field against Macrinus his rival; and when the soldiers were giving way, rallied them and brought them back to victory.†

The grandmother of Mæsa is described by Herodian as a woman of masculine spirit, and vexed at the effeminate vices of

* Herodian, lib. v, c. 12. † Dion, "Hist." lib. LXXVIII, p. 889.

Heliogabalus. She earnestly entreated her grandson, before he marched to Rome, to lay aside his Syrian robes and assume the Roman dress, and not to offend the people by appearing in a costume which they regarded as only suitable for a worthless woman. The emperor did every thing that he was beseeched not to do. He resolved to prepare the people of Rome to see him in all his Eastern adornments.

For this purpose he caused a full-length figure of himself to be made, as he appeared in his sacerdotal robes, and sent it before him to Rome, where it was erected on an elevation in a conspicuous place, in order that when the senate met, they might burn frankincense, and pour out libations of wine to him. "When Heliogabalus himself thereafter entered Rome," says Herodian, "the people saw nothing that was new to them."

His entrance to Rome, the emperor signalised by a largess of corn to the people, and then by a sacrifice to his god on the most magnificent scale. He built a vast and most beautiful temple, and built several altars around it, at which every morning hecatombs of bulls, and immense numbers of birds were sacrificed. Odors and incense were heaped up on the sacrifices, and the richest wines were mingled in profusion with the blood of the victims. Women danced round the altars in a circle, with cymbals and tabours in their hands. The noblest in the land carried the articles required for the sacrifices on their heads, clothed with the long Phœnician robes, and wearing the linen shoes of the Phœnician priesthood.*

In his familiarity with the gods and goddesses, Heliogabalus bears most resemblance to Caligula, who fell in love with the moon, and implored her to share the imperial bed. Heliogabalus used to have the "Judgment of Paris" acted in his

* Herodian, lib. v, c. 12, 13.

palace, he himself performing not the part of Paris, but of the goddess of beauty. He also sometimes appeared as Venus, lamenting the cruel fate of Adonis—as indicating the grief which would be felt for himself when he should be removed from the world. The lamentation for Adonis, the Syrian Thammuz, was, however, a piece of worship known throughout the Roman empire, and in particular was a favorite part of the religious rites of Syria, which Heliogabalus brought into fashion. How beautifully, and in what an Eastern spirit has Milton described this worship when enumerating the heathen divinities amongst the fallen angels in hell!

"Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In am'rous ditties all a summer's day;
While smooth Adonis from his native well
Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded; the love tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezechiel saw when by the vision led,
His eyes surveyed the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah."

Heliogabalus, however, assumed the character and costume of all the gods and goddesses. He was one day Cybele, the great mother of the gods, and like her had his chariot drawn by lions. The next day he was Bacchus, and his chariot was drawn by the Indian tigers. Heliogabalus married and repudiated two or three beautiful but mere mortal women before he took a wife from Olympus. He divorced Cornelia Paula because he discovered a spot on her body; and then compelled the vestal virgin, Aquila Severa, to marry him, in order that from himself, the high priest, and her as a vestal, a celestial progeny might be begotten. He next took to his bed the

image of Pallas, which had been kept sacred from the sight of men in her temple since the time when, according to tradition, it had been brought from burning Troy. The emperor introduced the goddess at court as his wife. He grew tired, however, of the martial maid, and took in her place the Syrian Ashtaroth or Diana, alleging that there was much suitability in the match between him and her—a marriage of the sun with the moon. The nuptials were celebrated publicly and privately with the utmost splendor.

In his magnificence, Heliogabalus was truly Oriental. He had beds and couches of solid silver. He adorned others of his beds with gold. His chariots glittered with gems. They were drawn sometimes by elephants, sometimes by stags, and sometimes by beautiful naked women. His drinking and cooking vessels were of silver. He was guilty of the luxury which, at a later period, St. Chrysostom charges as a sin against the Christian ladies of Constantinople—of using vessels of the most precious material for the use of most ignoble purposes. He had cups artificially perfumed for drinking, and others on which lascivious designs were sculptured; an iniquity not confined to ancient and heathen times. At table he reclined on couches stuffed with the fur of hares or the down of partridges. He wore cloaks heavy with gems, and used to say that he was burdened with a load of pleasure. He had gems in his shoes, sculptured with designs by the finest artists. He wore a diadem of precious stones that he might resemble a beautiful woman. He is said to have been the first Roman who wore robes of entire silk. He never, it is said, wore a ring for more than one day, or twice put on the same shoes.

In his more refined and elegant luxuries he was the rival of the ancient Demetrius Poliorcetes. He had beds and couches of roses, and walked amongst lilies, violets, hyacinths, and narcissuses. When he wished to add the piquant flavor of cruelty to his enjoyments, he would stifle a courtier to death in a

bed of flowers. He swam in water perfumed with saffron and precious unguents; and wine and aromatics were poured into his fish-ponds and his baths.

In eating and drinking he appears not so much as a glutton, but as the chief all royal epicures—the equal is gastronomic science of the renowed Apicius. He joined with all who studied the pleasure of the palate in admiration of the dish which the Romans made of the teats of a newly farrowed pig—the most celebrated of ancient luxuries. After the example of Apicius he indulged in dishes made of the tender parts of the heel of the camel, and of combs torn from the heads of living cocks. This latter delicacy, Casaubon, in his commentary on the passage in the Augustan historian in which it is referred to, tells us, is at this day—that is, in his day, two hundred years ago—passionately sought after by men of learned palates. Like Vitellius he seems to have had his appetite whetted by the expensiveness of the dishes which he procured; and like him he took a pleasure in sacrificing the rarest and most beautiful birds, for the sake of eating their heads, their brains, or their tongues. At one entertainment he displayed on his table the heads of six hundred ostriches, whose brains as well as those of the flamingo and thrush, were amongst his favorite repasts. He also indulged in the tongues of peacocks and nightingales, believing that they had a medical virtue in averting epilepsy. He also made dishes of the entrails and sometimes of the beards of the mullet, of the eggs of partridges, and the heads of pheasants, peacocks, and parrots. We wonder at the destruction of creatures so lovely to the sight as the peacock, the flamingo, and the pheasant, for the particle of delicate eating to be got from them; but epicurism and gluttony consume and destroy all the other tastes.

The Abbe Dubois, in his curious work on India, notices with regret that the prospect of the immense influence over the minds of the Hindus which they would have acquired if

they would only have consented to abstain from one single article of food—the flesh of the cow; the representative on earth of the goddess Bhavani, would not restrain the English from horrifying the heathen by eating of that one article, even in the unsavory condition in which it is found in India. A devout Danish missionary, of the Moravian sect, is still more severe on the same subject. He tells us that when an English child is shown any pretty bird or fish, its first question about it is: "Is it good for eating?"

We presume that Heliogabalus knew the rich merits of the goose's liver, though he may have been ignorant of that terrible cruelty which Christian cooks, in modern times, are guilty of practising to please Christian palates in the preparation of the celebrated fat liver; but it is recorded of him that, while he put grapes into his horses' mangers and fattened his lions on parrots and pheasants, he fed his dogs with the livers of geese.

The genius of Heliogabalus shone particularly bright in the cooking of fish. In this department he is said to have invented new modes unknown to Apicius; but with a refined hatred of things common and cheap, he would never taste fish at all when he was near the sea, but always took delight in them when far removed from water, just as he took a fancy for having snow brought to him in Midsummer. He offered rewards for the discovery of new dishes of exquisite flavor, and he had a humorous way of stimulating the invention of those around him in this science. When a courtier, after exerting his best skill to please him, produced a dish which he did not relish, he made the ingenious artist himself continue to eat of that dish and of nothing else, till his faculties, sharpened by disgust, enabled him to find out something superior for his master.

Like Nero and Caligula, Heliogabalus had his jocularities—generally practical ones—sometimes merely absurd, sometimes

characteristically cruel. His most harmless entertainments in this way consisted of the suppers which he would give one night to eight men all of them blind of one eye, sometimes to eight bald, sometimes to eight afflicted with gout, then to eight deaf men, eight black men, eight tall, and eight fat men. He kept lions and leopards, which lay at table with him, in order to frighten his friends. He would get a company filled with drink; and after locking them up for the night would let loose amongst them lions, leopards, and bears, with their claws pared, to terrify them; and many, it is said, died of the fright.

At other times, when daylight would break in on the company who had been drinking the night before, they would find themselves in the arms of ugly black old women. At other times he made sham entertainments, like the Barmicide's feast in the Eastern tale, setting his guests down to dishes made of wax, ivory, or stone, painted after nature. He collected serpents together, and let them loose to bite his visitors. He would tie his courtiers to a wheel, and have them whirled round in water, calling them, in allusion to the mythological fable, his "Ixionite friends."

Fearing a violent death from the vengeance of the people, Heliogabalus had made preparations which turned out to be all in vain, for terminating his existence in an elegant manner. He had poisons mixed up with the most precious articles, he had ropes of purple and crimson silk ready to strangle himself with, and golden swords to stab himself with. He had also a high tower built with rich adornings, where he might breathe out his last in royal state.

The manner of his death was just the reverse of all that he desired. After being slain, his body was first thrown into the common sewer, then dragged through the streets, and cast into the Tiber. According to Herodian and Dion, the same indignities were inflicted on the body of his mother, who was

killed at the same time. Dion represents Heliogabalus as having been slain in her arms, and states that both their heads were cut off, and their bodies stripped naked, and that the one was thrown into one place of the river, and the other into another.

We have a curious picture of Roman manners in these days in the record of the various names of contempt and derision which were bestowed on Heliogabalus in his lifetime, and after his death. The most complimentary were those of "Sardanapalus" and "Assyrius," in allusion to the eastern luxury of the emperor. From the licentious amours of his mother, he derived, according to some authorities, the title of "Varius," indicative of the uncertainty of his paternity :* though another derivation has been assigned to this epithet. After his death he was called "Tractitius," from having been dragged through the streets, and "Tiberinus" from having been cast into the Tiber. His name of "Impurus" was, perhaps, conferred upon him from his body having been thrown into the common sewer, though this tittle was at least as well merited by him in life as in death. Heliogabalus had lived like Vitellius, and the circumstances of their deaths were remarkably similar.

* Et aiunt quidem, Varii etiam nomen idcirco eidem inditum a condiscipulis, quod vario semine de meretrice utpote, conceptus videtur. Ælius Lampridius, "Hist. August. Script.," lib. 1, 794.

ZENOBIA.

The person and habits of Zenobia, the celebrated Queen of Palmyra, have in some degree become familiar to the general reader, from the notice of them which Gibbon, transcribing from the full details furnished by the Augustan historian, Trebellius Pollio, has embodied in his fascinating work. It is rarely indeed that the character of Gibbon suffers from a comparison of his text with his authorities and references, and in matters of curious interest he is seldom chargeable with want of sufficient copiousness. He has, however, by no means exhausted the personal description of Zenobia, and to some important particulars about her habits he has made no allusion.

Zenobia says Pollio was the most noble and the most beautiful of all the women of the East.* Her complexion, he tells us, was brown, as is noticed by the monk in Chaucer:

> 'I say not that she had moche fairnesse,
> But of hire schepe she might not be amended.'†

* Trebellius Pollio, "Hist. August. Script." lib. II. p. 299. Ludg. Bat. 1671.

† Chaucer, "Monke's Tale," b. xiv. 259.

Yet it should be recollected that Zenobia was descended of the Macedonian princes of Egypt, and reckoned Cleopatra amongst her ancestresses. Her eyes were black and sparkling beyond measure,* says Pollio; her spirit was divine, and her beauty incredible. Her teeth were so white, that some thought she wore pearls instead of teeth. This is the most distinctly Oriental feature in the picture of Zenobia. There are teeth sufficiently white to be found in Europe, if they be diligently sought after; but the tooth which is most accurately described as "pearly," having an appearance of half transparency, is purely Asiatic.

Her voice, says Pollio, was clear, and he adds, manly. She lived in royal pomp, after the manner of the Persians, and like the sovereigns of Persia, received divine honours. She feasted after the fashion of the Romans. She went to the public assemblies with a helmet on her head, and a purple bordered robe, with jewels hanging from the fringe, her under robe bound about her waist with a clasp, and her arms often bare. On her shoulders she wore an imperial tunic, or small cloak, after the usage of Queen Dido.

She was at once prudently liberal, says Pollio, and economical, beyond a woman's fashion, of her treasury. She used a chariot in driving, seldom taking a coach, and often rode on horseback. She frequently walked on foot three or four miles with the soldiers.

"She marched at the head of her troops," says Father le Moyne, "always the first at the fight, and the last to retreat.

* Oculis supra modum vigentibus, nigris. Salmasius tells us that the Palatine manuscript, instead of vigentibus, read ingentibus. Gibbon has with great art, given Zenobia the full benefit of both readings, besides adding a compliment of his own. "Her large black eyes," he says, "sparkled with uncommon fire, tempered with the most attractive sweetness."

Her eyes, indeed, were the common fire of the camp; the most cowardly were warmed at them, and drew from them vigor and courage; and when she harangued her men on a day of assault or of battle, she left nothing for the clarion or the trumpets to do."*

Temperance in the use of wine was not amongst her virtues —a circumstance remarkable in a woman so renowned for her singular chastity—but she had great powers in bearing liquor. She drank often with her generals, says Pollio, though otherwise she was sober; she drank also with the Persians and the Armenians that she might overcome them.

At her feasts she used vessels of gold adorned with gems, such as Cleopatra was wont to display. She preferred being attended by eunuchs of grave years rather than by women. She made her sons speak Latin, so that it was only rarely and with difficulty that they spoke Greek. She herself was not wholly ignorant of Latin, says the historian, but modesty prevented her from speaking it. She spoke the Egyptian language perfectly, and was so well acquainted with Oriental history, that she is said to have written a compendious account of it.†

It is somewhat remarkable that Gibbon, one of whose great weaknesses was the pleasure which he felt in speaking to the discredit of women, and who, in the history of this very Zenobia, has founded a censure of the sex not merely unjust but at direct variance with truth, has omitted all notice of the vice of drunkenness with which Zenobia has been charged, and of which there is little doubt that she was really guilty. It is true that Pollio tells us her reason for drinking; but both men and women readily find reasons, quite satisfactory to

* "Galerie des Femmes Fortes," par le Pere le Moyne, p. 210. Paris, 1663.

† "Hist. August." lib. II, 335.

themselves, for indulging in their darling sins. The jolly English Churchman, who has enumerated in three Latin verses the five reasons for drinking, has judiciously made reason fifth so broad as to include in it anything that any person at any time may be pleased at consider as a reason.* The Roman writer's statement is about as valid a vindication of Zenobia as the defence made by Mr Alison the historian, of Pitt's deep drinking. "Though he often," says Mr. Alison, in a passage of rich, though perfectly unintended, humour, "drank deeply, it was only to restore nature after the incessant exhaustion of his parliamentary efforts." † Mr. Alison just shows that Pitt had no worse and no better reason for "drinking largely" than other large drinkers have, or than drinking weavers and cobblers have, while the defence embodies a belief in the dangerous doctrine that "drinking largely" as Pitt did, restores nature when it is exhausted.

Towards Herod, the only son of her husband, Odenathus—for Zenobia had a husband, though the readers of her history are apt to forget the circumstance—Pollio tells us that she displayed the spirit of a step-mother. Herod was an effeminate creature, wholly given up to Oriental luxury, delighting in pavilions and tents ornamented with gold. Odenathus, "moved by the affection of paternal indulgence," says Pollio, sent to Herod the concubines, riches and gems, which he captured in war. Such a Sybarite was not likely to disturb the rule of a woman of the masculine and warlike soul of Zenobia.

Father le Moyne, in his rhapsodical work on great women, has given a prominent place to Zenobia, "who," he says, "uni-

* The famous lines are by Dean Aldrich :

"Si recte memini, causæ sunt quinque bibendi,
Hospitis adventus, præsens sitis autque futura,
Aut vini bonitas, aut quælibet altera causa."

† Alison, "Hist. of Europe," vol. III, p. 114. Edit. 1847.

ted all the graces of her own sex to all the virtues of ours." He speaks of her daughters, of whom I have not elsewhere heard, as having the generosity, and wearing the dress of Amazons. She, herself the descendant of Cleopatra, he says, inherited the beauty, the wit and the magnificence of that celebrated queen. She had, besides, other virtues of her own, being chaste and magnanimous, eloquent and acute. Her beauty, says the gallant priest, was a beauty majestic and military, a beauty of command and of action. Her heroic figure, he goes on to say, her assured countenance, her haughty and hardy grace, her eyes brilliant and full of fire, and all her exterior was like that which painters have given to virtue and victory. Her body, so perfect, was inhabited by a mind yet more perfect; like a fine intelligence in a fair star. The Roman historians, who for state reasons have blackened the reputation of Cleopatra more than the sun of Egypt had blackened her face, have not touched the honour of her descendant. She was more chaste, he adds, in marriage, than their vestal were in their virginity; and when Odenathus was taken from her, she still remained married to his name and memory.

After a very long and flowery eulogium on Zenobia, from which what I have here given are mere pickings, the good father concludes the whole by dealing with Zenobia as honest Launcelot Gobbo does with the Jew's daughter. "I was always plain with you," says Launcelot, "and so now I speak my agitation of the matter; therefore be of good cheer, for truly I think you are damned." So Father le Moyne tells us that with all her virtues, Zenobia is now in hell in the midst of everlasting torments. The following piece of raving is what he calls the *reflexion morale* on her case.

"It is a pity that a generosity so high, a constancy so heroic, a chastity so invincible, graces so modest, so many virtues of peace and war are damned; and that Zenobia the brave, the temperate and the chaste, has certainly as bad an

eternity as Messalina the dissolute and debauched. The pagan virtues, whatever beauty they may have, or however adorned they may be, are but foolish virgins. The heavenly bridegroom knows them not, and whatever importunity they may make, the gates of his palace will never be opened to them. The chastity, the temperance, the modesty, the fidelity which will not go to him with the lamp burning, and shall not be presented to him by faith and by charity, shall not be at his marriage. And if there be no place there for temperate and modest pagan women, who shall not have been warned to prepare their lamps and to follow the guides that are agreeable to the bridegroom, what will become of the licentious and disorderly Christian women, who shall have broken their lamps and despised and rejected their guides? Certainly if it is writen that repentant Nineveh shall comdemn Jerusalem the incorrigible, it is much to be feared that the great Zenobia, and other virtuous pagan women will rise at the general judgment and bear testimony against our ladies who refute their belief by their lives; who reprove by their softness and their luxury the power of Christianity and the austerity of the Gospel; who love better to lose eternal crowns than to part with the little half-withered flowers which only infect them with their bad odour, and sting them with their prickles."

The edition of Le Moyne's work from which I have made these extracts, contains a portrait of Zenobia in full armour; her helmet plumed, a rich necklace plaited across her breast, and a hunting spear in her hand; while in the back ground she is represented on horseback engaged in combat with a lion. She did not, says Father le Moyne, "chase the swans which are harmonious and loveable, and only armed with plumes, nor the bees which carry honey about them, and respect innocent persons and virgins."

Pollio tells us that Zenobia shared with her husband in the pursuit of the lion, the leopard, the bear and other wild beasts.

The courage of Zenobia deserted her when she fell into the hands of the Romans. She became afraid of death, and charged her guilt in resisting the power of Aurelian on the bad advice of her friends. Her secretary, the celebrated Longinus, was amongst those who fell a sacrifice to the unworthy means which she adopted to save her life. Aurelian treated her as Octavius intended to treat Cleopatra. After the barbarous Roman fashion, she was led in triumph by Aurelian in his procession, covered with ornaments, which only made her humiliation more conspicuous. She was adorned with gems of such size as to be a burden to carry; and it is a picturesque and affecting circumstance mentioned by Pollio, that she very often stopped on the way declaring that she could not bear the weight with which she was loaded. Her hands and her feet were bound with gold; and a large golden chain was placed round her neck and carried before her by one of her Persian attendants. It is spoken of as an act of clemency that the emperor permitted her to live, and gave her a possession near the palace of Adrian, which was afterwards called by her name, and where she lived in the style of a Roman matron.

Upon the means adopted by Zenobia, with a view to save her life, Gibbon, as I have already noticed, has made a remark, which is the reverse of being well-founded. "As female fortitude," he is pleased to say, "is commonly artificial, so it is seldom steady and consistent." He would have been speaking according to facts, if he had said that while the fortitude of men is often artificial, blustering and shallow, and incapable of confronting adversity, that of women is commonly natural, calm and consistent, and acquires strength and cheerfulness amidst trials and sufferings.

The case of a woman exposing the lives of others to danger in order to save her own, is very uncommon; with men it has been so usual, that it is only the exceptions which have been considered worthy of record. Hence it is that the terror of

Zenobia has been so much noticed. It must be admitted that her conduct was unworthy of a woman, and the blot on her memory is that she unhappily followed the example of many men before her, rather than the lessons which she might have learned from her own sex.

When the first conspiracy against Nero was discovered, the woman Epicharis, who knew of the whole contrivance, persisted, under the torture, in refusing to answer any questions that might involve the safety of any of her accomplices. And when all Nero's senators, and all the men around him, including, it is to be feared, the philosopher Seneca, joined either passively or actively, in the accusations raised against Octavia, at the instigation of the emperor, when he became desirous of getting rid of her, for the sake of Sabina, her maid-servant Pythias alone refused, for court-favour, to deny or even conceal the truth, and under the severest tortures still asserted the perfect purity of her mistress;* rendering to an oppressed woman the greatest and noblest service which can be rendered to those who cannot be delivered from death; for posterity accepts the evidence of this solitary witness, and rejects the whole opposite testimony which terror and bribery were able to procure against Octavia.

Nay, the sentiment of heroic endurance which sustains woman under the most terrible sufferings so much more than it does men, is not confined to those who have been trained to fortitude by a life of virtue. Anne Boleyn and Mary Queen of Scots died as calmly as did Lady Jane Grey or Marie Antoinette; and ancient history records that Leaina, a courtezan of Athens, engaged in the famous conspiracy of Harmodius Aristogiton endured with courage and joy the most exquisite tortures, rather than reveal what she knew of the plot.

* Dion, "Hist." lib. LXII. p. 707.

JULIAN THE APOSTATE.

We may become familiarly acquainted with Julian the Apostate from various sources, but particulary from the admirable narrative of his officer, Ammianus Marcellinus. He was of middle stature; *mediocris staturæ* is the expression of Ammianus, his friend, and I must adhere to it. Julian, it may be remarked, has been called a little man, and the people of Antioch ridiculed him as a short man (*homo brevis.*) Ammianus also tells us that when all Constantinople turned out to see the new emperor, the hero of so many victories, the people were surprised at his youth, and his small person (*adultum juvenem, exiguo corpore.*)*

All this, however, is, I think, quite consistent with the belief, which I do not doubt is the true one, that Julian was just as Ammianus says, of middle stature. The satirical humor of the Antiochians would not stick closely to dry facts; and the mob of Constantinople would expect their heroic sovereign to be a man of gigantic stature, as all ideal warriors are in popular belief.

The hair on Julian's head was soft, as if he had carefully combed it; his beard was shaggy, ending in a point. As in

* Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxii. c. 2. sec. 5.

his mind, Julian, in some respects, bore a likeness, though with a marked inferiority in point of intellect, to the most illustrious of the emperors, so in his face there were two features in which he resembled Cæsar. He had, like Cæsar, the beautiful bright eyes which expressed every emotion of the mind; like Cæsar also, his mouth was rather large. His eyebrows were fine; his lower lip fell down a little. He had a very straight neck, somewhat bent; and large and broad shoulders. From his head, says the historian, to the very tips of his nails, there was a proportion in all his parts; and he excelled in strength and swiftness.*

I ought to add, that in the view of St. Gregory Nazianzen, Julian's shoulders were continually in motion, his eyes wild and wandering, his walk irregular, his head always moving this way or that way.

One of the coins of Julian represents him without a beard as he was at the period when he outwardly professed Christianity. In the coins on which he has the imperial title of "Augustus," he has the rough, shaggy beard attributed to him. On his head is a fillet, sometimes highly ornamented, apparently formed of strings of beads. Ammianus gives an amusing account of his coronation when the soldiers raised him on their shields, and saluted him as Emperor.

He was beseeched to assume the diadem; he said he had no such thing about him. The soldiers said that his wife's necklace, or an ornament from her head-dress would do. Julian objected, that he thought at the outset of his reign to wear a woman's toy would be a bad omen. The soldiers were then about to make a coronet out of part of a horse's trappings, but this also Julian resisted. The dispute was put an end to by one of his officers, whose name, Maurus, has been preserved, who took the collar which he wore as the badge

* Ammianus, lib. xxv, c. 4, sec. 22.

of his rank, and placed it on the head of the general, who accepted the throne, and distributed the usual presents.*

Julian's rough beard subjected him to ridicule at various times. I am afraid that it was the affectation of looking like a philosopher that led Julian to cultivate his beard. From Julius, who was always shaved, to Julian, none of the emperors, with the exception of Adrian had worn a beard. The Greek emperors after Justinian, who was smoothly shaved, wore their beards long. Amongst the Romans, it is said, the fashion of shaving daily having been introduced by the great Scipio whom Cæsar perhaps wished to imitate in this—while the example of Cæsar would stamp the fashion as imperial. The flatterers of the weak and mean Constantius at the time that they did not foresee Julian's elevation to the throne jeered at his person and habits. They called him a goat, and the shaggy Julian, a talking mole (*loquacem talpam* is the expression in Ammianus,) an ape in purple, and a Greek literary puppy (*litterio Græcus.*)

On his visit to the Christian city of Antioch, the people sung songs in derision of his character and religion, and did not forget to deride his beard. They called him a little man stretching out his shoulders, and carrying his goat's beard before him, and walking big like a man of stature. He was also called the priest's assistant (*victimarius*), in allusion to his numerous sacrifices, and his carrying the sacrificial things in the processions, surrounded by a troop of women.

Julian felt these attacks, but suppressed his anger, and revenged himself not like an emperor or a soldier, but like a philosopher, or—if it might be so said of the champion of fallen paganism—like a Christian, by writing in reply to his libellers the piece called "Misopogon," in which he apologised for his own peculiarities, and satirised the vices of the

* Ammianus, xxv, c. 4. sec. 22.

people of Antioch; and this reply he caused to be affixed to the gates of their dissolute capital.

With all his great virtues, the pedantry and affectation of Julian furnished fair materials for satire. What of his habits has been passed over in silence by Ammianus, his own ostentation has supplied. He had the vanity to distinguish himself not merely by the simplicity of his habits but by his filthiness. We learn from himself that he was almost wholly covered with hair. His beard was not merely shaggy but, to use the genteel expression of Gibbon, it was also "populous." Fanaticism produces similar results in all ages and countries, and under every varying form of faith. Many Christian saints have believed that God takes delight in all manner of filthiness; and Cardinal Bellarmier, undoubtedly a good man, had the same passion for the comfort and nourishment of small vermin as Julian had.

In that portion of the very critical review of Julian's character which Ammianus devotes to the enumeration of his defects, we are told, amongst other points well known to his detractors and his friends, that his tongue was too loose, and rarely silent; and that his greed of approbation made him keep company with unworthy persons.

Julian in his early days had devoted some attention to the study of music. He was also taught the Pyrrhic dance, a military movement to the sound of flutes, but seems to have thought this exercise unworthy of him.

In his diet Julian, we are told by Ammianus, was as abstemious as if his food had been regulated by the sumptuary laws of Lycurgus. He rejected the pheasants and other delicacies prepared for him, and contented himself with the meals of the common soldiers; and he would eat his hasty and coarse fare, standing after the military fashion. The scantiness and weakness of his food astonished his friends. From other sources we learn that Julian was almost a vegetarian, being

one of those who fancy that a vegetable diet preserves the health both of the body and of the mind. To Julian's diet producing its usual effects on his head and stomach, we may attribute his belief that he held personal conferences with the gods and goddesses of his faith. His religion was of a gloomy nature, and not that rich and cheerful "prodigality of faith" which was the character of Grecian paganism in its palmy days. His melancholy vision of the genius of Rome leaving his tents may be ascribed to his dyspeptic supper. He had been feeding on pulse, the diet of ancient Rome in the days of its simplicity.*

Ammianus admits that the religion of Julian was mingled with superstition; and the heathens, while they loved him, ridiculed his numerous and expensive sacrifices and observances. As a Platonist, Julian believed in the transmigration of souls. The ecclesiastical writer, Socrates, tells us, and on this point I do not see that there is any occasion to reject his testimony, that Julian believed that the soul of Alexander the Great inhabited his body; that he was, indeed, Alexander in the person of Julian.† Basilina, his mother, when about to be brought to bed dreamed that she was delivered of Achilles, and after waking, and while she was relating her dream to her attendants, she brought Julian into the world.

After the ancient fashion Julian sought to learn the secrets of the future by inspecting the entrails of beasts. The Christian writers accuse him of using human sacrifices at the celebration of his nocturnal rites. At Carræ, in the temple of the moon, there was found, it is said, after his death, the body of a woman hung up by the hair, with the arms extended, and the belly opened. Julian is also charged with having killed a great number of children in the performance of magical ceremonies. Theodoret and St. Gregory Nazianzen are the author-

* Ammianus, lib. xxv, c. 11, sec. 2.

† Socrates, "Hist. Eccles." lib. III, c. 21. Paris, 1668.

ities for these stories, and their testimony wants confirmation. A story is told by the monk Zonaras, which has more than one parallel in history. It is said that a youth with yellow hair appeared to Julian in a dream, while he was at Antioch, and told him he would die in Phrygia.* The spot where he was killed, it appears, bore that name; but Julian was misled by believing the prediction to refer to the large country of Phrygia.

Julian divided his time into three parts; devoted to study, business, and rest. He could, whenever he wished, awake from sleep, an unhappy gift, the fruit, most probably, of his spare vegetable diet. He rose, says Ammianus, in the middle of the night, not from downy plumes or silken beds shining with ambiguous lustre,† but from a rough carpet. He then prayed silently to Mercury, and next directed his attention to public business, and afterwards to the study of philosophy, rhetoric, and history. The labor of war occupied his days. In every respect he mortified the lusts of the flesh like an anchoret. He was always "warring either against the Persians or his own vices," is the beautiful eulogium of a heathen writer.

The best and most complete character of Julian is to be found in Motaigne's "Essay on Liberty of Conscience." It is no discredit to Julian to have been assailed by every kind of calumny by writers who praise the character of such men as Constantine and Constantius.

* Joa. Zonaræ Monachi Annales, lib. II, p. 28. Paris, 1687,

† "Non e plumis vel stragulis sericis, ambiguo fulgore nitentes," says Ammianus. Is this changing color silk?

EUDOCIA.

The Empress Eudocia, the queen of Theodosius the younger, was, while a heathen, called Athenais, and was the daughter of Leontius, a philosopher of Athens. "The writer of a romance," says Gibbon, "would not have imagined that Athenais was nearly twenty-eight years old when she enflamed the heart of a young emperor." Having been ill-used by her brothers, Athenais fled to Constantinople, where she was introduced to Theodosius by his sister Pulcheria, who had previously given a glowing description of the charms of the fair refugee.

In Gibbon's account of Athenais, the physical and the sentimental are blended together in that writer's very best style. "She had," he says, "large eyes, a well-proportioned nose, a fair complexion, golden locks, a slender person, a graceful demeanor, an understanding improved by study, and a virtue tried by distress."

Theodosius, who was first permitted to behold this rare beauty from behind a curtain, where he had been concealed by Pulcheria, immediately fell in love with her, and made her his queen. She, on her part, forsook the pagan faith, and at her baptism assumed the pleasant Christian name of Eudocia. The Christian empress delighted in elegance and splendor,

loved gems and gold, and had a taste for literature and art after the corrupted fashion of her age. She is the reputed author of a cento from the verses of Homer, adapted to the life of Christ, which is still extant. She converted several books of the Old Testament into hexameter verse, and wrote the "Legend of St. Cyprian," and a "Panegyric on the Persian Victories of Theodosius." The composition of a cento is a sufficient proof of the depravity of the empress's taste, which, however, would be much admired in her own day; and the turning of the Old Testament into hexameters was certainly a sad waste of time.

The empress enjoyed a high reputation for piety. Her habits of devotion, however, did not save her good name from the whisperings of scandal. The emperor became jealous of her, and banished her to Jerusalem, where she died after an exile of sixteen years, spent in religious exercises. The emperor's favorite eunuch raised the calumny. Eudocia was charged with an amour with Paulinus, the master of the horse, whose comeliness is celebrated by the writers of the time. The evidence of her guilt was that Paulinus had brought to the emperor some apples which Theodosius himself had given to Eudocia. Gibbon doubts the truth of even the story being alleged. If it were true, there is certainly good ground for believing that a plot had been laid, such as in romances we often find quite effectual for the ruin of a virtuous woman.

The reader, as Gibbon remarks, is reminded of the tale in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainment," of the young man who kills his wife in a fit of jealousy, arising from her having given away, as he supposes, one of the three apples which he had bought for her in the caliph's garden at Balsora. Shakespere's "Othello" has done great good in discouraging, through the case of the handkerchief, all belief in this kind of circumstantial evidence.

In reading the story of Eudocia, as well as the Arabian tale,

it should be recollected that, in the emblematic language of the East, the ripe apple signifies requited love. "Comfort me with apples," says the bride in the Canticles, "for I am sick of love." In some ancient paintings, Venus was represented with a ripe apple in her hand. From Catullus, we learn that it was the custom for the fair one who had secretly received an apple from her lover, to conceal it in her bosom.* In one of the Love Epistles of Aristænetus, a writer living perhaps near to the time of Eudocia, the lover is represented as inscribing a declaration on the apple which he throws in the way of his mistress.† In another of these love letters, the lover throws an apple into the bosom of the woman with whom he is in love, which she receives and kisses, and hides in her girdle.‡

* Catullus, "Carm," lib. xv, Ad Ortalum.

† Aristænetus, "Epist." lib. I, Ep. x.

‡ Aristænetus, "Epist." lib. I, Ep. xxv.

THEODORA.

The Empress Theodora, the profligate wife of Justinian, was, as her mother and her sisters Comitona and Anastasia were, extremely beautiful. Yet her beauty was not of that kind which has sometimes been possessed by licentious women which simulates modesty; for Procopius, using a remark which has been attributed to many others since his time, tells us that she carried indecency in her very face. It should be noticed that she and her sisters were deliberately and studiously brought up to wickedness by their mother. Each of them, as she grew up, was sent to the stage of Constantinople. When Comitona, the eldest, came out, Theodora, then a mere girl, appeared as her attendant, wearing the long sleeves which marked the dress of a servant, and carrying the seat on which her sister sat. Theodora followed the career of Comitona, and her beauty soon attracted admiration. Her face, such as it is described to have been, was reckoned fine; her complexion was moderately pale; her eyes were brilliant, and glanced hither and thither. Her stature was short; but the exquisite beauty of her figure was such, we are told, as could not be expressed by human art or declared by speech; the statue erected of her by the Byzantines failing entirely, as Procopius says, to do justice to the charms of her person.

Theodora as empress loaded herself with jewels after the fashion of Constantinople, that fashion so repeatedly inveighed against by St. John Chrysostom in his discourses; and a figure of her in long robes, with strings of large pearls on her head, neck and shoulders, has been engraved from a mosaic made of her in her time at Ravenna.*

Beyond her talents as a comic actress—a sort of Columbine—Theodora is not represented as having any of the accomplishments of her times, and it is expressly mentioned by Procopius that she could neither sing, nor play on an instrument, nor dance. She was thus deprived of some of the most powerful weapons for attacking the human heart. Justinian, her devout and theological husband, must have been one of those men whom the grossest indecency attracts instead of repelling. The law which forbade the marriage of a patrician with a woman who had been on the stage was expressly and solemnly repealed in favor of the most abandoned of stage performers—of her whom the historian calls "of all bad women that ever lived by far the most celebrated,"—who practised arts "which he who wishes God to be merciful to him may not even mention." Justinian, adds Procopius, took for his own "the common disgrace of all mortals." The emperor multiplied statues of her throughout the provinces. He also called cities, towns, forts, and public baths afer her name.†

It has been said that the crimes of the Tiberiuses, Caligulas, and Neros could not have been perpetrated by Christians. If the parallels to these monsters are not easily to be found amongst the emperors after Constantine, heathen Rome has no female parallel to Theodora; for Messalina herself, with all her infamy embalmed in the terrible verses of Juvenal, gains something of character when her guilt is compared with

* See Procopius, "Anecdota" (Fig. 5) Lipsiæ, 1827.

† See Alemanni, "Annotationes Historicae," Procopius, p 361, where a list of places called after Theodora is given

the horrible brutalities which, after all the deductions that can be made, we are compelled to believe of "the highly-to-be-revered Theodora, given by God to Justinian," as the loving emperor called her.

Human faith is staggered at the record of her impurities, and might doubt if the Roman senator who has told so much and yet professes to have left more and worse actions unrecorded, had not been over-credulous of an infamy than which the deceased imagination of a romancer, revelling in ideal wickedness and painting a lascivious fiend, could have conceived nothing more horrible. But though we should withhold our belief from the anecdotes of Theodora in her palace, we are compelled to give credit to Procopius, her contemporary, when he relates what she did on the open stage of Byzantium. That stage must have made rapid progress in shamelessness since the time of Chrysostom; for though in his discourses he has more than one allusion to the unbecoming sights to be seen there,* he has no description of anything like what is described by Procopius.

The same reason which has led me merely to allude to the ample record of the habits of Tiberius, compels me to adopt a similar method with Theodora, and to pass over wholly untouched the picture of Antonina, the wife of Belisarius, the companion in wickedness of the empress.

Of such a woman as Theodora it may be censurable even to hint that one good thing can be said. I do not know whether it be to her credit, or otherwise, that after she became empress she did not forget her old stage companions, but kept with her Chrysomalla and Indara, who had been dancers when Theodora was the comic actress. The empress also was the foundress of one of those asylums—the earliest

* See Chrysostom, Opera, lib. VII. p. 113; and lib. XI. p. 464. Paris, 1718.

noticed in history—which in modern days are called by the beautiful and tender name of Magdalen Institutions.

I am sure, however, that she deserves some credit for having employed her influence with her orthodox and persecuting husband to procure a relaxation of the severities exercised against heretics. Her own faith, it should be admitted, was not quite orthodox. The clergy, who in all ages have been in the habit of studiously disobeying the prohibition of the Saviour against presuming to point to the sins of individuals as the cause of the afflictions with which Heaven may be pleased to visit them, regarded the malady of which Theodora died—a cancerous sore covering all that fair body which had raised her to the throne of the greatest empire in the world—as the result of the divine vengeance, not on her impure life, but on her want of a perfectly accurate belief in the Athanasian Creed. Had she in all matters of faith been what the triumphant religious party would have had her to be, it is not unlikely that they would have done something to save her memory from the execration of posterity by obliterating the record of her crimes.

Of the innocent arts which Theodora used to heighten the effect of her beauty, something may lawfully be said. From her system of living, as detailed by Procopius, it may be inferred that in her time stoutness of form, for which the Byzantines have long had a passion, was in request; for her habits were exactly such as are prescribed to those who desire to be fat. She made abundant use of the bath, remaining in it long, and only leaving it to eat and to rest in bed during great part of the day as well as of the night. At table she used an infinite variety of meats to provoke her to eat plentifully.

"The sensual Byzantines," says M. Chasles, "destroyed the worship of beauty and proportion, in order to accord to stout-

ness that preference which all the nations of the East have professed."* The tastes of Constantinopolitans in this way is sufficiently established by a variety of passages in the writers of the Eastern capital. Chrysostom feels it necessary to tell his hearers that "the virtue of the body does not consist in fatness, nor in a good habit of person, but in the capacity of bearing torments."†

In a passage which M. Chasles has quoted, the same father speaks of the great care and expense which the ladies took to display the floating folds of their robes, the adornment of their hair, and the roundness of their figures. I doubt, indeed, if this taste has not been in most countries a more prevailing one than critics on statuary are willing to allow; and if the modern Americans are not the only people who are fairly chargeable with a decided fancy for slenderness, while their beauties have been severely censured by good judges on every point except their feet, of which the German traveller, Grund, anxious to praise all that is right as well as all that is wrong in America, has spoken with such rapture.‡

Stoutness of figure, as it has certainly been the taste of Asia and Africa, has not escaped admiration in Europe. I have met with few commendations of slenderness in European

* Chasles, "Etudes sur le Moyen Age," p. 113.

† St. Chrysostom, Opera, lib. I, p. 724.

‡ "There is one perfection," says Grund, "in ladies sometimes the first to attract our notice, and the last to vanish when every other beauty has faded and departed, which consists in delicate feet and ankles. The idea is taken from Goethe's novel, 'Die Wahlverwandschaften,' and would hardly have found its introduction here, were I not backed by the all-powerful authority of the immortal poet, who at the same time was the most accomplished artist. Well, then, this perfection is one of which the American ladies can certainly boast, and which they possess in a higher degree than the French, though they take infinitely less pains to obtrude it on the notice of strangers."—THE AMERICANS, BY FRANCIS J. GRUND. Vol. I, p. 37. Lond. 1837.

writers. Chaucer indeed tells us of Alison, the carpenter's wife, that

> "Fayre was this young wif, and therewithal
> As any wesel hire body gent and small;"

On the other hand, in a great variety of European writers of different nations and ages, the *embonpoint* enters into the description of a beauty. In the "Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles," it almost uniformly forms an element in the charming women mentioned. In the third novel, the Miller's wife is "very beautiful and *embonpoint*." In the twenty-first, the abbess is described as "beautiful and young and *embonpoint*." It is true that in some other instances in these tales, the expression *embonpoint* is evidently taken to mean "well made," generally speaking; but this only makes the proof stronger that stoutness was considered to be handsomeness, just as we find that the Saxon passion for fair hair and fair complexions has made the English word "fair" a synonyme for beauty.

The Queen of Navarre—who, however, borrows much of her phraseology from the "Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles"—speaks usually in the same way of her beauties. In her eighth novel the jealous wife asks her husband if it is the beauty and *embonpoint* of her servant-maid that have seduced his affections from her. In the fifteenth novel the wife ridicules the bad taste of her faithless spouse for loving a lady who is thinner and less beautiful than herself; and in the twenty-fifth, the wife of the advocate of Paris is described as "very beautiful in the face and complexion, and still more beautiful for her figure and her *embonpoint*;" (fort belle de visage et du teint, et plus belle encore pour la taille et pour l'embonpoint.)*

These are pictures of women drawn by a woman, and they show that the pious Queen of Navarre concurred in that taste

* "Contes et Nouvelles," de Marguerite de Valois, tom. i, p. 303. Amst. 1698.

which I believe has been the general taste in France to the present day. It was distinctly the taste of Brantome, and his taste was undoubtedly the fashionable taste of his time. Montaigne also describes the arts which were used by the ladies in his day to give themselves a false appearance of stoutness. Some years later we have the same taste displayed in a very minute and particular portrait of a female beauty, drawn by one who was herself a stout beauty. It is the description of Mademoiselle de Villene, by Madame Deshoulieres. I give the portrait entire.

"Je ne puis m'empecher de faire la peinture
Du plus charmant objet qu'ait forme la nature :
C'est la june Phyllis dont les divins appas
Se sont rendus fameux par cent mille trepas.
Je connois son esprit, sa beaute, son merite
Sa taille n'est encore ni grande ni petite ;
Elle est libre, mignonne et pleine d'agrement
Toute seule elle peut faire plus d'un amant.
Ses cheveux sont fort noirs ; son teint n'est pas de meme,
Il est vif, delie ; sa blancheur est extreme.
Son nez n'est pas mal fait. Mais que ses yeux sont beaux
Qu'ils sont fins ! qu'ils sont doux ! et qu'ils causent de maux !
Ces yeux noirs et brilliants ou l'amour pour ses armes
Font naitre des desirs et repandre des larmes.
Tant d'illustres amants que l'on voit en ces lieux
Sont, chere Amaryllis, l'ouvrage de ces yeux.
Sa bouche est d un beau tour ; elle est vive et charmante
Par sa forme on connait qu'elle est tres eloquente.
Elle a je ne sais quoi qu'on ne peut exprimer
Qui fait qu'on ne peut pas s'empechere de l'aimer.
Elle a de belles dents ; le tour de son visage
Est si beau, qu'il n'est rien qui le-soit davantage.
Elle a de l'embonpoint, comme il en faut avoir ;
Sa gorge est blanche, pleine : et l'on ne sauroit voir
En toute la nature une gorge plus belle ;
Et ses bras et ses mains sont aussi dignes d'elle.

La fraicheur de son teint, et sa vivacite
Font bieu voir que Phyllis a beaucoup de sante.
Elle a cet air gallant qui sait plaire et qui donne
Un charme inexprimable a toute sa personne.
Pour fair une conquete et pour la conserver
Elle a tout ce qu'il faut ; et l'on doit avouer
Que sa gorge, ses bras et sa taille admirable
Sa bouche et ses beaux yeux n'ont rien de comparable,
Son esprit tout divin repond a son beau corps
Le ciel en la faisant epuisa ses tresors."*

* "Œuvres de Madame et de Mademoiselle Deshoulieres," tom I, p. 1. Paris, 1821.

CHARLEMAGNE.

The person and habits of the Emperor Charlemagne have been described with all the minuteness desirable by his secretary and friend Eginhart.* He was large and strong in body, of great but not gigantic stature, measuring seven times the length of his foot.† It is probable that the emperor's foot was a very long one. He does not appear to have derived any of his personal features from his father Pepin the Little, but from his mother, who was very tall, and who is called "Bertha with the long foot." Pepin, his father, is described as being of exceeding small stature, but of great courage and incredible strength; though I cannot believe that he cut off the head of a lion with a stroke of his sword, as the French chronicles relate.‡ Bertha, his mother, in the early histories

* "Vita et Gesta Karoli Magni Imperatoris invictissimi," per Eginhartum ejus Secretarium descripta. Francof. 1707.

† "Statura eminenti," says Eginhart, "quæ tamen justam non excederet; nam septem snorum pedum proceritatem ejus constat habuisse figuram." "M. Gaillard," says Gibbon, "fixes the stature of Charlemagne at five feet nine inches of French, about six feet one inch and a fourth English measure."

‡ Mezerai "Abrege Chronologique de l'Histoire de France," tom. I, p. 447. Paris, 1717.

of France figures as a giantess; later historians admit that she was of great stature, and all agree that her character was generous and noble. Mezerai insists that she got her name of Bertha with the great foot, on account of her having one foot longer than the other.* I hardly think that this is so likely as that both her feet were large.

The head of Charlemagne was round and high, his eyes were very large and sparkling, his nose a little exceeded the middle size, his hair was beautifully white (*canitie pulchra*, says Eginhart,) his countenance cheerful. There was much dignity in his appearance, whether sitting or standing. Although his neck was thick and short, and his belly rather protuberant, those defects were concealed by the proportion of his other parts. His walk was firm, and his whole bearing manly. His voice was clear, but more slender than accorded well with the appearance of his body.†

It may be worth while to compare this sketch with the picture drawn by Mezerai. "One cannot hear the name of this prince without immediately conceiving the idea of something great. He was of an imposing figure, and well formed in all his parts, except that his neck was a little too thick and short, and his belly a little too protuberant. His walk was grave and firm, his voice not sufficiently clear. His eyes were well opened and brilliant, his nose long and aquiline, his countenance gay and serene, his complexion fresh and lively, nothing effeminate in his action and in his bearing, but nothing proud or disdainful; his mind gentle, easy and jovial, his conversation unrestrained and familiar."‡

There was a general resemblance between Charlemagne and William the Conqueror. Both were of great stature and full in person; and as Eginhart says of Charlemagne, so William

* Mezerai, tom. 1, 544.

† Eginhart, 'Vita Karoli,' ut supra. ‡ Mezerai, tom. 1, 458.

of Malmesbury tells us of the Norman, that whether sitting or standing his appearance was majestic.

The health of Charlemagne, Eginhart tells us, was good, except that for four years before his death he was frequently seized with fevers. Latterly he was lame of one leg. In his illness he acted more according to his own notions of what was good for him than by the advice of his physician, whom he hated because he forbade him the roasted meats to which he had been accustomed, and in which he delighted, and directed him to use boiled meat. He exercised himself continually in riding and hunting, according to the habit of his nation, as there is, says Eginhart, scarcely to be found on the earth a people who equal the Franks in this respect. He loved natural hot baths, frequently exercising himself in swimming, in which he excelled. On this account he built a palace at Aix-la-Chapelle; and here in his latter days he remained constantly till the end of his life. To these baths he invited his sons, his nobles, and his friends, and sometimes a whole crowd of attendants and guards; so that occasionally there would be a hundred or more persons bathing there.

In his dress the emperor followed the native Frank fashion, wearing a linen shirt and trowsers, a jacket with a silk border and trunk-hose. Besides these he had bands on his legs. In winter he fortified his breast and shoulders with a corslet made of otter skins. He wore a Venetian cloak, and was always girt with a sword, the belt of which and the girdle on which it hung were either of silver or gold. He had also a sword adorned with jewels which he wore on the occurrence of solemnities, or when ambassadors from distant nations were present. He, however, rejected all foreign garments, however beautiful, nor ever suffered them to be put upon him, except that when he was at Rome, at the request of Pope Adrian and again at the request of Leo, his successor, he appeared in a long robe and cloak and shoes after the Roman fashion.

At great public ceremonies he wore a garment interwoven with gold and jewelled shoes, with a golden clasp fastening his cloak. He then walked adorned with a diadem of gems and gold. On other occasions his dress was little different from that of the vulgar. In his eating and drinking he was temperate, but particularly in his drinking; for he abominated drunkenness in any man, and more particularly in himself, and those about him. He could not, however, Eginhart goes on to say, abstain so well from eating, and used to complain that fastings were hurtful to his body. He fasted rarely, and then principally on great days and with a great number of persons. At his ordinary suppers,* the emperor always had his roasted meats, of which, as I have before noticed from Eginhart, he partook more willingly than of any other food. During supper he either had a play performed before him, or listened to a reader. The reading in which he delighted most was the histories of ancient kings. It is mentioned also that he took great pleasure in the treatise of St. Augustin "De Civitate Dei."

In summer, after his noon's repast (*cibus meridianus*,) he used to take some apples, and drink a little, and then putting off his robes, as at night he would retire to rest for two or three hours.

Eginhart, who furnishs all these particulars, is an historian of the highest veracity. In the midst of all his partiality for his patron we can learn the whole truth about the emperor's habits. Charlemagne was temperate in his drinking, but voracious in his eating; and this, as will be seen, is what legend and romance unite in recording of him.

Gluttony, which would be reckoned exceedingly vulgar in

* The *cæna* of Charlemagne, which I have translated *supper*, was with the emperor as with the Romans, the principal meal of the day, answering in this respect, and from the time of which it was taken, to the modern dinner of England

humble life, is a kingly and aristocratic vice, and is not reckoned ungenteel in royal and exalted persons. "La noblesse *oblige*," says the Baroness d'Oberkirch, "nobility ennobles." Royal and aristocratic blood makes that refined in those who possess it, which is regarded as brutish among people who are not of good families. There is a long list of imperial gluttons ranging from the great Mithridates of Pontus—that king so wonderful in everything: who could drive six horses in hand, speak fluently twenty-two different languages, and swallow with impunity any ordinary poison—ranging from this marvellous man down to a living continental princess. The Baroness d'Oberkirch, who considered, as she herself tells us, the want of high blood as the only fault utterly unpardonable, records a feat of her own in gluttony in the confectionery line, for which she paid the penalty of several days' severe sickness, while all the time she had the mortification to see another lady of high family, who she says, had outdone her in the quantity which she had devoured, walking about apparently quite uninjured.

The emperor, says Eginhart, was accustomed to break his rest at night by waking several times and occasionally rising. Then, when he was girt, he not only admitted his friends, but if the count of the palace reported to him any lawsuit which could not be settled without his authority, he presently ordered the litigants to be brought in, and examined the case and gave judgment as if he were sitting in court. Besides this, he would at these times dispatch any other business and give orders to his servants. In these matters Eginhart describes a practice which the emperor had in common with Augustus and Napoleon.

Charlemagne, says his secretary, was copious in discourse, and could express very clearly whatever he wished to say. Not contented with his own language he bestowed pains in the acquiring of foreign tongues; and he learned Latin so well,

that he was accustomed to pray in that language as well as in his native tongue. The Greek, however, we are told, he could understand better than he could pronounce it. He cultivated the liberal arts most studiously, and loaded with honors those who taught him. His teacher in grammar was Peter of Pisa; in his other studies he listened to Albinus, called Alcuinus the Saxon, a deacon from Britain. Under him he devoted mnch time to the acquiring of rhetoric, and dialectics and astronomy. He attempted also to write, and for this purpose he carried about with him in his bed, under his pillcw, tablets and little books, so that when he had leisure he might accustom his hand in forming the letters. But this labor, says Eginhart compassionately, "unreasonable and late begun," succeeded but indifferently. The affectionate secretary enlarges on the emperor's works of piety and almsgiving, mentioning that he corrected the reading and singing in the churches, though he himself neither read nor sung in public, but in a low voice and in common with the rest of the congregation.

Such is the substance of Eginhart's highly intersting account of Charlemagne's studies, and from his kindly statements there is no great difficulty in fairly estimating the extent of the emperor's scholastic attainments. This great man, who makes so prominent a figure in history as a warrior and statesman, and a munificent patron and warm lover of literature and science as he undoubtedly was, could read but could not write. I do not know, however whether his painful efforts to acquire the art of writing in his advanced years do not excite an admiration of the greatness of his character as much as if we were to hear that he had been a scholar from his youth upwards. The amount of Charlemagne's Latin was that he was able to pray in that language—that is, he could repeat the Latin prayers of the Church, which many a one can do who can neither read nor write.

The Scottish King, Malcolm III., a man of good intellect

and a patron of learning, might as well be called a Latin scholar as Charlemagne, because he used to kiss the book which his wife the sainted Margaret read to him. There is no necessity nor even excuse for extending the meaning of the word *orare* in the secretary's phraseology farther than understanding it to signify that the emperer used the prayers prescribed by the Church. (*Latinum ita didicit ut æque illa ac patria lingua orare sit solitus.*) The expression about his Greek is obscure and evasive; and it may be fairly inferred that his being able to say "Kyrie Eleison" in church was about the full extent of Charlemagne's acquirements in that rich language. But what man, even what learned man in France or Germany, in that age understood Greek? Tiraboschi declines believing that even Italy, where, if anywhere in the west, the knowledge of it might be expected to be lingering, could boast of a single Greek scholar. "I do not find," he says, "to tell the truth, in the ninth century, any writer of our provinces, of whom it can be affirmed that he knew Greek."*

With the genuine portrait of the emperor, furnished by his contemporary and friend, the particulars of which I have given in a condensed form, it is curious and interesting to compare the picture drawn about three centuries later by a writer who, adopting the grave air of history, has given us the romance of Charlemagne. It will be seen, however, that this is a romance "founded on facts." In the history, Charlemagne is a tall man and an excellent eater; in the romance, he swells into the stature of a giant with a giant's strength, and the appetite of an ogre; while his temperance in drinking is eulogised by the romancer just as it is by the historian.

In the life of Charles the Great and Roland, falsely attri-

* Tiraboschi. "Storia della Letteratura Italiana," tom. VI, p. 118. Firenze, 1776.

buted to Turpin, Archbishop of Rheims, who was the emperor's contemporary, the twenty-first chapter is entitled, "De persona et fortitudine Caroli." Here we are told that Charles was Brown, [*brunus* after the German *braun*] red in the face, handsome and beautiful in the body, but terrible in the aspect. His stature was *eight* times [the history says *seven* times] the length of his feet, *which was very long*, [*silicet qui erant longissimi.*] His shoulders were very broad, continues the romancer, and his loins proportionately so; and he had a suitable belly, with thick arms and legs. He was most beautiful in all his joints, strong in conflict, and a most keen soldier. His face was a span and a half in length, his beard a span and his nose about half a span. His forehead was a foot in breadth, and his eyes as the eyes of a lion sparkled like carbuncles; every man on whom he looked in wrath was terrified. His girdle was eight spans.

In the eating department, Charles is made to figure like one of those terrible monsters for clearing the world of which, a meritorious young man, familiarly called "Jack," has acquired the immortal title of "the giant killer." At dinner, says the pseudo Turpin, the emperor took little bread, but eat the fourth part of a ram, or two fowls, or a goose, or a piece of pork (*spatula porcina*—a most indefinite description of quantity,) or a peacock, or a crane, or a whole hare. He drank, however, but little wine, and that soberly diluted with water. He was so strong, that with his sword he cut down an armed soldier sitting on horseback, horse and all, from the crown of the head to the ground with one stroke.

Similar stories have found their way into other histories besides this of the so-called Turpin. Montaigne censures Bodin for treating his favorite Plutarch as a fabulist when he relates that Pyrrhus, with his sword, cut down an armed man into two halves.* In the history of Scotland, however, the full

* Montaigne, "Essais,,, liv. iv. c. 32.

feat attributed to Charlemagne of cutting man and horse asunder at a stroke, is ascribed to a Scottish knight fighting in the French army during the wars between England and France in the fifteenth century. Charlemagne, we are farther told, could raise an armed man on his palm with one hand from the ground to his head. He was, says the pretended Turpin, in conclusion most generous in his gifts, most righteous in his judgments, and pleasant in his discourse.*

The reader who listens to the way in which, according to this wonderful history, the bed of Charlemagne was guarded by night, will not be surprised that his slumbers were neither sound nor lengthened. "About his bed every night a hundred and twenty brave and orthodox men (the author of the romance is intensely orthodox and exceedingly theological) were placed to guard him. Forty of these passed the first watch of the night, namely ten at his head and ten at his feet, ten on his right side and ten on his left, holding each in his right hand a naked sword, and in his left a burning candle. In the same way, other forty kept the second watch; and, in like manner, other forty kept the third watch even until day, the rest in the meanwhile sleeping."† The emperor must have been as famous for sleeping as he was for eating, if he could have slept with all these annoyances about him.

On four solemn festivals of his Church, says Turpin, when

* "De Vita Caroli Magni et Rolandi Historia, Joanni Turpino, Archiepiscopo Rimensi vulgo tributa," p. 56. Florentiæ, 1822.—The real Archbishop Turpin died in the year 800, fourteen years before Charlemagne. The romance attributed to him has been pretty accurately assigned to the end of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfeh century, between 1090 and 1120. By some writers, Pope Calixtus II., who in 1122 put the seal of his infallible authority on the truth of the whole story, has been charged with the authorship of this curious book.

† Turpin, "De Vita Caroli," p. 57.

the Emperor kept his court in Spain, he wore his crown and carried his sceptre; namely, on the birthday of the Saviour, on the eve of Pasch, on the day of Pentecost, and on St. James's-day.

MIDDLE AGE PORTRAITS.

I AM aware that as the memory of the heroes who lived before Agamemnon has perished, because, as Horace tells us, they had not a poet to celebrate their deeds, so there is much ignorance prevailing about the personal appearance and characteristics of the great and enlightened men and women of the dark ages, arising not so much from the want of writers and chroniclers in these ages as from their obscurity at this day, and the dryness of their manner, which repels the perusal of modern readers. The Byzantine writers, in particular, are tasteless, silly, and cold.

Mr. Hallam is not perfectly, though tolerably, correct when he tells us that between the appearance of the work of Boethius, "De Consolatione Philosophiæ," (anno 460) and the date of the "Letters of Abelard and Heloise" (1170,) Europe did not produce a single entertaining work. He might have added to this list, as coming within this dry period, that France gave to the world the "History of the Franks," by Gregory of Tours (591;) Germany, Eginhard's "Life of Charlemagne" (870;) and England, the histories of the Venerable Bede (730) and William of Malmesbury (1142;) all of them very interesting works.

I should have liked well to have been able to have presented

my readers with a complete portrait of the famous Queen Brunehilde, "the murderess of seven kings," as the old chroniclers call her; of the great and good King Alfred; and of the famous Gerbert, or Pope Sylvester II., the greatest man of science of his age, of whose connexion with the devil so many stories have been handed down to us by a succession of credulous historians. But above all, I regret, with M. Chasles, that we are entirely ignorant of the outward appearance, the manners and habits of Roswida, the nun of Gandesheim, who, amidst the thick darkness of the tenth century—the darkest of the dark—the *sæculum obscurum* of historians—with a pious and faithful hand, trimmed the lamp of knowledge in her chamber in the convent, and having studied the drama in the plays of the heathen Terence, wrote those Christian comedies still extant which are mentioned with such high praise by the earliest literary annalists of Europe, as works calculated to lead those who witnessed their performance in the paths of virtue and religion.

The Christian theatre was then, as it had always been since its origin with St. Gregory of Nyssa, and continued to be till about the end of the sixteenth century, the faithful ally of the pulpit and the Church. Little did the cheerful and good-humored nun dream that the time would come when a set of sour, surly fellows, calling themselves what she would not have called herself, godly, would rise up and make a divorce between religion and everything that is agreeable, and declare that such innocent and instructive recreations as had produced roars of salutary laughter amongst her spiritual sisters, were the inventions and contrivances of Satan, who according to the Puritans, is the author of everything that is pleasing, graceful, or elegant, or that tends, in any measure, to make the burden of this weary life bearable.*

* The question has been raised, were the comedies of Roswida inten-

M. Chasles is, I think, pretty safe in assuring us that whether Koswida was or was not beautiful, her appearance must have been intellectual and expressive. His picture of the young nun reading Terence under the shadow of the great oaks on the banks of the Ganda is extremely fine.

ded for performance and actually performed, or only designed for perusal? From the specimen of their character, and the nature of the fun which pervaded them, as given by M. Chasles, I cannot doubt that they were actually performed. Mr. Hallam ("Introduction to the Literature of Europe," lib. I, c. 14,) speaks with contempt of the nun's comedies; but Hallam speaks contemptuously of "Bayle's Dictionary," and had a perfect passion for everything that is dry and unreadable, and an utter destitution of all imagination, taste, or feeling. M Chasles, who has the faculties of a true critic about him, gives a favorable judgment on the writings of Roswida. See his Essay "Hrosvita, Religieuse de Gandesheim," in his "Etudes sur le Moyen Age," p. 243.

ABELARD AND HELOISE.

We have but little, and that very imperfect, knowledge of the persons of the famous Abelard and Heloise. In modern times doubts, not well founded I think, have been entertained, whether Heloise was really beautiful. It may not be good evidence of her personal charms, that Abelard, from the first time of his becoming acquainted with her, meditated her seduction; but the fair interpretation of the celebrated passage, in which he ranks her literary attainments above her beauty, is, I think, a testimony that she was possessed of beauty.

From this passage, it must be admitted that no less acute a critic than Bayle, who, however, had a predisposition to undervalue the influence of mere personal beauty in exciting love, has inferred that Heloise was but moderately comely. "As in her face," says Abelard, "she was not the lowest, so in literature she was supreme" (cum per faciem non esset infitma, per abundantium literatum esset suprema.*) From this indirect mode of compliment, Bayle argues that Heloise was merely "sufficiently pretty" (*assez belle;*) and he asks

* "Petri Abelardi Abbatis Ruyensis et Heloisæ Abbatissæ Paracletensis Epist. I, p. 9. Lond. 1718. (Rawlinson's Edit.)

whether those who have described her as possessed of the most ravishing beauty are to be believed in preference to Abelard, who had an interest in magnifying her charms.*

Now, it is certainly to be regretted that Abelard, who has shown so little modesty and so much distinctness in speaking of his own great personal attractions, has not avoided all ambiguity in his description of Heloise, though the circumstance is perfectly characteristic of the man. Yet it may still be contended, and with good reason, that the *non infima* may be taken to express a great degree of beauty, and be an equivalent for *eximia.*

A completely parallel usage of the same form of compliment occurs in the Gospel of Matthew. "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least (ουκ ελαχιστα) amongst the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a king who will rule my people," where it cannot be disputed that the highest honor is intended to be bestowed on the city which gave birth to the Saviour. On the whole, I think we have Abelard's testimony, as far as it is valuable, to the beauty of Heloise; and if on this snbject he has been much more concise than could have been wished, we must remember, that when he penned this passage, his days of rapture were fled for ever.

In an interesting abstract of the history of Abelard and Heloise, M. Villenave states his opinion that Heloise had a moderate beauty (*une beaute mediocre ;*) and from some expressions in the strange commentary which Abelard makes in his second epistle to Heloise, on the passage in the song of Solomon, "I am black but comely," he ventures to assert that she was of a dark complexion.

We have evidence that both Heloise and Abelard were of tall stature. M. Villenave's essay contains an account of the

"Dictionnaire Hist. et Crit." Art. "Heloise."

various translations, from place to place, which the remains of this famous pair underwent, from the time that they were first interred in the priory of Saint Marcel, till they were removed to the cemetery of Père le Chaise. "They have been troubled and agitated in death," he says, "as they had been in life."

When Lucien Buonaparte, as Minister of the Interior, in 1800, directed that their remains should be removed from their then resting-place, in the church of Nogent, to the Museum of French Monuments, the coffin was opened. The head of Abelard was found to be incomplete, but that of Heloise was perfectly entire. Besides the head of Heloise, the coffin contained the lower jaw in two parts, and the thighs, the legs, and the arms, all completely preserved.

On this occasion, Delaunaye, the author of a life of Abelard, examined with care the bones remaining of both skeletons (which were separated by a leaden plate,) and declared that both had been persons of great stature and fine proportions (*d'une grande stature et de belles proportions.*) Lenoir, the originator of the Museum of Monuments, came to the same conclusion, adding, that "the head of Heloise is beautifully proportioned; the forehead of a flowing form (*d'une forme coulante,*) well-rounded, and in harmony with the other parts of the head, expresses still a great beauty."

While their remains were in the Church at Nugent, enormous sums, amounting sometimes to a thousand crowns, were several times offered for a single tooth of Heloise. "I have no occasion to add," says Delaunaye, "that these offers were made by Englishmen." Lenoir preserved in his cabinet, some fragments of the bones and teeth of both Heloise and Abelard.*

* Villenave, "Abelard et Héloise, leurs Amours, leurs Malheurs, et leurs Ouvrages," p. 118, prefixed to "Lettres d'Abelard et Héloise." Paris, 1840.

"There is," says M. Villenave, "no authentic image of these illustrious personages, who for a moment were the light of letters and of philosophy in the long darkness of the middle ages." There are, it appears, two medallions of Abelard and Heloise in an old and miserable house in the cloister of Notre Dame, said to have been the residence of Fulbert, Heloise's uncle; but the costume of both proves that these figures are works of a comparatively modern date. Busts of the two were moulded by direction of Lenoir from casts taken from their skulls.

Those who do not seek so much to be accurate as entertaining in their histories, never fail to ascribe abundance of beauty to women who have inspired a powerful passion in the other sex. The popular stories of Heloise all agree in heaping a crowd of charms upon her person, which they have composed out of the usual materials of black hair, black eyes, ruddy lips, white teeth, perfect symmetry of form, &c. Such testimonies might be easily set aside, if in addition to the evidence furnished by Delaunaye and Lenoir, we had not other opinions from writers who had studied the history of the famous lovers, and were not able to put Bayle's interpretation on Abelard's words. Papire Masson tells us that Heloise was of excellent wit and beauty (*præstanti ingenio et forma.*)

Gervase also, who had studied every document referring to her and Abelard, and who certainly had nothing either of sentiment or romance about him, and whose avowed object was to withdraw attention from the history of the erring lovers to the record of the piety of the abbot and the abbess, considering that in treating as they had done of "the least edifying days" of Abelard, other writers had "composed pieces of gallantry only suited to nourish an impure flame;" even Gervase, the recluse of La Trappe, with these high views, feels justified in telling us of Heloise that "few girls surpassed her in beauty, while in the kingdom and perhaps on earth she had not her equal in wit and learning." (Peu de filles la surpassoient en

beaute; mais il n'y en avoit dans le royaume, ni peut-etre sur la terre qui l'egaloit en esprit et en erudition.*)

Brucker, the historian of Philosophy, also tells us that she was "commendable for her exquisite beauty" (*eximia pulchritudine commendabilis,*)† which is sufficient to show that this very learned writer had read the testimony of Abelard in the same spirit as I think it ought to be read.

Of Abelard we have his own testimony that he was very beautiful; and though he was in every respect a conceited coxcomb, perhaps his evidence on this point cannot well be rejected. He tells us that when he contemplated the seduction of Heloise he believed he would have a very easy task. "For I was then," he says, "of so great reputation and was so endowed with the graces of youth and form, that I feared no repulse from any woman whatever on whom I might condescend to bestow my love."‡ This language is remarkably characteristic of Abelard. At the time to which he refers he was forty and Heloise not half that age; and yet he could speak of his "youth." There is no doubt that downright impudence, in which Abelard was an eminent proficient, has a great charm for most men and women in this world. The power of audacity in politics and in war is invariably acknowledged, and in love also that assurance which is blind to all chance of failure will often succeed where a world of modest merit may fail. The younger Crebillion in his best and indeed his only decent romance, "Les Egarements du Cœur et de l'Esprit," introduces the universal favorite Versac instructing Meilcour in the art of succeeding in female society, and assuring him that all

* "Vide de Pierre Abeilard," &c. tom 1, p 42 Paris 1720.

† "Historia Critica Philosophiæ," tom. III. p. 744. Lipsiæ, 1743.

‡ "Tanti quippe tunc nominis eram et juventutis et formæ gratia præeminebam, ut quamcumque fœminarum nostro dignarer amore, nullam vererer repulsam" ABELARDI "EPIST" I, p 9.

that is required is to talk incessantly about himself and in praise of himself; and that it was by professing a highly favorable opinion of himself that he had driven all his rivals out of the field. "Let us not," says Versac, "be inwardly prejudiced in favor of our own merit, but let us appear to be so; let a certain assurance be painted in our eyes, in the tone of our voices, in our gestures, and even in the regard we have for others. Above all, let us speak continually and speak well of ourselves; let us not fear to say and say again that we are possessed of superior merit. There are thousands of people who are believed to have merit, simply because they never cease telling us that they have."*

Abelard could act accordingly to the laws here laid down without being guilty of any hypocrisy; for this arrogant man was sincerely and profoundly impressed with a sense of his own talents. It is not an uncommon thing to see a woman passionately in love with a man who has not one particle of love or admiration, or even respect, to bestow upon any creature in the world but himself; whose whole worship is paid at his own shrine; and who, to the eyes of all indifferent persons, appears scarcely to put a decent veil over his heartless and ignorant contempt of the being who loves him ardently, and of the whole sex to which she belongs. Such a man was Abelard; such a woman was Heloise. It is certainly far from evident that Abelard ever loved Heloise at all. Heloise herself, constitutionally the victim of vehement passion, had more than mere misgivings on this subject; and in a very remarkable passage in her first letter she reproaches Abelard with having neither friendship nor love for her; "and this," she adds, "my dearest, is not so much my thought as that of all others." †

* "Les Egarements du Cœur et de l'Esprit," p. 277. Maestricht, 1786.

† "Concupiscentia te mihi potius quam amicitia sociavit, libidinis ardor

That Heloise ardently loved and generously loved Abelard, there is no room to doubt. Hers was a better nature; and it is to be regretted that in their attempts to palliate the hateful selfishness of her seducer, most of his biographers have done great injustice to his victim. Her expressed desire to be considered the mistress rather than the wife of Abelard, after their secret marriage, has been represented as an effusion of diseased licentiousness. But Heloise may surely claim to be judged by reference to the opinions of the age in which she lived. To have been avowedly a married priest, would have ruined the worldly prospects and crossed the ambition of Abelard; while to have kept a mistress or any quantity of mistresses, would have been no bar to his sitting in the chair of St. Peter, and acting as the Vicar of God.

The prevailing opinion in Heloise's time was, that it was positively pollution for a priest to be married, but quite allowable for an unchaste man to officiate at the altar. This opinion was sincerely and devoutly held by Heloise, and in this light, which was her light, what has been charged against her as the delirium of profligacy, was the fruit of her zeal for the honor and the interests of Abelard. The great joy which she felt at the prospect of becoming a mother, is characteristic of the woman and a favorable characteristic. "She wrote to me about it," says Abelard, "with the greatest exultation" (*cum summa exultatione.*)* I suspect that the profligate theologian

quam amor. Hæc, delectissime, non tam mea est quam omnium conjectura."—EPIST. HELOISŒ, i, p. 51. This is most painfully unromantic. Heloise wrote with terrible vigor; and literary women of the twelfth century used language which is not permitted to men in the nineteenth. "She loved like St. Theresa, and wrote sometimes like Seneca," says M. Cousin. In her third letter, amidst a crowd of references to Scripture and to the writings of the Fathers and Saints of the Church, she makes a special and verbatim quotation from Ovid's "Art of Love."

* Abelardi, "Epist" I, p. 12.

did not read the letter conveying the happy tidings with any exultation at all.

Perhaps Heloise was aware that her vain lover would take care to let the world know sufficiently about his fine figure without her assistance. It must, however, be regarded as somewhat remarkable that the evidence of the woman who loved him to distraction is wanting to confirm the very favorable judgment which Abelard passes on his own beauty. Heloise alludes distinctly enough to his accomplishments, and tells us in language breathing of her own intense passion that neither maid nor married woman could resist him.* "There were in particular in you," she says, "two gifts by which you could presently draw towards you the heart of any woman—the arts of talking and of singing; gifts rarely attained by philosophers."

Abelard besides was a poet; I venture to conjecture a cold, stiff, and pedantic poet, and Heloise alludes to his amatory verses, which, on account of their sweetness of diction and music, she says, were in every one's mouth—as a principal cause why the women sighed for love of him; and "as these songs," she tells us, "for the most part treated of our loves, they spread my name in many regions and kindled the envy of many women against me."† She adds, and this is the only reference which she makes to his person, and it is vague enough —"For what gift of mind or body did not adorn thy youth?"

Pope, in his beautiful epistle of Heloise, makes her predict that her love would be grafted "immortal" on the fame of Abelard. I dare say that this might be the thought of Heloise, but it is just the reverse that has taken place. Abelard owes

* "Quæ conjugata quæ virgo non concupiscebat absentem et non exardebat in parseentem?"—Epist. Heloise, 1, p. 51. Heloise's language is unfortunately always gross.

† "Epist. Heloise," 1, p. 51.

all the fame which he now enjoys to the passion entertained for him by Heloise, who deserved a more worthy lover; he owes all the knowledge which exists of his name to his profligacy.

Popular opinion, misled by a succession of romance writers, has been amazingly favorable to the memory of Abelard, in whose real character it is difficult to discover one redeeming point. For the guilt of Heloise, many excuses may be pleaded. Abelard was a grave divine of forty years of age, a commentator on the Scriptures, and a teacher of religion, when he deliberately undertook the ruin of Heloise, then a girl between seventeen and eighteen;* and for this purpose he appealed to the avarice of her uncle, by offering to educate his niece at whatever price he should be pleased to pay. All this is stated in the plainest and coolest language by Abelard himself, in the first of the epistles published in Rawlinson's collection. He adds that he was comfounded at the simplicity of Fulbert in accepting his offer, and delivering his niece wholly into his hands, "as if he had committed a tender lamb to a famished wolf" (*quam si agnam teneram famelico lupi committeret.*)† All this is rather infamous than romantic; it is quite different from any of the tales in which those who have "loved not wisely, but too well," have mutually been the seducers of each other.

* The writers of the romances which have been made about Abelard evade all allusion to this dreadful disparity between the years of the seducer and the seduced. Both Abelard and Heloise died in their grand climacteric—the 63rd year of their ages; Abelard on the 21st of April, 1142 (Gervase, tom. II, p. 132); Heloise on the 17th of May, 1164 (Gervase, lib. II, p. 284.) Gervase expressly tells us that she was seventeen or eighteen when she became the pupil of Abelard (Gervase, tom. I, p. 42,) and when Abelard was consequently forty—more than double her age by two years. In the face of these dates, it avails nothing that Abelard, with his usual impudence speaks of his youth.

† Abelardi, "Epist." I, p. 9.

The latter days of the Abbess Heloise were not particularly edifying. Her mind, naturally easy to corrupt, had been completely debauched by the arts of Abelard; and when he was compelled to be virtuous himself, and desired to wean her affections from the deceitful pleasures of this world, and turn her soul to the all-satisfying love of God, he failed in his endeavors. Her letters afford the most unmistakable evidence, that never was mortal woman more feebly qualified for the office of an abbess than was the unfortunate Heloise, whose burning imagination in the midst of her devotions presented to her soul none but the most sensual ideas and images.

There has often been remarked something like a temporal judgment in the loathsome deaths of many who have desired to live in sinful pleasures. The Empress Theodora, we have seen, was covered with ulcers. The disease of which Abelard died has been described as the itch. His body appears to have been as completely overrun with sores, as was that of the patriarch Job in the days of his affliction. Gervase compares him to the man of Uz, both in his sufferings and in his patience, and has given a minutely painful account of his disease and his torments, with which I shall not trouble my readers.

ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY.

Saint Elizabeth of Hungary and her husband Louis the Landgrave of Thuringia were the most beautiful persons of their times. The eloquent modern biographer of Elizabeth, the Count de Montalembert, has in his extremely interesting work collected from a crowd of authorities the particulars of her form, and features, and appearance. All the chroniclers agree in praise of her extreme beauty.

"She was very beautiful in the person," say the Bollandists (*corpore valde speciosa erat.*) "Saint Elizabeth," says the German Adam Ursinus, "was perfect in the body" (*volkommen an dem Leibe.*) "There was not a more beautiful person in the world," says a French writer, quoted by Montalembert. Her figure was tall and stout, and her features admirable. Her hair was black, and her complexion was dark but beautiful; (*Braun an dem Angesichte und schon*) says Ursinus. And all authorities agree that her whole appearance and carriage were noble and majestic.

Montalembert has combined all the particulars furnished by his authorities into a fine portrait. "Her beauty," he says, "was regular and perfect; her entire figure left no improvement to be desired in it; her complexion was dark and clear

(*son teint etait brun et pur*,) her hair black, her figure of unrivalled elegance and grace, her walk grave, and full of nobleness and majesty; above all, her eyes appeared like a fire (*foyer*) of tenderness, of charity, and of compassion. It was easy to see that in this earthly beauty, there was painted a brilliant reflexion of the immortal beauty of her soul."*

The biographers of illustrious persons have generally shown a disposition, while intending to exalt the character of their heroes and heroines, to paint them like themselves; and often to lower them to their own standard. Thus D'Aubigne, trying to exalt Luther, makes him like a modern Evangelical preacher, and by leaving out one-half, and that certainly not the worse half of his character, has succeeded in depriving it of what helped to make the great German reformer the natural, impulsive, likeable man that he was; presenting to us a person little better than D'Aubigne himself, instead of the true man Luther; the player at skettles, the advocate of the theatre, the drinker of ale, whose favorite lines expressed his favorite tastes, which were for wine, beauty and music—

"Wer nicht liebt Wein, Weiber und Gesang,
Der bleibt ein Narr sein Lebelang."

In this spirit, some ascetic writers have painted Elizabeth, very much such as they themselves were, and have tried to make an absurd and whimsical devotee of her who appears to have been a perfect lady. Writers of a more sound and cheerful religion have described her as everything that is amiable and graceful in mind, as she was in body—a light and joy to the circle in which she moved. The amiable St. Frances of Sales, a saint of the first and truest order, himself by-the-by like Fenelon, whom he so much resembled in mind, distin-

* "Histoire de Sainte Elizabeth de Hongrie," par le Compt de Montalembert, p. 226. Paris, 1849.

guished for his personal beauty; "the gentleman saint," as Leigh Hunt, in one of his essays calls him—as if to be a saint and a gentleman were a marvel, if not even a miracle—this St. Francis, in his charming work on the devout life—the prettiest and most practical of books of piety—tells us of Elizabeth that "As for St. Elizabeth of Hungary, she played and danced sometimes when she was in company to which these things were pleasures, which did no harm whatever to her devotion, for that was so deep rooted in her soul, that as the rocks by the lake of Rietta grow larger amidst the waves and billows, so did her devotion increase amidst the pomps and vanities to which her condition exposed her. Great fires are made greater by the wind; it is only the small ones which are extinguished if they be not protected by a cover."*

The taste of Elizabeth was for plain and humble attire; but at any time, at the request of her husband, or to please the assemblies in which she had to appear, she would dress and adorn her beautiful person with a magnificence becoming her rank.

The fame and virtues of Elizabeth have thrown the name and history of her husband, the pious Louis, into the shade. It may be mentioned as interesting, that this matchless dark beauty was married to a prince of an exceedingly fair complexion, with long light hair flowing over his shoulders. His figure was well proportioned, the expression of his features calm and benevolent. "The charm of his smile," says Montalembert, "was irresistible. His walk was noble and dignified; his voice of extreme sweetness." "Many persons," adds the enthusiastic writer, "believed that they saw in him a striking resemblance to the portrait which tradition has preserved of the Son of God made man."†

* S. Françoise de Sales, "Introduction a la Vie Devote," c. xxxiv. Paris, 1850.

† "Histoire de Sainte Elizabeth," p. 215.

DANTE.

We are familiar with the slender, wasted, melancholy, and somewhat feminine features of the great Dante, conveyed to us evidently with fidelity by the earliest Italian painters, copying from the great Giotto, his contemporary. The soft, slender, half-shut eye is said to be a peculiarity in the paintings of Giotto, and part of his manner. The sallow, tinged complexion of the poet is well known, from its association with the belief of the common people of Italy in his time that Dante had actually visited those regions of pain—"the grieving city," and "the lost people,"—which he has described in that immortal work which awoke to life the long-slumbering genius of modern Europe and modern poetry. The original fresco portrait of Dante has been revealed in our days on the wall of the chapel of the Palazzo del Fodesta at Florence, where it had for nearly five hundred years been covered over with a thick dirty coating.

The exquisitely beautiful imaginative picture of Dante meditating the story of Francesca di Rimino, by Mr. Noel Paton, a Scottish artist of a peculiarly graceful genius—which, from the calm sweet atmosphere which it presents, would be a fine picture of the figure of Dante were a mere accessory, like a

shepherdess in a landscape of Claude—has the merit of giving us the Dante of Giotto—though the Dante of latter days; for the fresco discovered in 1840 is Dante in his thirtieth year. "On comparing," says Mrs. Jameson, "the head of Dante, painted was about thirty, prosperous and distinguished in his native city, with the latter portraits of him when he was an exile, worn, wasted, embittered by misfortune, and disappointed and wounded pride, the difference of expression is as touching as the identity of features is indubitable."*

* Mrs. Jameson, "Memoirs of the Early Italian Painters," vol I, p. 32.

ROBERT BRUCE.

ROBERT BRUCE, the greatest of Scottish kings, was, according to Major the historian, "of a fair, graceful, and active body, with broad shoulders, and a beautiful countenance; his hair after the fashion of the Northerns being yellow, and his eyes blue and sparkling."* His statue, as it was ascertained by the disinterment of his remains in the year 1818, "when Scotland after five centuries again beheld her great deliverer," was between five feet ten and six feet. From the measurement of the thigh bone, Dr. Gregory calculated that he was from five feet ten to five feet eleven; while others thought the skeleton that of a man of six feet. His head was of the middle size and well formed, such as is generally found in men of the highest ability.

The coins of King Robert represent him with his locks long and curled. The lower jaw was found to be remarkably strong and deep. This, says Sir Robert Liston, in his anatomical remarks on the skeleton, has been considered as indicative of great strength; and hence the ancient sculptors in their figures of the divinities combined depth of this bone with

* "Erat enim pulchro, decoro et vegeto corpore, latis humeris, venusta facie, flava, more borealium cæsarie, cæruleis et micantibus oculis."—MAJOR "HIST. MAJORIS BRITTANNIÆ," lib. v, c. 2.

the shortness peculiar to youth. The *ramus* (the bone proceeding upwards from the back part of the jaw,) he adds, rises almost perpendicularly from the base of the bone.

It appears that, as in the instances of Julius Cæsar and the illustrious Sobieski, the hardships and toils of his early years brought upon Robert Bruce a premature old age. The disease of which he died is attributed by Barbour, who in this point is followed by Bishop Leslie, to his out-door life during the days of his adversity.

In the character of this man there was a singularly harmonious and beautiful union of the best moral and intellectual gifts. His intellect was at once vigorous, refined, and subtle. With all his heroism as a warrior and his wisdom as a politician, he could never have done what he did, if he had not added to his heroism and his wisdom the rarest patience in affliction, and the most unwavering reliance on Providence. What he really achieved, and how he achieved it, make his genuine history like the richest treasures of romance. He had to contend with poor resources against a wealthy enemy, and with inferior numbers against armies and leaders who were the terror of all Europe, and yet this extraordinary contest was completely successful.

If Poland or Hungary, in their struggles for nationality in modern days, had had a head like that of Robert Bruce to guide them, they would at this hour have been completely independent nations. And this man, if he had not been a great warrior and a profound politician, and called on to exercise all his high and varied gifts for the noblest national purposes, would have shone, as Cæsar and Alexander would have shone, in private life. He was, as his recorded sayings prove, a man of a poetical mind, and of a gentle and graceful wit. He had those soft parts of conversation "which win the favor of the other sex." He resembled in all their good points Henry II. of England, and Henry IV. of France; and as men being

human must be imperfect, there is reason to believe that in some measure, though to a less degree, he also resembled those great kings in their too warm admiration of female beauty.

On the other hand, it has been alleged that, as is recorded of Augustus, he made his affairs of gallantry subservient to his state policy; and it certainly does not appear that they ever, as they frequently did with the English and the French Henry, stood in the way of his duty to himself and his country. However this may be, it is certain that it was in the depth of difficulties and dangers, out of which no genius less splendid and no virtues less obstinate than his could have delivered him, that a woman, gifted perhaps with a presentiment that a bright day of triumph was about to dawn on so much heroism and so much goodness, placed with her own hands the crown on the brows of the most illustrious of Scotland's monarchs.

INEZ DE CASTRO.

The true history of Inez de Castro, the mistress, and in succession the wife, and lastly, in death, the crowned queen of Pedro of Portugal, called "the Cruel," is as full of melancholy romance and of terrible and grand tragedy as anything that poetry and fiction have ever conceived. The extreme beauty of her neck and bosom has been celebrated. A portrait of her has been transmitted to our times. An engraving of it, borrowed from a work entitled "Retratos e elogios dos Varoes e Donas que illustraron a naçao Portugueza," is prefixed to the second volume of Adamson's "Life of Camoens," as her history forms an episode in the great epic poem of Portugal. The features are uncommonly regular and handsome, and the whole face and expression are marked by calmness and gentleness. Even the peculiar and unnatural head dress in which she appears does not destroy, though undoubtedly it does not add grace to, her sweet features.

That must have been an affecting and solemn ceremony, exciting emotions at once pleasing, sublime, and terrible—something to which there is no parallel in all history, when, four whole years after the barbarous murder of this famous beauty, Pedro, on coming to the throne, caused the body of his adored wife to be translated from its tomb in the monas-

tery of Santa Clara to that of Alabaca. When the corpse was disinterred in the midst of the nobles, the dead lady was placed on a royal throne, and Pedro with his own hands put a golden crown on her head, while all present kneeled before her, saluting her, and kissing her hand as Queen of Portugal. When the procession arrived at Alabaca, this appalling yet pathetic coronation of a mouldering carcase was repeated. The beautiful figure of Inez was sculptured on her tomb, but was afterwards injured by an attempt to open it made by King Sebastian.

The care which Pedro took solemnly to remove all manner of doubt of his having been married to Inez, though state policy had compelled him to espouse her only in private, redeems a multitude of crimes. We understand and compassionate the gloominess of his after character ; we sympathise with the terrible vengeance which he took on the assassins of his bride. He was deeply injured if ever man was. The murder of Rizzio by the Scottish barons was a crime of atrocious baseness ; but I do not know in what terms the killing of Inez de Casto by the Portuguese nobles can be at all adequately described.

The narrative now given of the resurrection of Inez contradicts and refutes the story sometimes told that the murderers cut off her head. She was stabbed with poinards in the neck and bosom, "that neck of alabaster," says Camoens, "which bore those perfections with which love killed him who afterwards made her queen."

> "No collo de alabastro que sostinha
> As obras com que Amor maton de amores
> A quello que despois a fez rainha."

AGNES SOREL.

Agnes Sorel, the mistress of Charles VII., is the most celebrated French beauty of her age, inheriting from her own day to this the title of "the beautiful Agnes." Posterity has dealt very gently with her memory and character, and has represented her as at once endowed with the meekness and humility of Mademoiselle de la Valliere, and with the patriotism and generous public spirit of Nell Gwynne. To her influence over the king is attributed all the good that appeared in him, and she in particular gets credit for having roused him to the effort which drove the English out of France. The popular portrait of this frail beauty is indeed quite enchanting. "Heaven," says Mademoiselle de B———, "had not only endowed Agnes with the charms of face; she had an air of grace, an admirable figure, more wit than any other woman in the world and that the most delicate and finely turned, and a certain greatness of soul which led her naturally to generosity; all her inclinations were noble; she was attentive, compassionate, ardent in friendship, discreet, sincere, and in short, altogether fitted to make herself be loved to distraction.*

After noticing her death under suspicion of poison, Made-

* "Histoire des Favorites," par Mademoiselle de B———, p. 102.

moiselle de B——— goes on to say: " Such was the unfortunate end of the most beautiful person whom France ever gave birth to. Her memory has ever been esteemed there. Celebrated authors speak favorably of her; never did the mistress of a king make so generous a use of her favor, which she never employed but for the good of others. The care which she took to inspire the project of war into the king covers her with much glory, and on this point Francis I. bestowed on her illustrious testimonies which will make her live eternally."*

The reference to Francis I.'s testimony reminds us of the verses said to have been written by him on Agnes, which certainly show that he, living about a century after her, believed in her gentleness and in her patriotism. The king, finding her portrait amongst several others in a portfolio, wrote some lines under each of them, and the following under that of Agnes:

> " Gentille Agnes ! plus d'honneur tu mérites
> La cause etant de France recouvrée
> Que ce que peut dans un cloitre ouvrer
> Close nonain, on bien dévote hermite."

The historian Duclos has adopted these stories. " Agnes," he says, " was the mistress for whom Charles had the greatest passion, and she was the most worthy of his attachment. Her singular beauty caused her to be called ' the Fair Agnes,' and she was also called ' the lady of beauty,' a rare example for those who enjoy the same favor. She loved Charles only for himself, and had no other object in her conduct than the glory of her lover and the good of the state. Agnes Sorel distinguished herself by qualities preferable to those which are found in her sex."† And again, he says that Agnes " died this year (1450) regretted by the king, the court, and the peo-

* " Historie des Favorites," p. 158.

† " Histoire de Louis XI." par M. Duclos, tom. 1, p. 6. Amst. 1746.

ple. She never abused favor, and united the rare qualities of a tender mistress, a true friend, and a good citizen." "I do not know," he candidly adds, "how Alain Chartier strove so much to defend the chastity of Agnes, who died in childbed. She had three daughters to Charles."*

A violent death, and distance of years soften the asperity with which persons in the situation of Agnes Sorel are assailed during their lives; and after the grave has closed over her, charitable posterity is willing to believe that an unchaste woman may not have been altogether a demon. The rancor of her own sex has long ceased to persecute the memory of Fair Rosamond, and even of the more guilty Jane Shore; and the most harshly virtuous of the sex in the present day are good enough to hope that both the one and the other have found that grace which was given to Mary Magdalen and Rahab the harlot. Under the notion, which is the prevailing one in the present day, that Agnes Sorel was an extremely amiable sinner, and a lover of her country and her country's glory, a set of quadrilles bearing her name is admitted to a place on virtuous pianos; just as Nell Gwynne is at this day introduced on the stage in decent comedies.

Yet there is unfortunately stubborn contemporary authority for destroying the whole idea of Agnes's moral loveableness and her patriotism, and for leaving her nothing to recommend her but mild features, her alabaster skin, and her golden hair, which have never been disputed. It is historically untrue that it was by her persuasion that the king was excited to expel the English from France. The peace of Arras was concluded eight years before Charles became enamored of Agnes. From certain contemporary accounts which it is not easy to distrust in favor of later testimonies, there is reason to believe that the meekness and sweetness attributed to Agnes Sorel, were rather the property of Mary of Anjou, Charles's injured queen.

* Duclos, tom 1, p. 64.

George Chastelain, a contemporary writer, in his "Chronique des Ducs de Bourgogne" represents Agnes as a woman ostentatious in her splendor, and not merely immodest in her manners, but a zealous teacher of immodesty in other women. She appeared at court in all the state of a princess; her apartments were more richly adorned than those of the queen, she had more female attendants, and she had all the reverence shown to her that she could have had if she had herself been queen. Her beds, her tapestries, her linen, the vessels and dishes on her table, the rings and the jewels which she wore, were all finer than those of the queen, and so was her kitchen, and so was everything about her. There was in short, he tells us, no princess in Christendom so highly adorned, and kept in such state. "With this woman, called Agnes," says Chastelain, "whom I have seen and known, the king was terribly besotted." To please her, he tells us, Charles did many things against his honor, and the murmurs against both her and him were loud. The trains which she wore, he adds, were longer by a third than any princess of this kingdom had, and her robes were more costly. "And of everything," Chastelain says, "in the way of dress that can seduce to immodesty and licentiousness, she was the producer and promoter."* He describes with indignation the extreme to which Agnes carried the lowness of her dress, and the zeal with which she studied day and night to make all virtuous women throw aside honor, shame and good manners, and the great influence which she exercised in corrupting the morals of France.† The whole

* George Chastelain, as quoted by Le Roux de Lincy in his introduction to the "Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles," p. 14. Paris, 1844.

† "Descouvrioit les espaules et le seing devant, jusques aux tettins, donnoit a toute baudeur loy et cours, feust a homme, feust a femme, ne estudiott qu'en vainité jour et nuit pour desvoier gens, et pour faire et donner example aux preudes femmes de perdicion d'onneur, de vergoigne et de bonnes meurs."—CHASTELAIN as quoted by LE ROUX DE LINCY.

nobility, he says, gave themselves up to vanity by her exhortation and example.

In what Chastelain says of the richness of apparel in which Agnes delighted, his testimony is confirmed by Olivier de la Marche, and by Monstrelet, both of them contemporary historians; and those who speak of the simplicity and plainness of her dress, and her unostentatious habits are manifestly in the wrong. "This fair Agnes," says Monstrelet, "had been five years in the service of the queen, during which she had enjoyed all the pleasures of life in wearing rich clothes, furred robes, golden chains, and precious stones."*

We must presume that the extreme openness of dress, which Chastelain so much reprobates in Agnes, had been introduced by her amongst the women at court; as otherwise, if she had merely followed the established fashion, she could not be fairly charged with immodesty. As to her indulgence in the most gorgeous garments, while it may argue bad taste, it can hardly be reckoned criminal; and it is not fair to treat that as a sin in Agnes which is mentioned without any reprobation in women of unquestioned innocence. There is, in truth, an appearance in Chastelain's statements—which, however, in substance are confirmed by other good authorities, and cannot be rejected—of a wish to make Agnes look at least as bad as she was. Besides calling her by the harshest name which can be bestowed on a frail woman, he adds that she was a poor servant (*povre ancelle*,) and of an insignificant and low house, (*de petit basse maison.*)

This is pure spite on the part of the virtuous chronicler. It is no alleviation of Agnes's guilt to recollect that she had the miserable merit of being of noble rank, and of an ancient family, being the daughter of the Seigneur de St. Geran, while her

* "The Chronicles of Enguerrand de Monstrelet," vol. IX, p. 96, (Johnes's Trans.) Lond. 1810.

poor service was that of being first the attendant of Isabella, Queen of Naples and Sicily, and afterwards of Mary, the wife of Charles. Her situation in the household of the amiable queen when she became the king's mistress, her rank by birth, and her education, are all aggravations of her criminality. Neither extreme youth, nor ignorance, nor any chain of unfortunate circumstances can be pleaded in her behalf. She was not the girl of seventeen as Mademoiselle de B———, for the sake of romantic effect, makes her when the king fell in love with her. It was in the year 1431, when she was two-and-twenty, that she entered the service of Isabella of Naples.

How long after this it was till she became lady in waiting to the Queen of France, when Charles could first have seen her, I have not been able to ascertain. I have seen a calculation which makes her about eight-and-twenty when the king fell in love with her; there is, however, better reason to believe that she was three-and-thirty. Olivier de la Marche, a contemporary writing about certain events which took place in 1444 tells us in connexion with them that "the king had just (*nouvellement*) elevated a poor lady, a pretty woman (*genti femme*) called Agnes du Sorel, and placed her in such triumph and power, that her state was comparable to that of the great princess of the realm."*

The truth appears to be that Agnes became known as mistress to the king, who was rather her junior, at the ripe age of thirty-three. This fact, for such I assume it to be, spoils one of Mademoiselle de B——'s most effecting sentences. Speaking of Agnes, when the king fell in love with her, she says: "That penetrating vivacity which the age of seventeen gives to an infinite beauty, spread an air full of charms on the least of her actions, and the most insensible souls could not resist her."†

* "Olivier de la Marche," quoted by La Roux de Lincy, ut sup. p. 13.

† "Histoire des Favorites," p. 104.

Seventeen has always been the favorite figure with romancers in fixing the age of a heroine at the period of her most splendid achievements. It is the age of womanhood in Asia, and in novels and poetry in England, where it has the great merit of alliterating pretty tolerably with "sweet." Hence while "sweet seventeen" is a stock phrase with the dealers in fiction, we never hear of sweet eighteen, nor sweet twenty; much less of sweet three-and-thirty.

Whatever merits Agnes may have had, it is hardly consistent with the idea of her being possessed of much humility, that she should strive, as it is a fact that she did, to outshine the queen in all kinds of magnificence; more especially as Mary appears to have borne the alienation of the king's love from her, not merely with resignation, but with sweetness of temper, and by no action or word ever to have reproached the reigning favorite.

I suspect, after all, that when we add to Agnes's beauty, the gay temper, pleasing manners, and agreeable conversation which Monstrelet allows her, we have summed up her perfections; and all that can farther be pleaded with truth in her favor, is her charity to the poor—quite a common, and indeed a characteristic virtue amongst women of Agnes's class—and her death-bed repentance, both of which are attested by genuine history. Her arrogance, and disregard for the feelings of the Queen, are hardly to be doubted. On one occasion the dauphin (afterwards Louis IX.), it is said, gave Agnes a blow on the face, for uttering some irritating languge—some say for speaking disrespectfully of the queen.

It is not easy to say much in favor of Louis's character, but his attachment to his mother was sincere, and he resented the ill-usage which she suffered, so far as to quarrel with his father about it; while he hated Agnes Sorel, for her ostentatious magnificence, and the contempt in which she is said to have held the queen.

There is reason to doubt if Agnes Sorel died of poison, as is positively affirmed by several historians. Mezerai states it broadly as a fact. The scandal went, that the poison was administered by the dauphin. The known ill-will which he bore to Agnes, would naturally lead to the fixing of such an accusation upon him. Agnes was seized with violent purgings, which continued a long time, and then carried her off, in the fortieth year of her age.

"She was," said Monstrelet, who shows her no particular favor, "very contrite, and sincerely repented of her sins. She often remembered Mary Magdalen, who had been a great sinner, and devoutly invoked God and the Virgin Mary to her aid. Like a true Catholic, after she had received the Sacraments, she called for her book of prayers (in which she had written with her own hand the verses of St. Bernard,) to repeat them. She then made many gifts, which, including alms and the payment of her servants, might amount to nearly sixty thousand crowns."*

The interesting chronicler who tells us these particulars seems to relent in her favor, when he describes, as he does with much simple pathos, the last moments of this renowned beauty. "The fair Agnes," he says, "perceiving that she was daily growing weaker, said to the Lord de la Trimouille, the lady of the Seneschal of Poitou, and one of the King's equerries called Gouffier, in the presence of all her damsels, that our fragile life was but a stinking ordure. She then required that her confessor would give her absolution from all her sins and wickedness, conformable to an absolution which was, as she said, at Loches, which the confessor, on her assurance, complied with. After this, she uttered a loud shriek, and called on the mercy of God, and the support of the blessed Virgin Mary, and gave up the ghost on Monday, the 9th day of February, in the year 1449, about six o'clock in the after-

* "Monstrelet," lib I, p. 98.

noon." Monstrelet kindly adds: "May God have mercy on her soul, and admit it into Paradise!"

The body of Agnes was interred in the church at Loches, which had been enriched by her pious liberality. Her figure in white marble was placed on a black tombstone. At one end were two angels supporting the pillow on which her head rested, while in the playful allusion to her name, which was common in her days, two lambs lay at her feet. I think I have read somewhere that at the Revolution this monument was destroyed by a horde of ruffians, who scattered about the bones of the royal favorite. Those ingenious persons who have persuaded themselves that that insane revolution was an outburst of the indignation of a virtuous people against the vices of kings and queens, and who find in every brutality of that period a proof of the sincere love of goodness by which its perpetrators were actuated, will be able to attribute this atrocity to the reverence which the revolutionists felt for that virtue in which poor Agnes was specially deficient.

Charles lamented the death of Agnes with unaffected grief. He survived her seven years. Out of his affectionate memory for the aunt he immediately made her niece (others say her cousin,) Madame de Villequier, his next chief mistress; but the greatness of his sorrow required the consolation of a whole seraglio.

Mezerai is bitterly sarcastic on the grief of this bespotted voluptuary. "In 1449," says the historian, "when the king was at Jumieges, they poisoned for him his dear Agnes Sorel, without whom he could not live a moment. To console him, Antoinette de Maignelais, lady of Villequier, the cousin of the deceased, took her place; but she was not alone. This voluptuous monarch set himself to keep a great number of beautiful girls, at least for the pleasure of his eyes." After the lady of Villequier came another who was called, probably from her imperiousness, or her control over the kingdom, *Mad-*

ame la Regente, and who is celebrated for her extreme regard to decorum; and fourthly, and lastly, the daughter of a pastry-cook came into favor. She is known in history as *Madame des Chaperons*—the lady of hoods; "because," says Chastelain, "of all women in the world, she it was who best put on her hood."

It has been noticed that Chastelain blames Agnes Sorel for introducing the open dress which he condemns. The censure, in all likelihood, is bestowed at random. The same charge has been brought by various historians against Isabella of Bavaria, the wife of Charles VI., famed for the fairness of her complexion and the foulness of her soul, and who died about the time that Agnes Sorel became known at court. The fashion which Chastelain inveighs against has in Europe, where fashions are not eternal, been going out and coming in at intervals, according to accidental circumstances, since the first time that women fell into the habit of wearing clothes at all. The loose open dress would become general when those women in whose hands was the control of the taste of their sex conceived, as Isabella of Bavaria it is well known did, that they had everything to gain by the freest exposure of their perfections; and it would become more close when the rulers of fashion fancied, as it is said Madame de Maintenon did, that it was for their advantage to place more reliance on the imagination than on the eyes of their admirers. Nearly a century before Isabella of Bavaria is said to have invented the anathematised costume, the censure of Dante had immortalised the low dress of the women of Florence, whom the great poet foolishly calls impudent, because they did not choose to fashion the fronts of their gowns according to his taste.* These censurers mis-

* Dante, "Divina Commedia," Purgat. XXIII, 98:

> "Tempo futuro m' e gia nel cospetto
> Cui sara quest' ora molto antica
> Nel qual sara in pergamo interdetto
> Alle sfacciate donne Fiorentine
> L' andar mostrando colle poppe il petto."

take matters of mere convention for matters of the essence of morality, and always take care to denounce the reigning fashion, whatever it be, as immoral.

Tertullian and Chrysostom direct all decent women to veil their faces. Poppæa veiled her face, but abated nothing of her profligacy. Tertullian takes it upon him to declare that it is the revealed will of Heaven that a woman should wear a veil, and also that this veil should cover her person from the head to the loins; this is the dimension which he says an angel of heaven revealed to a holy sister of his acquaintance. The African father's notions were those of his country, and he has expressly praised the Arab women for covering the whole face except one eye; "content to enjoy half the light rather than prostitute the whole face."* Yet unlawful love does not rage so furiously, in countries where women expose their faces and persons with the greatest freedom, as it does where they are closely veiled. In many countries, close dressing is the ensign of those women who put no value on their chastity and the nearest approach to nudity is the costume of the pure in heart and life.

There is a terrible story of a moral Queen of Malabar, who subjected one of her women to the martyrdom which has immortalised St. Agnes, because she had dared to come into her presence with her bosom covered after the licentious fashion of the Europeans. If the pious Richard Baxter felt called upon to write "A just and seasonable reprehension of naked breasts and shoulders," when these were fashionable, he would, if the fashion had run the other way, have published "a just and seasonable reprehension" of tuckers and neckerchiefs, and proved them to his own satisfaction to be unscriptural and a sinful departure from the simplicity of primitive times.

The philosophy of the whole matter is this, that such women as Isabella of Bavaria would not be more modest in

* Tertullian, 'De Velatis Virginibus," c. 16, Opera, tom I, 182.

one dress than in another; and that singularity in dress is more immodest than any dress whatever, which has ever become general, can be. The rule for gowns and fashions is the same as that for words and expressions—

> "Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
> Nor yet the last to lay the old aside."

On this point, the young Antonia, in Mandeville's curious dialogue, has all the reason on her side, in opposition to her censorious aunt. "Though you are pleased," says the niece, "to find fault with my behavior, I don't know that ever I was guilty of any immodesty in my life; I don't invent the fashions; but indeed I don't love to be pointed at for affecting singularity. I dress myself as I see other young gentlewomen do; my stays are not cut lower than other people's."

This is the moral of the case; and what follows is equally good. "Women, in strictness," says Aunt Lucinda, "should never appear in public but veiled; at least, young women should never show their faces but to their nearest relations."

To this Turkish doctrine of the old lady, the reply of the niece is admirable. "Indeed, aunt, when 'tis the fashion to go veiled, I won't stick out, but I shall hardly begin first."*

* "The Virgin Unmasked," p. 18. Lond. 1742.

MRS. JANE SHORE.

Mrs. Jane Shore is known to the present age by the sufficiently distinct accounts of her person, handed down from her own time. "Two or three poems," says Michael Drayton, "written by sundry men, have magnified this woman's beauty, whom that ornament of England, and London's more particular glory, Sir Thomas More, very highly hath praised for her beauty, she being alive in his time, though very poor and aged. Her stature was mean, her hair of a dark yellow, her face round and full, her eye grey, delicate harmony betwixt each part's proportion, and each proportion's color; her body fat, white, and smooth, her countenance cheerful, and like to her condition. That picture which I have seen of her, was such as she rose out of bed in the morning, having nothing on but a rich mantle, cast under one arm on her shoulders, and sitting on a chair, on which her naked arm did lie."*

Sir Thomas More, whose account of Mrs. Shore, in her

* "England's Heroical Epistles." "The greater part of this passage, as well as the extracts from Sir Thomas More afterwards given, are appended by Bishop Percy to his 'Ballad of Jane Shore.'"—Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, vol. ii, p. 190. Lond. 1846.

extreme old age, I shall afterwards quote, gives us a fine picture of her doing public penance in St. Paul's Churchyard, walking in a procession in a white sheet, and with a taper in her hand, before the cross. He says, "She went so fair and lovely, namely, while the wondering of the people cast a lovely rud in her chekes (of which she before had much misse,) that her great shame won her much praise among those that were more amorous of her body, than curious of her soule." Sir Thomas says there was "nothing in her body that you would have changed, but if you had wished her somewhat higher."

Such was Mrs. Shore, when she attracted the love of Edward IV., the handsomest prince of his time.

In the picture-gallery at Hampton Court, there is a picture of Jane Shore, in which it is impossible to trace a particle of beauty. Over her head is the inscription: "Baker's wife, mistris to a King." Jane Shore was a goldsmith's wife.

In the common histories of her, there is an attempt to alleviate her guilt, by representing her as having been married against her inclination, by her parents, when she was eighteen, and Mathew Shore thirty; and for her benefit, the romance tells us that he was ill-favored, mean-looking, and strongly marked with small-pox. In direct opposition to this testimony, we have the statement of Sir Thomas More, which I think must be received, that the unfortunate goldsmith was "young and goodly, and of good substance." And Michael Drayton, no doubt well-informed on the subject, though not a contemporary, tells us that he was a "young man of right goodly person."

It is but justice to Jane Shore to receive without hesitation or qualification the uncontradicted testimony of Sir Thomas More, as to the use which she made of her influence with the king. Archbishop Tennyson, a prelate of irreproachable life,

did not shrink from publicly speaking of the virtues of Nell Gwynne; and Jane Shore, more guilty than the poor orange girl, has been fortunate in receiving a eulogium from such a man as Sir Thomas More.

According to More, Jane Shore was the only one of his mistresses whom the king loved, and "whose favor, to say the truth—for sin it were to belie the devil—she never abused to any man's hurt, but to many a man's comfort and relief. Where the king took displeasure, she would mitigate and appease his mind; where men were out of favor, she would bring them in his grace; for many that had highly offended, she obtained pardon; of great forfeitures, she obtained remission; and finally, in many weighty suits, she stood many men in great stead, either for none or very small rewards, and those rather gay than rich; either for that she was content with the deed itself well done, or for that she delighted to be sued unto, and to show what she was able to do with the king, or for that wanton woman and wealthy be not always covetous."

We are the more impressed with Jane Shore's merit in these matters when we recollect that the throne of England was never filled by a more selfish, heartless, and cruel wretch than her lover. Of the beauty of Jane Shore in her youth there is no room to doubt. But she survived her charms. Alas! "age that gives whiteness to the swan, gives it not unto woman." Sir Thomas More, writing in 1513, thirty years after the death of King Edward, tells us that there were people who "deemed her never to have been well visaged; whose judgment," he adds, pathetically, "seemeth to me somewhat like as though men should guesse the beauty of one long before departed, by the scalp taken out of the charnel-house; for now she is old, lene, withered, and dried up, nothing left but ryvilde skin and hard bone. And yet being even such,

whoso will advise her visage might gesse and devise which partes how filled would make it a fair face."

The little fat and fair young woman when old, thin, and withered, and her golden locks exchanged for grey and scanty hairs, her queenly ornaments for the weeds of poverty, and her joyous spirit for pining melancholy, was not likely to retain much of the charms which once distinguished her. In fact, Jane Shore's style of beauty, fascinating while it lasts, rapidly passes into decay. We have seen that yellow hair, both by the ancients and moderns, has been considered the ornament of youth; it never indeed, or very rarely, remains to adorn advanced years. The comparison between Jane Shore of 1483, and the Jane Shore of 1513, as furnished between Drayton and Sir Thomas More, is a powerful sermon on the instability of worldly grandeur and the frailty of human beauty. There is a sonnet in a fine spirit addressed to such a beauty as Mrs. Shore was in the days when her beauty lost her her virtue, by an Italian poet, Antonio Tibaldeo, which is so pretty, that its insertion here will not be deemed out of place.

"Non saranno i capei sempre d'or fino
Non saran' sempre perle i bianchi denti,
Non sempre avran splendor gli occhi tuo' ardenti
Ne sempre rose il bel volto divino.
Bellezza é come i fior' che nel mattino
Son Freschi e vaghi, e poi la sera spenti;
Ne noi ci renoviam, come i serpenti,
Che nati son sotto miglior destino.
Deh muta ormai questi costumi altieri
Che i giorni corron piu che cervi e pardi,
E stolta sei, se sempre durar speri.
Manca ogni cosa, e nel specchio guardi,
Vedrai che non se' quale fosti jeri
Pero provedi a non pentirti tardi."

LUCREZIA BORGIA.

In speaking of the celebrated picture of Titian, in which the famous, or as vulgar opinion says, the infamous Lucrezia Borgia is introduced as presented to her husband by the Madonna, Mrs. Jameson says: "I looked in vain in the countenance of Lucrezia for some trace, some testimony of the crimes imputed to her; but she is a fair, golden-haired, gentle-looking creature, with a feeble and vapid expression."*

There certainly are instances of persons whose looks have betrayed nothing of the vigor, energy, and strong passions of their nature. Thus of the ferocious ruffian Graham of Claverhouse, Sir Walter Scott tells us that he had "a beautiful and melancholy visage, worthy of the most pathetic dreams of romance;" and Lord Byron says that the cruel Ali Pacha was "mildest-looking gentleman" that he ever saw. The gentle, childish-looking Couthon was unquestionably one of the most ferocious monsters of the French Revolution; and when he was carried to the tribune, as he was required to be on account of his extreme bodily weakness, his soft, mild voice was ever lifted up in calling for more cruel bloodshed, and more sweeping slaughters.

* Mrs. Jameson, "Visits and Sketches," vol. II, p. 126.

As a general rule, however—and it is a rule which guides us every day in life, and guides us with safety—when furious, and cruel, and treacherous passions live in the heart, they are to be traced in manhood in the lineaments of the face. The personal description of the stalwart Cataline, his pallid complexion, his unpleasant, unhealthy eye,* his walk sometimes rapid, at other times slow, and the frenzy in his face and features, as noticed by Sallust, a great painter, is familiar to all readers. Fuzeli used to decline the company of the famous French painter, David. David had a hare lip; but it was not this innocent disfigurement which displeased Fuzeli. He said, that when he looked at the French artist, he could never divest his mind of the atrocities of the French Revolution, nor separate them from the part he had acted in them, for they were stamped on his countenance.†

On the whole, in judging of the nature of our fellow-creatures at first sight, an observer with his own heart and feelings as they ought to be, will very rarely be far deceived by confiding in that natural skill in physiognomy with which we all come into the world. "Heaven," as some one says, "is not in the way of hanging out false colors." The face is a book in which the innocent and the good may every day read lessons of caution and aversion for their guidance, protection and defence, and find

> "How surer than suspicion's thousand eyes
> Is that fine sense which to the pure in heart,
> By mere repugnancy of their own goodness,
> Reveals the approach of evil."

I do not believe that an authentic instance can be quoted of a thoroughly good man with a sinister expression of counten-

* It is not easy to translate the expression fædi oculi (Sallust "Catalina," c. xv;) but an unhealthy-looking eye is strikingly descriptive of great criminals.

† Knowles, "Life and Works of Fuzeli," vol. I, p. 258.

ance, though it would appear that there have been bad men with pleasing features; though I suspect a good eye would have detected a serpent-like beauty in those of them who were decidedly and deliberately wicked. The world does not put any faith in that professional physiognomist who denounced Socrates as a vicious man; we merely believe that his features were rude and inelegant in the extreme.

There is scarcely a man amongst all the good, great, and wise men of antiquity whom it would be safe to prefer to Phocion—to honest, wise, and witty Phocion. There was a beautiful balance of the moral and intellectual gifts in this man. He was the sagest of his times; and of all the ancients he was, perhaps, as his recorded sayings amply attest, the wittiest. His great moral virtues were rigid honesty, a passionate attachment to truth, and great kindness of disposition. Yet of this admirable man, Plutarch tells us—and he evidently speaks from contemporary statements—that "though one of the most humane and best-tempered men in the world," his countenance was severe, ill-natured, and forbidding, so much so that it repelled strangers from addressing him.

This account also agrees with an admission in one of Phocion's sayings, that his brow appeared lowering. Yet it is nowhere stated that there were any traces of cunning, of dissimulation, or of sycophancy in this rough face. I think no more can be made of this narrative than that Phocion, like many other good men, was "no beauty"—no Alcibiades, nor Xenophon, nor Critias. And nowhere in this world would the want of fine features in a ruler or general be criticised with more exaggeration of severity than in Athens—Athens, which though deficient in beautiful women, boasted above all the states of Greece of her beautiful men.*

* See the very curious dissertation of M. de Pauw, "de la Constitution physique des Athenians," in his "Researches Philosophiques sur les Grecs," tom. 1, p 107. Berlin, 1787.

On this point, however, it is to be observed that, in general, the vices and the real character, where it is bad, are more easily to be read in the faces of men than of women, owing, no doubt, to the greater shallowness and simplicity of the manly nature, and to the greater power which, in protection of their inferior physical strength, nature has given to women in controlling and concealing the outward expression of the passions which rage, and the fires which burn in their hearts and their brains. A woman certainly is no more to be blamed for having more art in her nature, and more wisdom in her daily contrivances than a man, than a fox is to be censured for having about him more cunning and wiles than a lion.

The face of the man of middle age, whose breast has, for a life-time, been agitated by violent passions, will not be unwrinkled; and the habitual tone of his voice, though he may strive to modulate it to serve his purposes, will have acquired something, at least, of a harshness which once did not belong to it. But it is not uncommon to meet with a woman who has passed through a painful career of crimes and passions, of agony and grief, still speaking with the sweet voice which enchanted the listener in the days of her innocence and happiness, still wearing the composed features, the "cheek unprofaned by a tear," which might be thought to betoken days spent wholly in the indolent enjoyment of pleasure, and with a brow still perfectly smooth; as smooth, indeed, as the ocean in a calm—that same ocean which, a few hours before, has torn to pieces in its fury, and engulphed in its never satiated jaws, noble fleets of which not a trace can now be found on its bosom—that calm bosom which invites the disconsolate to rest upon it, and there find peace to their troubled hearts.

The reader who believes all that is recorded of the crimes of Lucrezia, and looks to the portrait of her as described by Mrs. Jameson, even after he makes allowance for some sweetness which the great art of Titian may have added to it, has a striking illustration of these remarks and is compelled to con-

fess that this is not the woman that he looked for. Even he, who charitably and better instructed, can find no good evidence of the more dreadful and more disgusting crimes attributed to Lucrezia, must still look for something harsh, distracted, or melancholy in the face of the woman who was the daughter of Alexander, and the sister of Cæsar Borgia, who had been brought up and had lived so much amidst scenes of infamy, and witnessed, as she must have witnessed, so much of habitual, and daily, and revolting wickedness. But less flattering describers than Titian have testified that the traces neither of sin nor of sorrow were to be found in her fair face.

Lucrezia, however, notwithstanding the lustre thrown around her by the pencil of the painter and the verses of a poet she patronised, was not exactly a beauty. The contrast between the fair golden hair and black eyes, given to her by the great artist, is always striking, as in nature it is extremely rare. In picture galleries all the celebrated Italian women of Lucrezia's time appear with this fascinating half-flaxen, half-golden hair which painters give to their Venuses and other ideal beauties. It may hence be doubted if the charming color of Lucrezia's hair was not the production of her own skill, though in bare justice, we must give a woman full credit for all the beauty with which she can array herself, and judge of her as she appears at her best, in fair reward of the amiable desire to please which leads to the use and perfection of the cosmetic science.

The world of antiquity allowed to the Queen of Heaven herself all the graces and witchcrafts which she could derive from placing the celestial girdle around her waist; and no earthly woman deserves either commendation or thanks for being less beautiful than she might be if she liked. On the matter-of fact, as to whether the hair of Lucrezia was by nature or only by art golden, there is, I believe, no evidence. For the rest of her features and person, between the favorable eulogium of an Italian poet and the more specific criticism of a

German prose writer, agreeing together in substance, as praise and censure often do, and taking these two descriptions along with her portraits, we learn pretty accurately what this famous woman was like. Her eyes were black and piercing, and her luxuriant hair fell in profusion over her shoulders. She had it tied tastefully with a black band. Her figure was large, and it had the great fault of exhibiting something like a masculine vigor in it. Her features were far from being regular. Her forehead was indeed comely and well shaped, but her nose was long and slender; her lips were deficient in fullness, and the lower part of her face was retreating. Such is the picture which is compounded out of the materials furnished by Strozzi and Burckhardt, as they are quoted by M. Chasles.*

Leigh Hunt, in one of his essays on female beauty, assures us, on the evidence of his own eyes, that the hair of Lucrezia was of that color which is justly and properly called golden. Mr. Hunt was in possession of an interesting and affecting relic of mortality—a solitary hair of this famous woman's head. "It was given us," he says, "by a lamented friend (Lord Byron,) who obtained it from a lock of her hair preserved in the Ambrosian Library, at Milan. On the envelope he put a happy motto, 'and beauty draws us with a single hair.' If ever hair was golden it is this. It is not red, it is not yellow, it is not auburn; it is golden and nothing else; and though natural-looking too, must have had a surprising appearance in the mass. Lucrezia, beautiful in every respect, must have looked like a vision in a picture, an angel from the sun. Every body who sees it, cries out and pronounces it the real thing.

"We must confess, after all, we prefer the auburn, as we construe it. It forms, we think, a finer shade for the skin, a richer warmth, a darker lustre. But Lucrezia's hair must have been still divine. Mr. Lander, whom we had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with over it, as other acquaintances com-

* M. Philarete Chasles, "Etudes sur le Moyen Age," p. 409.

mence over a bottle, was inspired on this occasion with the following verses :—

> " Borgia, thou once wert almost too august
> And high for adoration; now thou'rt dust;
> All that remains of thee these plaits unfold,
> Calm hair meandering with pellucid gold."

" The sentiment," continues Mr. Hunt, " implied in the last line will be echoed by every bosom that has worn a lock of hair next it, or longed to do so. Hair is at once the most delicate and lasting of our materials, and survives us like love. It is so light, so gentle, so escaping from the idea of death, that with a lock of hair belonging to a child or a friend, we may almost look up to heaven and compare notes with the angelic nature; may almost say, ' I have a piece of thee here, not unworthy of thy being now.' "*

This is a very learned and exquisitely fine and tender discourse on hair. As regards the great beauty which Leigh Hunt attributes to Lucrezia, I must say that, although it may be quite safe and perfectly logical to judge of the stature of Hercules by his foot; and though both ancient history and a beautiful modern fairy tale join in informing us that a man of susceptible feelings is able to fall in love with a woman at the bare sight of one of her slippers, it yet appears like the sublime of gallant rapture to discover, from the inspection of a single hair from that large flowing mass—and in hair, mere length and quantity are undoubtedly great beauties—which once adorned the head of Lucrezia Borgia, that her large and tall person was " beautiful in every respect."

A cold-hearted sneerer may think that Leigh Hunt and Walter Savage Landor more than came up to a parallel with the man immortalised by Hierocles, the Joe Miller of the ancients, who, having a house for sale, went about amongst the public, carrying a brick in his pocket as a specimen. The

* Leigh Hunt, "Men, Women, and Books," vol. 1, p 240.

single brick would at least show of what materials the man's house was constructed; but the single hair, besides that it might be dyed, might be a selected hair. For there is one peculiarly bewitching sort of hair which Leigh Hunt has unfortunately omitted to commemorate and laud in his catalogue though it is capable of competing for victory with the very finest and rarest. This consists of soft auburn locks, intermingled here and there with bright golden hairs. This kind of hair, which is extremely difficult to find, will do much for a woman's head which has nothing else, externally or internally, to recommend it to admiration or love.

The character of Lucrezia Borgia has labored with the mass of readers, from her own day to ours, under terrible stains; but she has not wanted her defenders, and even eulogisers. The greater part of her life appears, in wicked times and in wicked places, to have been passed in all outward decorum, decency and dignity. Ranke quotes from a contemporary report of the Ambassador of Venice to the Court of Rome, a passage about Lucrezia, in which she is called "wise and liberal;" and as her great natural abilities and talents have not been questioned, she is, taking her at the worst estimate that has been formed of her, entitled to this eulogium. Her personal beauty and her moral character have both gained something with posterity by her generous patronage of literature, and particularly of poetry; for a poet who knows his craft, will praise anything or anybody, if he is well paid for his panegyric. It is more to her true glory, that her counsel, her influence, and the free use of her purse, were all given to the establishment and diffusion of the art of printing in Italy.

There was wisdom, as well as liberality and enlightenment in this. The patronage of printing, which in the long run, says M. Chasles, corrects its own errors, was a far more unequivocal proof of her real liberality, than the giving of pensions to sycophantic court poets.

She knew, however, what Virgil and Horace had done for Augustus; and there was something good in her desire that both her soul and her body should appear as fair and bright as possible in the eyes of a merciful posterity. She knew what liberality to men of letters had done for other famous women. She knew that canonised saints of the Church and grave bishops had praised the Christian virtues and piety of Brunehilde, "the murderess of seven kings;" and Lucrezia's liberality was as great, and her guilt certainly not so great, as that of the ancient Frank queen. Though Mr. Roscoe's defence of the perfect innocence of Lucrezia may not be wholly satisfactory, still there is room left for disbelieving the more revolting charges which have been heaped on the memory of this woman.

If, however, the extreme guilt and the extreme beauty of Lucrezia are questionable, the atrocious crimes and the singular beauty of her brother, Cæsar Borgia, are not in the least doubtful. Contemporary history declares that this horrible monster, who in a Christian age and country, renewed by his crimes the memory of the Roman Commodus, whom he resembled in strength and personal attractions, was the most beautiful young man in the world; comparing him in this respect with Ferdinand, King of Naples, celebrated at that time for his great personal comeliness, and giving the preference to Borgia. He was an Achilles, tall and graceful in person, and beautiful in the face, and, like Achilles, of prodigious strength —a Hercules and Adonis united. Yet it must be doubted if his face could have any of that moral beauty, which appears in the countenances of men who get no credit for comeliness, though Borgia might present a beauty nothing less than that of "archangel ruined."

Pope has adopted the name of this monster as descriptive of the height of incarnate wickedness; and I am afraid that the name of Borgia, borne by the father Alexander and the

brother Cæsar, has an air of blood, of poison and sensuality about it, which throws a black cloud of prejudice around the memory of Lucrezia, the daughter and sister.

In the loathing and horror which this very name produces, it appears to be entirely forgotten that in St. Francis Borgia the Church of Rome has canonised a man of rank with the humility of a true follower of Him who was born in a manger; a saint with all innocent and virtuous accomplishments; a wit and a scholar, and one who is to be honored with Xavier and Borromeo, as amongst the most amiable of men.

After the death of Lucrezia, her third husband, Duke Alfonzo of Ferrara, married a poor country girl of extraordinary beauty. All who have seen any pictures, are familiar and delighted with that charming portrait by Titian, which has been multiplied by copies more than, perhaps, any other of his works—representing a young and very fair woman twining her luxuriant yellow hair. This is believed to be this peasant girl, Donna Laura, the second wife of Alfonso.

"Titian," says Mrs. Jameson, "painted her several times, *e nuda e vestita.* I have never seen in any gallery a portrait by Titian recognised as the portrait of Donna Laura; but for several reasons, on which I cannot enlarge in this place, I believe the famous picture in the Louvre styled 'Titian's Mistress,' to be the portrait of this peasant duchess."*

* Mrs. Jameson, "Sacred and Legendary Art," p. 341.

ANNE BULLEN.

THE power of charming, possessed by this celebrated woman, is historically established. Her claims to a high rank in pure physical beauty, have, however, been disputed. Her perfections in this way have been made the subject of controversy —even of religious controversy—the fiercest and firiest of all contentions.

Anne Bullen, who lived and died in the ancient faith of Rome, is, nevertheless, though no saint in her own age, yet in ours, on account of the services which her personal charms rendered to the Reformation, a woman of good memory with Protestants; as on the other hand, and from the same cause, she is an object of severe judgment, of reprobation, and of calumny with Roman Catholics. If her beauty did not create the Reformation in England, it undoubtedly hastened its outbreak, and accelerated its lagging progress. Heaven, which works its great and good ends by whatever instruments it thinks proper, made lust and avarice the great and conspicuous promoters of the purification of religion in England. "The British Bluebeard" was the leader of the hosts of the Reformed Faith; and the base panderer to his guilty passion was its high priest.

There will be found an agreement in the main about the beauties and the defects which were to be found in Anne Bullen. Both Protestants and Roman Catholics are agreed that she was tall, and that her figure and limbs were, on the whole, handsome; though the Roman Catholics, as will be seen, censure several of the details. Her fine black hair, her beautiful black eyes, her exquisitely formed mouth, and the elegant oval shape of her face, are admitted on both sides.

Protestant writers have made it a point of faith, an article *stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ*, to describe her as without spot or wrinkle. The Roman Catholic writers have found out about as many spots and wrinkles on her body as they have discovered in her soul, and they have adhered to facts in their unfavorable portrait. They tell us that her skin was so yellow, that she always looked as if she had the jaundice; and this is perfectly true. It is admitted by her passionate admirer, Wyat the poet, while speaking of her "rare and admirable beauty," "that her face was not so whitely clear and fresh;" in plain words it really was yellow, but it was beautiful notwithstanding.

The Roman Catholics assure us also, and this is perfectly true, that one of her upper teeth stood out from the rest. Then as to their exaggerated facts. The Roman Catholics tell us that she had six fingers on her left hand, and a tumor below her chin. These superfluities coming in aid of her yellow face, could scarcely be said to make her "a dainty dish to set before the king."

But the Protestants have reduced the sixth finger on her left hand to something like an abortive attempt on the part of nature at a second little finger, amounting after all to nothing better than a very large wart, which, however, Anne took great care to conceal, as constantly as possible, with a glove. As to the tumor below the chin, in Protestant eyes it dwindled down, and sweetened and beautified itself into a handsome

mole, which is no disfigurement, but rather a grace to a woman, if it be well placed; besides being indicative, as the voice of ages has declared, of a loving constitution, which Anne had, and of great worldly prosperity, which assuredly she had not. To conceal the wart, or superfluous little finger on her left hand, Anne Bullen introduced the fashion of hanging sleeves. The large mole under her chin she concealed under a richly ornamented collar, which also became the fashion amongst the Court ladies. The mole is certainly not to be seen in Holbein's portrait of her, in which her neck is bare.

With all this, the expression of Anne's features was sweet and sprightly. Her bitterest enemies have joined with her most partial friends in allowing that her taste in dress, and in all kinds of adorning was admirable, and that she displayed much genius in striking out new and splendid fashions. She had a graceful manner, and spoke in a sweet voice, and was highly accomplished in dancing and singing and in playing on the lute.

DIANA OF POITIERS.

Diana of Poitiers, created by Henry II. of France, Duchess of Valentinois, is one of the most famous of those women, who in the maturity of life have inspired a violent passion, and who have retained the power of charming even in old age. "I have seen the Duchess of Valentinois," says Brantome, "at the age of seventy, as beautiful in the face, as fresh and as amiable as at the age of thirty."* Brantome takes care never to underrate wonders of this kind; Diana was only sixty-seven at her death. "I saw her," he says afterwards, "six months before her death, still so beautiful that I know not a heart so rocky as not to be moved at the sight of her, though before that she had broken her leg on the street in Orleans. She was managing her horse as dexterously as ever she had done, but he slipped and fell under her. From the sufferings which she endured from this accident, it might have been thought," he says, "that her beautiful face would be altered; but nothing was farther from the result; her beauty, her grace, her majesty, her fine appearance, were all the same as they ever had been. I believe," he adds, "if this lady had lived a hundred years she would never have grown old either in the face, so finely was it composed, or in the person, so good was her constitution, and

* Brantome, "Dames Galantes," Œuvres, tom. iv. p. 179.

so excellent her habit of body. It is a pity that the earth covers this beautiful body."

Diana, as we learn from Brantome, had an extreme whiteness of skin, "and that without painting at all." Brantome adds, however, a report that every morning she took some soups containing *aurum potabile* and other drugs which he could not describe, to preserve her charms. Such a woman as Diana we may be sure would neglect no means of averting the appearance of old age, and the means she would use would be those that would be least liable to detection or suspicion. Amongst more scrupulous women, there has been a distinction drawn between such arts as Brantome attributes to Diana, and the less innocent practice of outward painting, as it would be esteemed by those who forebore it.

In a very curious "Discourse of Artificial Beauty," in the form of a dialogue between two ladies, the one who advocates every means of making the face and the person agreeable, speaks of "some who arraign before the rash tribunal of their judgments every face, whose handsomeness they either envy, if natural, or grievously reproach, if they think it hath anything artificial beyond what themselves are wonted to or acquainted with; who yet in other things do as much contend against the defects, deformities and decays of nature and age as may be, by washings, anointings and plasterings, by many secret medicaments and close receipts, which may either fill and plump their skins, if flat and wrinkled, or smooth and polish them, if rugged and chapped, or clear and brighten them, if tanned and freckled; only in the point of color or tinctures, added in the least kind or degree, they are not more scrupulous than censorious; as if every one that used these had forsaken Christ's banner, and now fought under the devil's colors."*

* A Discourse of Artificial Beauty in the Point of Conscience between two Ladies, p. 2. London, 1692.

The little treatise from which I have made this extract is a well and closely reasoned and really eloquent defence of the practice of painting the face in order to add to its beauty, or to conceal the decay of its freshness, against the sophistical objections of puritanism and hypocrisy. The arguments brought from Scripture are shown to be wholly irrelevant. It is to be observed that as the great strength of the puritan argument against dancing is the fact that the wicked daughter of Herodias danced, so the pretended argument from Scripture against painting the face is that Jezebel, like other women of her time, painted her face, which be it observed, should prove to those who are capable of being deluded by such absurdities, that it is also unscriptural to tire the head as Jezebel did, or even to "look out of the window," as Jezebel also did.

It would never occur to such arguers as these that it is a virtue to desire to please; and that as a woman can hardly go against the customs and usages of her age and country, and be innocent, so where face painting and patching are the fashion, a wise man will not look for the best and most amiable of the sex amongst those who abstain from what is forbidden neither by reason nor Scripture. All the arguments against women using every art to heighten and preserve their charms, when the fashion runs in the direction of these arts, resolve themselves into the hateful belief of the ascetic, that everything that is offensive to man is agreeable to Heaven, and the relative belief that all that is agreeable to man is offensive in the sight of God—a belief which has characterised all false religions since the beginning of time till the present hour.

Jezebel was justly punished, not for making herself beautiful, but for the murder of Naboth. Yet Jezebel may be slandered, and they have slandered her, who in the face of the taunting language which she gave to Jehu, insist upon it that her object in adorning her person was to attract his unlawful love. From the whole history of her death, it is the fair infer-

ence that calmly contemplating the fall of her throne and her own fate, she resolved like Cleopatra to die like a queen, defying her enemy. In the "Discourse of Artificial Beauty" before quoted, justice is done to Jezebel as regards her behavior at her death. "She puts herself into a posture of majesty, as showing that height and greatness of mind which could own herself in the pomp and splendor of a princess, even then when she expected her enemy and her end; that she might at least perish (as she thought) with the more reputation of a comely person, and undaunted spirit which abhorred to humble and abase itself after the manner of fearful and squalid suppliants in sackcloth, or to abate any of those accustomed ornaments with which she used as a queen to entertain herself in her prosperity."*

Henry had been married to Catherine de' Medici when he and his bride were only fourteen years of age; and he fell in love with Diana when he was eighteen and she thirty-nine, and his love continued unabated till his death, when she was sixty-seven. It gives us a striking idea of the disparity in years between these lovers, to reflect that Henry was younger than Diana's own children. She was married to the Seneschal of Normandy four years before Henry was born, and had been the mother of two daughters. By the vulgar, the influence of Diana over Henry was attributed to witchcraft; and the grave historian De Thou, has imputed it to the effect of philtres and medicines. We need not believe that she had recourse to either the chemist or the apothecary, in order either to preserve her beauty or to bewitch the king; but that she gained his love by the beauty which is not unusual in a Frenchwoman of forty, and retained it by the indescribable graces of manner and conversation which make the inevitable decay of beauty unobserved, and by the power of a strong mind over a weak.

Mademoiselle de Luzan makes her a perfect Poppæa in the

* "A Discourse of Artificial Beauty," p. 10.

art of varying her attractions. "The Duchess of Valentinois," she says, "had lived long enough to be experienced in pleasure, voluptuous by nature, and attentive in preserving her conquest, she every day devised new entertainments. She was too knowing not to recollect that at upwards of forty, she had unceasingly to guard the heart of a young prince who was not twenty-nine. (He was nineteen when she was forty.) In place of the air of flowery youth which was somewhat wanting in her beauty, she employed art, and this art was guided by long experience in gallantry, by a mind acute, cunning and adroit, by a lively gaiety, or by a soft languor. With these advantages a woman in her decline may preserve her conquest, but it is difficult for her to make a new one. Diana preserved hers by a thousand charms of the mind, happily put into operation. She was a sort of Proteus; she knew how to exhibit herself to Henry under a form always new."*

During the whole period of Henry's reign, Diana openly ruled the king, and influenced all the public affairs of France. Even the queen, Catherine de' Medici, with all her vigor of mind and ambition, and great talents for business, never resisted the will of the favorite, nor sought to thwart her schemes.

"She mixed herself up with everything," says Mezerai. "She could do everything; she was, so to speak, the soul of the king's counsels. And in order that it might be known that it was she who reigned, it was his will that there should be seen on the furniture, on the devices, and even on the fronts of his royal buildings, a crescent, and the bows and arrows which were the arms of this unchaste Diana. The love of a young king for a woman of forty, who had several children to her husband, might be called an enchantment without charms."

Mezerai, it will be observed, speaks with less gallantry than the courtly Brantome. "There was," he says, "more of old

* Mademoiselle de Luzan, "Annales Galantes de la Cour de Henri Second," tom. I, p. 129. Amst. 1749.

age than of bashfulness on her forehead; and years which had extinguished the brilliancy of youth in her eyes, lighted up more violently the flames of desire in her heart. She was unjust, violent, and proud towards those who displeased her, but otherwise she was beneficent and liberal. She also had a very agreeable mind, and her hands still more so, as she bestowed much, and with a good grace. The king loved her because she was very sensible of love, and her temperament sometimes led her to seek elsewhere for the completion of her pleasures, as she found in him the completion of her fortune and her honors."*

Diana of Poitiers is an instance—though not a solitary one by any means—of a woman loved to distraction by a man whose mother, in respect of difference of ages, she might have been. Such affections are unromantic; but romances and poetry have both given very unfair representations of the loves of this actual world.

European writers have not had the courage to speak of the beauty of a woman past twenty, their notions on this subject being drawn neither from feeling nor experience, but servilely stolen from Eastern writers describing beauty in countries where a woman is a mother at fifteen and an old woman at thirty. Yet there are more writers than Ovid who have done justice to the beauty of matured womanhood. In one of the Love Epistles of Aristænetus, Terpsion is introduced, censuring her lover for his bad taste in preferring the charms of a girl to the richer beauty of a woman, and urging the superiority of the latter with great effect.† Our own pious and amiable Dr. Donne tells us that

> "No spring nor summer beauty hath such grace
> As I have seen in an autumnal face."

* Mezerai, "Abregé Chronologique," tom. III, p. 103.

† Aristænetus, "Epist." lib. II, Ep. vii, p. 151.

I have elsewhere noticed that Gibbon, in speaking of the Empress Eudocia (Athenais,) says that "the writer of a romance would not have imagined that Athenais was nearly twenty-eight when she inflamed the heart of a young emperor." The remark is a sound one; but, as an exception to its truth, it may be mentioned that Crebillon, in his best romance, the "Egarements du Cœur et de l'Esprit," makes Madame de Lursay by far the most interesting and effective beauty in the story, arrived at the age of forty, when she makes a conquest of the young hero of the novel.

It is to Diana of Poitiers that Brantome is understood to refer in another part of his "Dames Galantes," where he speaks of "a great sovereign who loved so passionately a great lady an aged widow, that he left his queen, beautiful as she was and all others for her sake. But in this," he says, after his usual fashion, in speaking of such matters, "he was right; for she was one of the most beautiful and loveable ladies that one could see; and her winter, indeed, was better than the spring, the summer, and the autumn of others."*

Mrs. Jameson, in her account of the paintings at Althorpe describes one that has been several times copied—"that most curious picture of Diana of Poitiers once in the Crawford collection. It is a small half-length; the features fair and regular. The hair is elaborately dressed with a profusion of jewels, but there is no drapery whatever—*force pierreries et tres peu de linge*, as Madame de Sevigne described the two Mancini."†

With regard to this picture, it may be conjectured that the Duchess had chosen to have herself represented thus naked, in the character of her namesake in the ancient mythology. We have seen that amongst the devices on her equipage she used the moon, the representative of Diana in heaven, and a bow and

* Brantome, "Dames Galantes, Œuvres, tom iv, p. 103.

† Mrs. Jameson, "Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad," vol. ii, p. 245.

arrows the weapons of the goddess of the chase upon earth. As an active huntress the Duchess might be flattered by being compared to the Greek Diana, but she should not have invited those awkward comparisons which her name and character together must have suggested between her and the cold divinity who bore the title of "the perpetual virgin."

At Hampton Court, in the Queen's Gallery, there is a curious picture called "Francis I. and the Duchess of Valentinois." The bringing of these two together in a picture keeps alive the scandal which, though affirmed by more than one French historian, is not well authenticated, that Diana, before she became the favorite of Henry, had been mistress to his father. In this picture, Francis and the lady who is squinting into his face, form a ludicrously ugly couple. There can be no doubt that though a caricature of his likeness, this is Francis, as may be seen by a comparison of it with his portrait by Holbein in the same room. There may be doubts, however, if the other portrait is that of the Duchess of Valentinois. All the portraits of Francis represent him with these small eyes. In this picture they are peculiarly piggish. The little woman beside him is yellow-haired, amazingly ill-favored, with very small and very ill shaped eyes.

We must not be surprised that an artist should put out of his hands a thing like this as representing a handsome prince and a beautiful lady, seeing that many painters, and amongst these some of great name, have given us portraits of the goddess of beauty herself in which the face is devoid of charms, and the figure offends painfully against the natural proportion of the female form.

CATHARINE DE' MEDICI.

Between Brantome and one or two other writers, we have a tolerably complete picture of that remarkable and interesting woman Catharine de' Medici. Brantome does the purely eulogistic part to perfection. Catharine, he tells us, was of a very beautiful and gorgeous figure, of great majesty, always very gentle when there was occasion, of fine appearance and good grace, her face fair and pleasant, her bosom very beautiful and white and full, her body also was very beautiful and fair. She was of a very rich *embonpoint*, her legs very handsome, and she loved to wear fine stockings.*

Catharine, though stout in womanhood, was a slender girl, a very common and indeed the usual case. She is described by Antonio Suriano, ambassador from Venice to Rome, who saw her in 1533, as slender and small in person; her features not delicate, and he adds, that she had the large eyes peculiar to the Medici family. "Her nature," he adds, "is lively, her spirit gentle, and her manners good."† This is the description of Catharine at the age of fourteen, when an Italian girl is con-

* "Relatio Antonii Suriani," quoted by Ranke, "History of the Popes,' Appendix, No. 20.

† Brantome, "Dames Illustres," Œuvres, tom. II, p. 41.

sidered a young woman. Catharine was married at fourteen It is the age of Shakespere's Juliet.

> LADY CAPULET.—Thou know'st my daughter's of a pretty age.
> NURSE.—Faith I can tell her age unto an hour.
> LADY CAPULET.—She's not fourteen.
> NURSE.—I'll lay fourteen of my teeth—
> And yet, to my teen be it spoken, I have but four—
> She is not fourteen. How long is it now
> To Lammas-tide?
> LADY CAPULET.—A fortnight and odd days.
> NURSE.—Even or odd, of all days in the year,
> Come Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen.

The great beauty which Brantome attributes to Catharine endured with her, as he tells us, as a wife and widow almost to her death;" "not that she was then," he says with a caution unusual with him in such cases, "as fresh as she was in her most flourishing years, but in good preservation, and very desirable and agreeable."

The flattering picture painted by Brantome must be modified by the sketches drawn by writers less prejudiced in favor of royal charms. Catharine de' Medici was not a beauty. There were serious drawbacks to the perfections which Brantome finds in her. The more faithful picture by Mezerai bears manifest marks of minute accuracy, and of being derived from contemporary sources. Catharine, according to Mezerai, was of middle height, and fat and square in the figure (*grosse et garree*,) and her face was rather large, the mouth projecting (the phrase here is, *la bouche relevee*, which may have some other signification,) her complexion was perfectly white, but with little carnation in it, the eyes soft but large and rolling about with great volubility, her head very large, and she could not walk even a short distance without bathing it in water. A face rather large and a head very large are perfectly destructive of beauty. A small head in a woman is more tolerable to a just taste than a head which can be called large, much less very large.

"As for the rest," says Brantome, "Catherine had the finest hand I believe that ever was seen. The poets have praised Aurora for having beautiful hands and beautiful fingers, but I believe that the queen would have surpassed her in this, and she kept her hands beautiful even till her death. Her son Henry III. inherited from his mother a great deal of this beauty of the hands."

Brantome is very liberal of fine hands to his ladies, but there is reason to believe that Catherine was proud of her hands and her feet. A narrow hand with long slender fingers appears to be what is required. Such are the hands of Dante's Beatrice in the Canzone, in which he draws so complete a picture of beauty. With the exception of the broad forehead which Dante bestows on his mistress, the rest of her portrait is entirely after the ancient taste. She has the crisped golden locks, the mouth, "amorous and beautiful," the nose straight, the chin small, the neck white and slender, finely joining with the shoulders and bosom, and as heightening their effect the slender hands of Beatrice are attached to arms which the poet says were large and broad:

"I bracci suoi distesi e grossi."

The hand of Alcina in her enchanted form in the "Orlando Furioso" is long and narrow, and her picture is one of the most complete descriptions of a beauty to be found in all poetry:

"Lunghetta alquanto e di larghezza augustat."*

"Her hands long and her fingers slender," is part of a very minute description of a perfect woman in the curious and learned work of Nicolas Venetta. I give the whole portrait as drawn by Venetta in a note below, as it contains some peculiar points.†

* Ariosto, Orlando Furioso, c. VIII, st. XIV.

† "En effet, sa taille est haute, bien prise et des plus fines; son air a je ne scay quoy si remply de majesté qu'il inspire du respect aux plus

Fine hands—that is fair and slender hands—have even been admired in the other sex. In the Queen of Navarre's novel, where the lady of Pampeluna falls in love with the Cordelier, the beautiful hands of the priest are made to play a principal part in inspiring this unhappy passion. She goes to church on the first day of Lent. "After sermon the Cordelier celebrated mass, at which the lady was present, and took the ashes from his hand, which was as beautiful and white as a lady could have. The devout lady paid much more attention to the priest's hand than to the ashes he gave her, persuaded that this spiritual love could not be hurtful to the conscience, whatever pleasure she received from it."*

D'Israeli, in his "Curiosities of Literature," notices that Henrietta the Queen of Charles I., in describing the famous Earl of Stafford, in a private letter says: "Though not handsome he was agreeable enough, and he had the finest hands

hardis ; son humeur est agréable et son esprit vif et brilliant. A la considérer en particulier, *son embonpoint est accomply* et le tour de son visage merveilleux Ses dents sont blanches, ses joues et ses levres sont du couleur do rose, *son front est assez large*, ses yeux grands et *bleus*, bien ouverts et pleins de feu, ses sourcils noirs, *sa bouche* et ses oreilles petites, son nez bien fait, sa gorge un peu elevée, ses mains longues et doigts deliez, sa poitrine large, son flanc, pressé, ses pieds petits et délicates" Venette then adds what he considers the ancient portrait of a beauty, and here the small forehead comes in place of the large one in his own picture. "Et si l'on veut une beauté qui plaisoit aux anciens, je diray avec Petrone, qu'elle a les cheveux naturellement frisez, qui lui battent agreablement les epaules ; *que son fronte est petit* au dessus duquel on voit de véritables cheveux retroussez agréablement, que ses sourcils se courbent, que ses yeux sont plus brilliants que les étoiles dans l'obscurité de la nuit, que son nez est un peu aquilin ; que sa bouche est petite semblable a celle de Vénus de Praxitele. Enfin que son visage, sa gorge, ses bras et ses jambes ornez de lien, de cooliers et de brasselets d'or effacent la blancheur du marbre le plus estimé."—NICOLAS VENETTE, "TABLEAU DE L'AMOUR CONJUGAL," p. 242. Cologne, 1696.

* "Contes et Nouvelles de Marguerite de Valois," tom II, p 17.

of any man in the world." Ninon de l'Enclos, as will be mentioned afterwards, felt a repugnance to a man with large hands. More than one French writer dwells with enthusiasm on the beautiful hands of Napoleon.

All writers, who have spoken on the subject, have agreed in praising the elegant taste and splendor which Catharine displayed in her dresses, and in her retinues. "She always dressed very well and superbly," says Brantome, "displaying every new and genteel invention." Corneille, the painter, he says, drew Catharine dressed after the French fashion, with a bonnet adorned with large pearls, and a robe with wide sleeves of silvered lace, trimmed with wolf's fur. Her three daughters appeared beside her in this picture. The Queen was delighted with her portrait, which ladies seldom are.

Varillas celebrates the skill with which all her dresses were adapted to her person. She rested her claims to admiration greatly on her fine ankles; and in order to do justice to their excellence, she had her silk stockings drawn tight upon them; and in riding, which was her usual exercise, she threw one leg rather ostentatiously over the pommel of the saddle. In her days, and long after, it should be observed, that stockings were an article of dress which women attended to with great care, and bestowed much expense upon. A common present in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from a gentleman to a lady, as a New-year's gift, was a pair of stockings and garters, often of the costliest and most curious materials and adornment.* Carnation-colored stockings and yellow garters were the handsome fashion; and those gaudy and expensive ornaments were intended only for partial concealment.

* In Southey's "Common Place Book" we find the following notices about stockings. The first is from the Skipton Accounts under date 1618; "Paid for a pair of carnation silk stockings and a pair of asshe-colored taffata garters and roses, edged with silver lace, given by my Lord to Mrs. Douglas Shiefield, she drawing my Lord for her valentine, £3 10s.'

Catharine, as we are told by Brantome, delighted in the chase, and could manage a horse admirably, though in the course of her life she suffered severely from falls. On one occasion she broke her leg, and on another received so severe an injury on the head, that she had to undergo the operation of trepanning. In fine weather she played at the *pallemail* and at the *arbalest a jallet*, a sort of cross bow for shooting clay-pellets. For bad weather she was always inventing some new dance, or ballet. She patronised theatrical entertainments, as also the performances of zanies and pantaloons, at which, says Brantome, she would laugh her fill. She had a great relish for humor, and showed her enjoyment of such jokes as men even must not make now-a-days.

Catharine loved to surround herself with beautiful women as her attendants. Amidst the general accusations, which have been cast upon her, her chastity has not been spared, and she has been accused of having various amors with persons of low rank. These charges may, I think, be dismissed as not supported by any good authority. The general licentiousness of her court, however, is well established; but it should be recollected that her immediate predecessors were Francis I., and Henry II., and that the court and the kingdom had long been ruled by mistresses; and the amount of the charge that can fairly be brought against Catharine on this score is, that she did not reform the morals of the palace. It must farther be admitted that she made use of the circle of beauty, which she gathered around her, for political objects.

"She brought with her," says Mezerai, in speaking of a visit she made to her son Henry III., "a great band of very beautiful women, whom she displayed in all her negociations, like snares, to catch those with whom she treated."

Under date 1611, we have: "Sir F. Bacon sends to Sir M. Hicke's lady and daughters a New-year's gift of carnation stockings to wear for his sake."—SOUTHEY'S "COMMON PLACE BOOK," pp. 321 and 513.

In order to retain the powers of the state in her own vigorous hands, she encouraged the debaucheries of her sons. She made a complete Sybarite of Henry III. He threw away prodigious sums in gambling; he disguised himself in masquerade, and appeared dressed as a woman. And Mezerai tells us that Catharine entertained him at a feast, at which the most beautiful women of the court attended with their hair dishevelled, and their bosoms uncovered.*

The court of Catharine in short was altogether like what the court of her husband had been. Speaking of Henry II., Mezerai says: "Almost all the vices which ruin great states, and draw down the wrath of Heaven, reigned in his court—luxury, immodesty, libertinage, blasphemies, and the curiosity, as foolish as impious, of searching after the secrets of the future by the detestable illusions of magical art."

The account which the historian gives of the court under Charles IX. (that is, under Catharine), is a parallel to this with some still darker shades in the picture. "Before this reign, it was the men that by their example and persuasions drew the women into gallantry; but now that love affairs formed the greater part of the intrigues and mysteries of state, the women went before the men; their husbands left the bridle loose upon them from complaisance, and from interest; and besides those who loved change, found a satisfaction in this liberty which, instead of one wife, gave them a hundred."†

During this reign, the court and the kingdom swarmed with sorcerers. The queen herself studied and practised magic. She wore about her person some characters written on a piece of the skin of a dead born child.

Catharine was ten years married before she had a child, and in the ten subsequent years she had ten children, three of whom died in infancy. Brantome makes the remark that it

* Mezerai, "Abregé Chronologique," tom III, p. 230.

† Mezerai, tom. III, p. 254.

was the nature of the women of the Medici family to be late in conceiving. During the period of her barrenness, Catharine who, during the whole life-time of Henry, is allowed to have conducted herself with prudence, was neglected and despised; but her subsequent fertility, says Mezerai, "made her triumph over the ill-will of her enemies, and acquired for her the affection of the people, and the esteem of the court, who regarded her afterwards with admiration and respect, as a beautiful tree always loaded with flowers and fruits."*

The employment of the famous John Fernelius, the physician, at her deliveries is noticed by the historians of Catharine. She rewarded him with a hundred thousand crowns, or about six thousand pounds sterling, on each occasion. It does not appear that the example of Catherine brought the practice of employing physicians instead of midwives into fashion. It is certain that, more than a century afterwards, when a medical man was employed at the first delivery of Mademoiselle de la Valliere, it was considered a thing unprecedented; and the reason for the departure from ordinary usage in this case was not any anticipated difficulty in labor, but the king's desire—certainly a vain desire—to make the delivery a secret, by keeping it out of the mouths of women.

Up till this time (1663,) a learned physician, omitting to notice the exception in the case of Catherine de Medici, asserts that the employment of physicians as midwives was unknown in any country in Europe.† In the history of ancient Athens, there was, for a very short time, a departure from the usage of all nations which created terrible consternation and discontent. After the example set in the instance of La Valliere

* Mezerai, tom. III, p. 149.

† Roussel, "Systeme Physique et Morale de la Femme," p. 277. Paris, 1845. The same assertion is made by Astruc in his "Histoire Sommaire de l' Art d'Accoucher"

the practice of employing physicians appears to have prevailed in France.

Bayle, writing about 1690, asserts that it was then unknown in any country except France. But he adds this prediction: "The time, perhaps, will come when the same fashion will prevail in the greater part of Europe; and modesty will undergo the fate of a thousand other things which are subject to the fantastic and inconstant laws of custom."* The prophecy has been fulfilled.

Mezerai has not been favourable to the moral character of, Catharine, but there is a great deal of truth and of sagacity in his sketch. "Her mind," he says, "was extremely subtle, concealed, full of ambition and of artifice, able to accommodate itself to all sorts of persons, to dissemble her real views, and to conduct her designs with incredible patience; ready in finding expedients in cases of need, being never surprised by any accident, as if she had herself desired and brought about all that happened. Otherwise, she was gentle—at least, in appearance—generous, and magnificent. . . . She also merits the praise of not only loving architecture, painting, and sculpture, but also of having favored men of letters, and having brought from Greece and Italy many ancient and rare manuscripts, which are, at this day, the most beautiful ornaments of the Royal Library.

"She entertained all strangers with much courtesy, and her own domestics with great familiarity. She had a marvellous grace in persuading, and loved diversions even in the midst of the greatest difficulties in her affairs. . . . From the time of the death of her husband she strove to keep the sovereign authority in her own hands. This she could not do without distracting her mind with continual pain and disquietude, and the kingdom with troubles and disagreements, arousing and elevating sometimes one faction, and sometimes lowering

* Bayle, "Dict." art. "Hierophile."

and lulling to rest another, uniting sometimes with the weaker out of prudence for fear that the stronger might overwhelm her, sometimes again with the stronger from necessity, and sometimes holding herself neutral when she felt herself powerful enough to control both; but never intending to extinguish them altogether."*

I am afraid that I may be considered as offering an outrage to virtue itself, if I speak of any good and noble qualities in the woman whose name, to many readers, awakens no other memory than that of St. Bartholomew's-day. It cannot, I admit, be considered any palliation of this execrable crime that it was not the fruit either of fanaticism or of bigotry. Catharine was neither a fanatic nor a bigot; and in religious matters, as separated from state politics, was a friend to toleration. Indeed, her enemies in her own day gave her credit for the boldest latitudinarianism.

In a little book published in her own lifetime, and written no doubt, with the same intention as John Knox wrote his treatise against the "Monstrous Regiment of Woman," to incite her subjects to rebellion against her, Catharine, whom the writer elaborately compares to the horrible Fredegondes and Brunehildes of the early Frank history, is plainly called an atheist. "Katherine," says this writer, "being of the race of an atheist, and nourished in atheisme, hath replenished the realme, but specially the Court, with atheistes."†

The massacre of St. Bartholomew was a *coup d'etat* dictated by what she considered a pressing emergency, when her throne was tottering under the assaults of its enemies, and it was con-

* Mezerai, tom. III, p. 150.

† "Ane Meruellous Discours upon the Lyfe, Deedes, and Behauiour of Katherine de Medicis, Quene Mother," printed at Cracow, 1576. I have used the copy of this curious little book, which is in the Advocate's Library at Edinburgh. As the place of publication, perhaps, we should read Edinburgh for Cracow.

ceived and carried out in the spirit of that expediency in which she had been educated; the Italian policy of the period. It was a terrible blow, struck at a dangerous and powerful enemy; a deed which men who were neither fanatics nor bigots highly approved, as extremely salutary in prostrating the power of what they regarded as hateful, hypocritical, intriguing, and insidious faction.

We cannot suppose that Catharine, who lived amongst them and knew them, could look on the Huguenots of France as they are regarded by the Protestants of the nineteenth century; as a congregation of saints. This certainly was not the light in which they were regarded by men at that period, who cannot be accused of fanaticism either in politics or in religion. We may safely call Montaigne—a liberal, a tolerant, and a philosophic man—as a witness to his impressions of the character of the Huguenots. "In this contest," says Montaigne, in his "Essay on Liberty of Conscience," "by which France is at present agitated with civil wars, the better and the sounder party is without doubt, that which maintains the ancient religion and the ancient policy of the country."*

The most dreadful crimes have been commited conscientiously and as the philosophical Tacitus half approves of the cruelties of Nero to the early Christians, whom the historian unhappily regarded as a hateful people, so I can believe, notwithstanding the tale of the remorse which visited her dying pillow, that Catharine, to the last, believed that the massacre of the Huguenots was a patriotic deed.

Catharine's conduct as a wife appears to have been exemplary. The uncomplaining patience with which she endured the king's neglect of her for the love of Diana of Poitiers may, by those who are not disposed to put a good construction on her extraordinary forbearance, be received as merely a proof of her great control over the expression of her feelings. But

* Montaigne, "Essais," liv. II, c. 19.

after she assumed and, as queen-mother, vigorously exercised the powers of monarchy, the magnanimity with which she refused to revenge herself, or allow any others to revenge her upon her who, for twenty years, had been her rival; and the care which she took, while succeeding lawfully to all the political authority which the Duchess of Valentinois had so long unlawfully exercised, that neither the wealth, nor the palaces, nor any of the presents which Henry had bestowed on his favourite should be withdrawn from her, will compel those who are capable of giving due weight to the rare and great merit of such conduct, to confess that, if Catharine's memory is loaded with one of the most gigantic crimes in history, she exhibited, on more than one occasion, virtues, in which few indeed of those who can execrate her great guilt will be inclined or able to imitate her.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

If it were desired to prove from partial testimonies that this unamiable woman was a great beauty and a perfect saint, it would not be difficult to collect a good body of evidence on both points from her contemporaries, and from persons who ought to have known what she was like, including herself. Her admiration of her own beauty was intense and enthusiastic. Whether or not it be true that she instructed her painters to paint her face without any shadow in it, it is certain that she never could be satisfied with any likeness made of her, in however courteous and flattering a manner the artist had behaved towards her. She was disgusted with the best efforts in this line; feeling how far those painters who were most anxious to please had fa.len short in doing justice to the charms which her faithful looking-glass, which could not lie, revealed to her in herself. She viewed with execration the attempts made to convey her features to the canvas.

She executed wrath against innumerable portraits of herself painted with the most passionate desire of pleasing her, or at least of appeasing her indignation, and with the most sincere and loyal design of imposing her on the world, and on all who had not seen or were not likely to see her, as a beauty; as not

merely the rival, but the vanquisher of her fair cousin, Mary of Scotland. No Iconoclast of Byzantium, no conquering son of the Koran ever, in his devoutest rage, manifested a more religious fury against graven images, and the likenesses of divine or human beings, either in the heavens above or the earth beneath, than the Virgin Queen, the "bright occidental star" did against the best portraits of herself; her sacred wrath against the more favorable being only surpassed by that with which she burned against the more faithful. Sir Walter Raleigh, her admirer, tells us of "the pictures of Queen Elizabeth made by *unskillful and common* painters which by *her own commandment* were knockt in peeces and cast into the fire."* As some excuse for her blindness to the moderate charms of her person and of her mind, it should be recollected that never was woman more flattered as to both than was Elizabeth. A volume of eulogiums on both might be compiled without trouble, the contents being in prose and verse, concluding, in the latter department, with the famous lines:

> "She was, she is, what can there more be said,
> On earth the first, in heaven the second maid"

The general appearance of Queen Elizabeth, as discernible through all the mists and the rose-coloring of flattery, is not difficult to gather. She was of the middle height. When she learned that Mary, whom she regarded as her audacious rival in beauty, though no rivalship was dreamed of by the unfortunate Queen of Scots, or was ever dreamed of by any person of taste, was tall, she declared, as thousands of women under similar circumstances have declared of themselves, that Mary was too tall, and that she herself was of the true proper height for a woman. The person of Elizabeth it is understood is done justice to, and is accurately embodied in the equestrian figure of her to be seen in the Tower of London. There were some good points about her. Her person was reasonably well

* Raleigh, "History of the World." Preface. Lond 1614

proportioned; her shoulders and bust were good. Various writers have spoken of the dignity and stateliness of her walk and carriage; but these, like her whole character, partook of something of the harshness of masculine vigor.

Her hands have been praised for their beauty and fairness; they were narrow, the fingers being long, and these are the hands of the admired fashion. Such was the hand of Ariosto's beautiful enchantress, as I have elsewhere noticed, "lunghetta alquanto e di larghezza angusta." Elizabeth was aware of this excellence, and endeavoured to make the most of it. Before company she was continually pulling off and on her gloves, and her fingers were decorated with rings and precious stones in order to call attention to their symmetry. But her face was long, hard, full of harsh lines, and intensely unwomanly, her hooked nose being particularly unfeminine. Her eyes were small, her teeth bad, and her lips thin and tasteless. Her hair and complexion were of a sandy, or insipid washed-out whitey-brown hue. Her little eyes are generally said to have been grey; but a very accurate observer who had gazed on her with much interest, and whom I am about to quote, tells us that they were black.

The appearance of Elizabeth, from childhood to old age, may be studied in the various portraits of her in Hampton Palace. They all bear resemblance, Elizabeth becoming gradually less and less comely as she advanced from childhood to youth, womanhood and old age. The picture of her when a mere child, by Holbein, in the King's Writing Closet (281 in the catalogue,) is like that of a boy, and bears a great resemblance to another picture by the same painter (282) when she was a girl. The portraits by Zucchero and by M. Garrand (283 and 285) represent her in old age. In the allegorical picture of her by Luke de Heere (284) the resemblance to the other portraits cannot be mistaken. This picture represents Eliza-

beth as vanquishing Juno in power, Minerva in intellect, and Venus in beauty.

> "Juno potens sceptris et mentis accumine Pallas
> Et roseo Veneris fulget in ore decus;
> Adfuit Elizabeth, Juno perculsa refugit
> Obstupuit Pallas, erubuitque Venus."

There is a very curious and rare book of travels originally written in Latin, by Paul Hentzner, a German who paid a visit to England in the time of Elizabeth, in the capacity of tutor to a young German nobleman. The work of Hentznerus lay in manuscript in the original Latin till about the middle of last century, when it was translated by Horace Walpole and printed at his private press at Strawberry Hill. The edition now before me is a small volume of a hundred and fifty pages, printed from the private edition of Walpole with the portraits of several persons mentioned by Hentzner. An engraving of Zucchero's portrait of Elizabeth "done by order of the Parliament" forms the frontispiece.

Hentzner's work is extremely interesting. He had an eye for detail in everything, and he has described everything that he saw. When admitted into Queen Elizabeth's presence chambers, he gazed on her with the eye of a painter, a milliner and a jeweller, and he has faithfully committed the fruit of his gazings to paper. He has given us a picture of Elizabeth in her sixty-fifth year, her face, her form, her dress, her retinue, her speech and her manners. I extract liberally from his picturesque pages.

"We were admitted by an order Mr. Rogers had procured from the Lord Chamberlain, into the presence chamber, hung with rich tapestry; and the floor, after the English fashion, strewed with hay, through which the Queen commonly passed in her way to Chapel: at the door stood a gentleman dressed in velvet, with a gold chain, whose office was to introduce to the

Queen any person of distinction that came to wait on her: it was Sunday, when there is usually the greatest attendance of nobility. In the same hall were the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, a great number of counsellors of state, officers of the crown, and gentlemen, who waited the Queen's coming out; which she did from her own apartment, when it was time to go to prayers, attended in the following manner:

"First went gentlemen, barons, earls, knights of the garter, all richly dressed and bare-headed: next came the chancellor, bearing the seals in a red silk purse between two; one of which carried the royal sceptre, the other the sword of state, in a red scabbard, studded with golden fleurs-de-lis, the point upwards; next came the Queen, in the sixty-fifth year of her age, as we were told, very majestic; her face oblong, fair but wrinkled; her eyes small, yet black and pleasant; her nose a little hooked; her lips narrow, and her teeth black (a defect the English seem subject to, from their too great use of sugar); she had in her ears two pearls, with very rich drops; she wore false hair, and that red; upon her head she had a small crown, reported to be made of some of the gold of the celebrated Lunebourg table; her bosom was uncovered, as all the English ladies have it, till they marry; and she had on a necklace of exceeding fine jewels; her hands were small, her fingers long, and her stature neither tall nor low; her air was stately, her manner of speaking mild and obliging. That day she was dressed in white silk, bordered with pearls of the size of beans, and over it a mantle of black silk, shot with silver threads; her train was very long, the end of it borne by a marchioness; instead of a chain, she had an oblong collar of gold and jewels.

"As she went along in all this state and magnificence, she spoke very graciously first to one and then to another, whether foreign ministers, or those who attended for different reasons, in English, French, or Italian; for besides being well skilled in Greek, Latin, and the languages I have mentioned, she is mis-

tress of Spanish, Scotch and Dutch; whoever speaks to her, it is kneeling; now and then she raises some with her hand. While we were there, M. Slawata, a Bohemian baron, had letters to present to her, and she, after pulling off her glove, gave him her right hand to kiss, sparkling with rings and jewels, a mark of particular favor: wherever she turned her face, as she was going along, everybody fell down on their knees. The ladies of the court followed next to her, very handsome and well shaped, and for the most part dressed in white; she was guarded on each side by the gentlemen-pensioners, fifty in number, with gilt battle-axes.

"In the ante-chapel next the hall where we were, petitions were presented to her, and she received them most graciously, which occasioned the exclamation of 'Long live Queen Elizabeth!' She answered it with 'I thank you, my good people!' In the chapel was excellent music; as soon as it and the service were over, which scarce exceeded half an hour, the queen returned to the same state and order, and prepared to go to dinner. But while she was still at prayers, we saw her table laid out with the following solemnity. A gentleman entered the room bearing a rod, and along with him another who had a table-cloth, which, after they had both kneeled three times with the utmost veneration, he spread upon the table; and after kneeling again they both retired. Then came two others, one with the rod again, the other with a saltseller, a plate, and bread; when they had kneeled, as the others had done, and placed what was brought upon the table, they too retired with the same ceremonies performed by the first.

"At last came an unmarried lady (we were told she was a countess), and along with her a married one, bearing a toasting-knife; the former was dressed in white silk, who, when she had prostrated herself three times in the most graceful manner, approached the table, and rubbed the plates with bread and salt with as much care as if the queen had been present; when

they had waited there a little while, the yeomen of the guards entered, bare-headed, clothed in scarlet, with a golden rose upon their backs, bringing in at each turn a course of twenty-four dishes, served in plates, most of it gilt; these dishes were received by a gentleman in the same order they were brought, and placed upon the table, while the lady-taster gave to each of the guards a mouthful to eat of the particular dish he had brought, for fear of any poison.

"During the time that this guard, which consists of the tallest and stoutest men that can be found in all England, being carefully selected for this service, were bringing in dinner, twelve trumpeters, and two kettle-drummers, made the hall ring for half an hour together. At the end of all this ceremonial, a number of unmarried ladies appeared, who, with a particular solemnity, lifted the meat off the table, and conveyed it into the queen's inner and more private chamber, where, after she had chosen for herself, the rest goes to the ladies of the court. The queen dines and sups alone with very few attendants; and it is very seldom that anybody, foreigner or native, is admitted at that time, and then only at the intercession of somebody in power."*

Here is valuable evidence from a most valuable witness. Walpole remarks with pleasure: "Fortunately so memorable a personage as Queen Elizabeth happened to fall under his notice! The excess of respectful ceremonial used at decking her majesty's table, though not in her presence, and the kind of adoration and genuflexion paid to her person, approach to Eastern homage. When we observe such worship offered to an old woman with bare neck, black teeth, and false red hair, it makes one smile; but makes one reflect what masculine sense was couched under those weaknesses, and which could command such awe from a nation like England."

* "Paul Hentzner's Travels in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth," p. 33. Lond. 1797.

Walpole has appended to his translation of Hentzner the "Fragmenta Regalia; or observations on the late Queen Elizabeth, her times and favorites, by Sir Robert Naunton, Master of the Courts of Wards." All that Naunton, in his professed eulogium of Elizabeth, tells us of her is, that "she was of person tall (the middle size rises into tallness when measured by a panegyrist), of hair and complexion fair, and therewith well-favored, but high-nosed, of limbs and features neat, and, which added to the lustre of these external graces, of a stately and majestic comportment." Farther on he tells us that "her wonted oath" was "God's death." This was her favorite affirmation, but it was certainly not her solitary one, for she had abundant variety, and swore with an energy becoming her character.

Elizabeth covered herself with rich dress and cumbrous ornaments gathered from all quarters of the world. At her death it is said that there were three thousand costly suits in her wardrobe. Brantome, who thought a woman amazingly fine when she was weighed to the earth with gold and gems, and who also speaks with rapture of the dazzling beauty of ladies of sixty, seventy, and fourscore years of age, had seen Elizabeth, as he expresses it, in her summer and in her autumn, though not in her winter, and he thus describes her as she appeared to his polite and courtier eyes. It is extremely awkward for Elizabeth that Brantome places this account of her in that part of his "Dames Galantes" which is devoted to "amorous old women" (*veilles amoureuses.*)

"The Queen Elizabeth of England," he says, "who reigns at this day, I am told is as beautiful as ever; which, if she really is, I hold her as a beautiful princess; for I have seen her in her summer and in her autumn; as to her winter, she approaches it closely, if she be not now in it; for it is a long time now since I have seen her. The first time I saw her, I know what age she was then said to be of; I believe that what

has preserved her so long in her beauty, is that she has never been married, nor has borne the weight of marriage, which is very burdensome, and particularly when one has several children."*

Elizabeth's continual refusals of marriage, notwithstanding her evident admiration of handsome courtiers, has been appealed to amongst other proofs of her guilt by those writers who have described her as a licentious princess. The evidence against her on this score is certainly very imperfect, and her celibacy is now generally accounted for from an innocent cause. This view is confirmed by some passages in her answers to the applications made to her by the Parliament praying her to take a husband, and it is alluded to by the historians Camden and Mezerai, as well as by Amelotte de la Houssaye, Bayle and various other subsequent writers.

* Brantome, "Dames Galantes," Œuvres, IV, 188.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

THE personal charms of Mary Queen of Scots have been more extensively celebrated than those of any other woman of modern times, and more so, perhaps, than those of any woman in all history, Helen of Troy alone excepted. It is possible, had she led a life unmarked by romantic incidents, or had her history been less deeply tragical from her childhood to the tomb than it was, that the praise of her beauty would have been less extravagant, though it is not possible to doubt that with this fatal gift—fatal to her, certainly—she was abundantly endowed.

The modern notions of her beauty are far from being distinct or well settled. This certainly does not arise from any want of pictures claiming to be original portraits of Mary, which are to be found in abundance in the mansions of aristocratic collectors in England and on the continent. There was an Italian painter, who has obtained the name of Lippo dalle Madonne, or "Phillip of the Madonnas," on account of his constantly employing himself in the painting of heads of the blessed Virgin Mary. In the same way, a great many painters have occupied themselves in multiplying portraits of Mary Queen of Scots. The greater number of these portraits

may be fairly considered as works of imagination, compounded out of such features as the painter thought would together make a fine picture.

Such beauties of the artist's imagination, are always, as if by a regular law, infinitely inferior to the portraits of real women of ordinary comeliness. Even when he attempts to improve nature herself out of the materials which she furnishes him, the painter always fails. "The Greek," says Jeremy Taylor, "that designed the most exquisite picture that could be imagined, fancied the eye of Chione, and the hair of Pægnium and Tarsia's lip, Philenium's chin and the forehead of Delphia, and set them all on Melphidippa's neck and thought that he should outdo both art and nature. But when he came to view the proportions, he found that what was excellent in Tarsia did not agree with the other excellency of Philenium, and that though singly they were rare pieces, yet in the whole they made an ugly face."

It is not given to mortal painter either to create by his imagination or compound by his learning, anything to compare with the faces which are to be seen in profusion in the real world. A perfectly beautiful face when we meet with it in painting, is sure to be the face of an individual. Look over the pages of a book of imaginary beauties, "Idols of Memory," "Flowers of Loveliness," "Dreams of my Youth," and so; and then turn to Vandyk's portrait of Margaret Lemon in the gallery at Hampton Palace, and see and feel how inferior the brightest imagination of a conceited painter is to the workmanship of Heaven.

It is to be feared that Mary's real beauty has suffered from the imagination of painters. Very few of the extant portraits of her have any beauty or grace about them at all. I have scarcely seen one with a fine forehead or even an approach to the shape of a fine forehead—that sweetly arched brow which we see in the real portraits of Lady Denham, the Duchess of Som-

erset, Miss Bagot, or many others of Sir Peter Lely's beauties, and in the portraits of the fascinating Ninon de l'Enclos. Yet this fine form of head is by no means a rarity in real life. Almost all the portraits of Mary agree in destroying the beauty of the lower part of the face by surmounting it with an offensively high broad and square-formed forehead

It is probable that Mary, with all her beauty otherwise, had such a forehead; for mere imagination, which when trusted to always leads painters far astray from true beauty, would have taught them to avoid the unpardonable error of giving to a woman so renowned for the effect of her charms a forehead which repels a refined taste; and besides this they had the example exquisitely formed and graceful foreheads presented to them in the Venuses, Cleopatras and Magdalenes of the great masters.

The celebrated picture of Mary at Hardwicke, is thus described by Mrs. Jameson. It is "a full-length, in a mourning habit with a white cap (of her own peculiar fashion) and a veil of white gauze. This I believe is the celebrated picture so often copied and engraved. It is dated 1578, the twenty-sixth year of her age and the tenth of her captivity. The figure is elegant and the face pensive and sweet." This is the picture of Mary which, as it appears in prints makes the nearest approach to the likeness of a beauty.

"The lovely picture by Zucchero," continues Mrs. Jameson, "is at Chiswick. There is another small head of her in a cap and feathers at Hardwicke, said to have been painted in France. The turn of the head is airy and graceful. As to the features they are so much marred by some *soi-disant* restorer that it is difficult to say what they may have been originally."*

Mary was tall in person and gracefully formed. Her hair, which, in childhood or girlhood, was yellow, grew to a dark auburn in womanhood, fading in the colour afterwards, and

* Mrs. Jameson, "Visits and Sketches," vol II., p. 201.

becoming grey before her death, with suffering and grief. Her hair, says Brantome, "so beautiful, fair, and ashy—*si beaux, si blonds, et cendres.*" Mary, however, like her royal cousin Elizabeth, who had more need of deceit, often wore false locks of yellow or red. Her eyes were grey, her face was oval, and the lower part was well formed; the chin, which approached to be what is called a double chin, being extremely handsome.

Her grief for the death of the husband of her girlhood was no doubt sincere; but we are not obliged to believe Brantome when he assures us that she lost all her colour from sorrow at the death of the Dauphin. Her face, however, in womanhood is said to have been pale; her complexion generally was clear. In her latter days her hair, as noticed before, became grey; but she did not pine away into fleshlessness with grief, but grew corpulent. Yet when she appeared on the scaffold at Fotheringay, in the forty-ninth year of a life, the last eighteen years of which had been passed in dreary imprisonment, she still was a beautiful woman.

As far as being real pictures of her style of dressing, all the old portraits of Mary may be depended on as authentic records. It is remarkable that though no one of these dresses is calculated to show her figure to advantage, her dresses, even the stiffest of them, are free from the cumbersomeness so general in the female attire of the times. What a contrast does the most formal and courtly of her suits present to the dress of Elizabeth, which always appears to do injustice to her person by concealing her well formed shoulders!

The portraits of Mary, as a young woman, often represent her in a kind of riding-dress—a dress disagreeable in itself, and extremely unfavourable for a portrait—helping, in her case, by its close fastening up to the throat and entire want of freedom and openness, the ill effect of the masculine forehead generally

given to her, and making her bear a very offensive resemblance to a handsome young man.

Brantome, who it is to be recollected accompanied Mary to Scotland after the death of the Dauphin, has some highly characteristic remarks on her dress. Such he tells us, were the charms of her person, that when she was dressed like a savage as he had seen her, after the barbarous fashion of the savages of her country, she appeared in a mortal body and in barbarous and rude costume, a true goddess. "What then would she appear," he exclaims in a fine and truly Parisian rapture and in the most sublime style of a French dressmaker, "what then would she appear in her fine and rich garments, either French or Spanish, or with her Italian bonnet, or in her white full mourning dress in which she looked so beautiful; for the whiteness of her complexion contended for the victory with her veil; but in the end the art of her veil lost the day, and the snow of her lovely face outshone the other."* As to her discourse, Brantome tells us such was the grace of her talking, that the rude and barbarous and unseemly language of her country became very beautiful and agreeable in her, "but not in others," he adds. All this is truly and delightfully after the manner of Brantome.

Mary had learned dressing, or the art of being dressed, at the court of Catharine de' Medici, and was herself a woman of the greatest good taste. All the continental fashions of dressing were well enough known amongst the ladies of Scotland long before Brantome came amongst them; but it may readily be conceded, that the women of the British Islands of the highest rank will never to the end of time be able to put their garments about them, with the elegant grace and ease which are common amongst all women in France, Spain and Italy. With Brantome all that was French was beyond improvement.

I do not know if the inherent meanness and poverty of the

* Brantome, "Dames Illustres," Œuvres, tom. ii, p. 108.

French language, its harsh consonantal, and perhaps still more disagreeable diphthong sounds have ever been acknowledged —perhaps they have never been perceived by any Frenchman, for the French are a thoroughly patriotic people. As to the question of language, however, and of comparative euphony, there need be no hesitation in declaring the Scottish language of the sixteenth century to have been a very superior language to the French Court language of any century. Brantome's tastes, however, were wholly conventional, and his standard was the French Court. By that standard he judged not only of fashions and of manners, but of morals, and it is to be feared even of women's faces. And as this was his general standard, so his particular standard was the French Court exactly as it existed in his own day, at the very period at which he wrote.

Thus, though Isabella of Bavaria, the Queen of Charles VI, and the ladies of her Court adopted the style of dress which they considered capable of setting off their beauty to the best advantage, Brantome looking to their costume, as it appeared in the tapestries of the period, treats it with contempt as compared with the fashions introduced by Margaret of France and Navarre in his time.* Indeed, if we may believe him, neither ancient nor modern, mortal nor immortal women were ever dressed like the women of the French Court in his time. Speaking of the voluptuous Margaret's dress, he says, "I have seen her sometimes, and so have others beside me, dressed in a robe of white satin, covered with tinsel with a little carnation, with a veil of tan-colored crape or Roman gauze, thrown over her head carelessly, but never was anything so beautiful; and what ever may be said of the goddesses of old or of the empresses, as we see them in the ancient medals pompously adorned, they looked like mere chamber-maids beside her."†

* Brantome, "Dames Illustres,' Œuvres, tom. II, p. 192.

† Ibid. II, p. 194.

I think a refined taste would uphold the elegance of the head-dress of Olympias, the mother of Alexander, in the medal to which I have referred in another place, in opposition to the most elegant head-dress to be seen in any French picture of the sixteenth century. Speaking elsewhere, Brantome says: "The Roman ladies, as they are to be seen in the ancient statues and medals, will be found with their head-dresses and their garments in perfection, and very fit to make them be loved; now our French ladies surpass all, but it is to the Queen of Navarre that they owe thanks."

This Queen, whose fine taste is thus enthusiastically celebrated, was a very tall and stout woman. She barely preserved decency in her manners, and is said to have studied inventions to make herself beloved, such as are only to be read of in amorous romances.

Mary did not neglect the care of her beauty during her long imprisonment in Fotheringhay Castle. Brantome is rapturous about the charms of her person, which the awkwardness of the executioner unexpectedly exposed, when he tore off the body of her gown and her low collar. But Mary, who like Anne Bullen, studied effect in death, had prepared to be charming in the last scene; and like Anne Bullen she was not ouly pious but really witty in her dying moments. She hastily gathered her dress about her, and pleasantly reproved the executioner by saying: "I am really not in the habit of putting off my clothes before so much company." If Mary had not murdered the worthless and heartless Darnley, she would have been deservedly ranked amongst the most amiable of women; while her long captivity, and her death on the scaffold—certainly not on account of her great crime—fully entitle her to be regarded as a martyr to her own beauty, the victim of another woman who envied her and abhorred her for her charms, and who, if Mary had not been so provokingly lovely,

* Brantome, Œuvres, tom. III p. 289.

would have easily pardoned her for the death of a husband who had proved himself wholly undeserving of her love or even respect. The murderess of Darnley had real injuries to avenge; the assassins of Rizzio had simply a thirst for blood to gratify.

Mary was accomplished in singing, in playing on the virginals and in dancing.

Miss Strickland has prefixed to her history of Mary, in her "Lives of the Queens of Scotland," an engraving from the famous painting in Culzean Castle, which was presented to the Earl of Cassilis by Mary herself. It represents Mary in the fourteenth year of her age, in the days of her happiness. Miss Strickland's description of the original painting is well worthy of quotation. "This most beautiful and undoubted likeness of Mary Stuart," she says, "represents her in the morning flower of her charms, when she appeared at the summit of all earthly felicity and grandeur. It is in a nobler style of portrait painting than that of Zucchero, and worthy of Titian or Guercino. It is scarcely possible for an engraving to do justice to a picture, of which the tone and coloring are so exquisite. The perfection of features and contour is there united with feminine softness, and the expression of commanding intellect. Her hair is of a rich chesnut tint, almost black, which Nicholas White (who had ascertained the fact from her ladies) assures us was its real color. Her complexion is that of a delicate brunette, clear and glowing; and this accords with the darkness of her eyes, hair, and majestic eyebrows. Her hair is parted in wide bands across the forehead, and rolled back in a large curl on each temple, above the small delicately moulded ears. She wears a little round crimson velvet cap, embroidered with gold and ornamented with gems, placed almost at the back of her head, resembling indeed a Greek cap, with this difference, that a coronal frontlet is formed by the disposition of the pearls, which gives a regal charac-

ter to the head-dress. Her dress is of very rich crimson damask embroidered with gold and ornamented with gems. It fits tight to her bust and taper waist, which is long and slender; so is her gracefully turned throat. She has balloon shaped tops to her sleeves, rising above the natural curve of her shoulders. Her dress is finished at the throat with a collar band, supporting a lawn collarette, with a finely quilted demi-ruff. Her only ornament is a string of large round beads, carelessly knotted about her throat from which depends an amethyst cross."*

The portrait, thus described and thus admired by Miss Strickland, is not that of a female beauty. Making every allowance for the defect of the engraving in wanting the exquisite coloring of the painting, the head is altogether unwomanly in form, and form is the foundation of beauty in a face. The forehead—that large and ungracefully shaped forehead—it need hardly be said would have repelled Zeuxis or Guido; it is a forehead that might be very becoming in a stupid professor of mathematics. No painter, left to himself to devise a female face, would dare to bestow such a forehead as this upon it.

The admiration of such foreheads in women is a depravity of modern times, and is yet and ever will be confined to a few sectarians in taste. The ancients—erring perhaps on the other side, but the safe and gentle side—sighed for narrow and low foreheads. I cannot recollect in any ancient writer a passage in praise of a large forehead in a woman.† Horace calls Lycoris "illustrious" for her slender forehead.

> "Insignem tenui fronte Lycorida
> Cyri torret amor."

* Miss Strickland, "Lives of the Queens of Scotland" vol. III., p. 94.

† In one of the elegies attributed to Cornelius Gallus the phrase frons libera occurs:

> "Nigra supercilia, et frons libera, lumina nigra
> Urebant animum sæpe notata meum."

It would surely be a forcing of the meaning of the passage to make a broad forehead out of this. Frons libera is a free smooth brow.

Winkelman, who has noticed this passage in his work on "Ancient Art," tells us that the Greek women, where the real beauty was wanting, gave the appearance of loveliness to their foreheads by fastening a band below their hair; and that the beautiful women of Circassia produce the same effect by an ingenious manner of combing down their locks. Petronius, in his exquisite picture of Circe—in which he has assembled so many points of high beauty—the naturally curled hair flowing down on her shoulders, and the eyebrows almost joined, does not forget to describe the forehead as "very small."*

From a passage in Montaigne, founded no doubt on the relations of travellers, it appears that the charm of low foreheads is understood by the women of Mexico; and that in order to produce its appearance, they make use of every art to make the hair grow down on their brows.†

The oldest seeming commendation of a large forehead in a woman, that I have happened to meet with, occurs in the Canzone of Dante. "Io miro i crespi e gli biondi capegli," where he gives a detailed and very fine description of his mistress, and praises, as appears, her "ample forehead," "la spaziosa fronte." But in justice to Beatrice, may not her lover's spaziosa be the Latin "speciosa," beautiful? Chaucer however, following soon after Dante, is unequivocal in praising the broad forehead of the prioress.

> "Sickerly she had a fair forehead;
> It was almost a span broad, I trow."

The celebrated verses, which enumerate the thirty points of woman's beauty, all of which are said to have been assembled together in Helen of Troy, are of unknown authorship. They have been translated into most languages, and are found in French, Latin, Italian, and Spanish, the French being believed to be the original;† but they have never been regarded as

* Petronius, "Satyricon." p. 96. Paris, 1601.

† "Les Mexicaines content entres les beautez, la petitasse du fronte et

older than the commencement of the sixteenth century. In these lines, it is laid down that the perfect woman must have three parts broad, "the breast, the forehead, and the space between the eyes."* It is somewhat remarkable that out of these three, the ancients desired two—the two latter—to be narrow. But there are great offences against sound taste in this enumeration of the thirty points; and if Helen has been such as this writer supposes her to have been, Paris would never have stolen her away—

> "Trojaque nunc stares, Priamique arx alta maneres."

ou elles se defont le poil, par tout le reste du corps, elles le nourrissent au front et peuplent par art."—Montaigne, "Essais," liv. ii, c. 12.

* "Tres anchas; los pechos, la frente, y el entrecejo."

CERVANTES.

It is fortunate that the immortal author of "Don Quixote," of whose romantic personal history, all that we know is so extremely interesting, as all that we learn of his character is so amiable, has not neglected, while giving us some hints in the most modest manner about the chief points in his adventures, to draw a striking picture of himself, according in every respect with the animated and intellectual portraits of him which have come down to our times. This picture occurs in the prologue to his novels, and refers to the portrait made of him by Don Juan de Jaregui, to be engraved for this work, in order to satisfy the desires of those who wished to know what the face and figure of the author were like. Cervantes tells us that his face is oval, his hair chestnut color, his forehead smooth and free (*lisa i disembarazada*,) his eyes cheerful, his nose crooked (*corbo*,) though well proportioned; his beard silvery, though not twenty years ago it was golden; his moustaches large, the mouth small, the teeth neither small nor large, because there are but six of them, and these ill-conditioned, and worse placed, as they have no communication the one with the other; the body between the two extremes, neither large nor small; the complexion clear, rather fair than brown; rather round in the shoulders, and not very light in the feet.

He goes on to tell us that he lost his left hand in the naval battle of Lepanto by the shot of an arquebuss; "a wound," he says, with characteristic nobility of spirit, "which he regards as beautiful (*hermosa*,) as he received it in the most memorable and lofty occasion which these past ages have seen, or those to come may hope to see, fighting under the conquering banners of the son of that thunderbolt of war Charles V. of happy memory."*

This is quite in the spirit of Cervantes himself, and of the noble age of Spanish literature, when all her poets and great authors were soldiers and adventurers who had fought at home and abroad, by sea and land—Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Mendoza, Boscan, Montemayor, Garcilazo, Ercilla, Calderon (first a soldier and then a priest).

The fighting periods in all civilized countries are, as was particularly and pre-eminently the case in ancient Greece and modern Spain, those periods in which what are sometimes called "the arts of peace" flourish most prosperously, and when literary genius has shone forth with the greatest brilliancy. Socrates, Eschylus, Sophocles, and Xenophon, were all themselves men who fought their countries' battles, as well as conferred honor on her literature. All this is quite in the teeth of the statements made at the conferences of the Peace Society, but in perfect accordance with the truth of history.

With our Northern notions, which associate black hair with the pictures of the people of the South, we are often surprised in reading how many distinguished men of Spain and Italy have had brown, yellow, or red hair. We find Cervantes with brown hair on his head, and his beard yellow; Camoens, the glory of Portugal, and Tasso, the great epic poet of Italy, with

* "Vida de Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra," autor, "Don Gregorio Mayans i Siscar," p. 174: prefixed to the vida y Hechos del Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quixote." Haya, 1744.

yellow hair; and Alfieri, who, in our time, revived the literary spirit of his country, rejoicing like the Roman Sylla, and enchanting the other sex with his flowing locks.

In the case of the women of Cervantes's times, the frequent occurrence of golden hair may be accounted for from the circumstance that, as the passion for yellow hair ran very high in the sixteenth century, those women who were afflicted with the misfortune of having black, imitated the color which inspired love by wearing a false head-dress, as did the ancient Messalina when, in matronly years, she wished to allure her lovers by the show of youthful beauty, or practised that strange and apparently lost art of discharging the black color and assuming the golden, which was known in ancient Greece to both women and men, which, in the days of Tertullian, was employed by his countrywomen of Carthage upon their strong, vigorous, African black hair—that great denouncer of women's vanities, describing, as I have noticed before, the torture and danger to which they subjected themselves in order to make themselves beautiful; and which was unquestionably both known and universally practised in Europe in the sixteenth century.

The taste of Cervantes in women's hair was the taste of his age. He could have adorned the head of his hero's imaginary mistress with hair of any color that he chose—and he has chosen to make it yellow—in the splendid description of her given by her romantic lover.

"I can only declare," said Don Quixote to Senor Vivaldo, after heaving a deep sigh, "that her name is Dulcinea; her country Toboso, in La Mancha; her rank at least that of a princess, seeing that she is my queen and mistress; her beauty superhuman, since in her are truly met all the impossible and chimerical beauties which poets give to their ladies; her hair is golden, her forehead the fields of Elysium, her eyebrows the bow of heaven, her eyes suns, her lips coral, her teeth pearls,

her neck alabaster, her bosom marble, her hands ivory, her whiteness that of snow; while all of her that modesty conceals from human vision is such, as I think and understand, that a discreet consideration can only extol, but must not compare with anything."

Except in reference to the absolutely essential beauty of yellow hair, all this, though extremely eloquent, is sufficiently vague and undefined.

There was a curious resemblance between Cervantes, the glory of Spain, and Camoens, the glory of Portugal, extending to their general history, their captivity, poverty, genius, chivalrous spirit, and personal appearance. Both were soldiers and literary men of a highly poetical character. Cervantes lost his left hand in battle; Camoens his right eye. It has been remarked, as to personal appearance, that the nose of Cervantes, the peculiar characteristic of which is the elevation in the middle, is exactly the nose of Camoens as seen in his portraits. The complexion of the two was nearly the same.

Camoen's early biographer, Manoel Severin de Faria, tells us that the poet was of middle stature, with a full face, his countenance a little lowering (which that of Cervantes was not any more than his spirit,) his nose long, raised in the middle, and large at the end. This is the nose of Cervantes accurately described. In his youth, the hair of Camoens, which afterwards became grey with sorrow and suffering, is described as being yellow like saffron. It is hardly worth mentioning that this elevation in the middle of the nose, as described in Cervantes and Camoens, has been declared, by some whimsical observers, to be a physiognomical characteristic of genius.

No romances are finer than the histories, as far as they have been related, of Cervantes and Camoens, particularly of the cheerful Cervantes. It is not generally known that Madrid has not the undisputed reputation of his birth; and that as several cities strove for the honor of having produced Homer,

there is a contention between four places in Spain for the glory of giving Cervantes to the world, the claims of Madrid being denied by Esquivias, Seville, and Lucena. The verses in praise of Madrid cited from Cervantes' own "Viage del Parnaso," are far from being conclusive in favor of the Spanish capital.

Cervantes died in the same year and in the same month, though it is not positively established that it was on the same day, with Shakspere—that 23d of April which is the anniversary both of the birth and the death of England's great dramatist, and by a curious comcidence is also the anniversary of the feast of England's patron saint, George of Cappadocia. The death of Cervantes, on whose life, as, on his writings, there is no stain of evil or unworthiness, is highly interesting. He lived and died poor but contented; feeling, as there can be little doubt that every great man, neglected by his own age, has felt, that just posterity would amply repay him for the praises withheld from him by his contemporaries.

"I have given," he says in his "Viage del Parnaso," in 'Don Quixote' an amusement to the melancholy and angry breást, in every season and for all time."

> "Yo he dado en Don Quijote passatiempo
> Al pécho melancolico i mohino
> En qualquiera savon, en todo tiempo."

The reader who is able to form a conception of the pleasures of a life of literary labor, is delighted to hear that the last work of the studious Bayle was to send a revised proof-sheet to the printer. Cervantes died still more decidedly in harness. He wrote on to the last under the increasing affliction of dropsy, and completed his romance of "Persiles and Segismunda." On the 18th of April, 1616, wishing "to go forth, like a Christian wrestler victorious in the last struggle," he received extreme unction, and then waited on death with a

serene soul. Next day, he wrote the graceful and cheerful dedication of his last romance, to the Duke of Lermos, in which he says, he must commence with the old lines once so famous, and which he could wish were not so pat to his purpose just now. "Having placed my foot in the stirrup while in the pains of death, I write this to you, great lord:"

> "Puesto ya el pie en el estrivo
> Con las ansias de la muerte,
> Gran Senor, esta te escrivo."*

This is exceedingly striking, and his pious biographer, Don Gregorio, feels the beauty of it; and only those who can see no good in a well-spent life, but think that a man should keep up all his religion in order to make it blaze out unexpectedly on his death-bed, will fail to admire the characteristic fine temper displayed by Cervantes in his last earthly moments. He could look back on years of honorable toil and sufferings, which the world had not recompensed, but which he had endured with patience and even in a joyful spirit—on writings in which there is "no line which, dying, he could wish to blot;" on a great work left as a treasure of delight to mankind, and distinguished for its purity even in the particularly pure and chaste literature for which his country is honorably distinguished above all other countries—that country of which there is this singular thing to say, that while it alone has produced more dramas than all other lettered nations, ancient and modern, put together, as their dramas now exist, have accumulated, it has no Congreve, nor Vanburgh, nor Cibber, no single drama in which there is anything to call up a blush on the cheek of modesty.

* "Vida de Miguel de Cervantes," p. 169.

SIR KENELM DIGBY.

Sir Kenelm Digby and his wife, Venetia Stanley, were a husband and spouse in every way remarkable, both being endowed with personal gifts and graces which attracted the admiration of their contemporaries. Mrs. Jameson describes the portrait of Sir Kenelm at Althorpe, and seems to have been disappointed at not finding him an Adonis.* She mistook the character of his appearance. Everything about the knight was romantic, and his figure was that of a giant. I am surprised that the description of his person and manners given by Wood appears not to have met the eye of Mrs. Jameson, for it is not to be forgotten. "His person," says Wood, "was handsome and gigantic, and nothing was wanting to make him a complete cavalier. He had so graceful elocution and noble address, that if he had been dropt out of the clouds in any part of the world, he would have made himself respect."*

Mrs. Jameson, in her account of Althorpe, has well described "the beautiful but appalling picture of Venetia Digby, painted by Vandyk after she was dead. She was found one morning sitting up in her bed, leaning her head on her hand, and lifeless; and thus she is painted. Notwithstand-

* Wood, "Athenæ Oxonienses," vol. II, p. 354.

ing the ease and grace of the attitude and the delicacy of the features, there is no mistaking this for slumber; a heavier hand has pressed upon those eyelids, which will never more open to the light; there is a leaden lifelessness about them, too shockingly true and real:

> "'It thrills us with mortality,
> And curdles to the gazer's heart.'

"The picture at Windsor," Mrs. Jameson continues, "is the most perfectly beautiful, and impressive female portrait I ever saw. How have I longed, when gazing at it, to conjure her out of her frame, and bid her reveal the secret of her mysterious life and death."

Horace Walpole notices a portrait of Lady Digby by Vandyk, in which "she is represented as treading on Envy and Malice, and is unhurt by a serpent that twines round her arm." Walpole had also in his possession portraits of Lady Digby by Isaac and Peter Oliver.

"Nearly opposite to the dead Venetia," says Mrs. Jameson, "in strange contrast, hangs her husband, who loved her to madness, or was mad before he married her, in the very prime of life and youth. This picture, by Cornelius Jansen, is as fine as anything of Vandyk's. The character expresses more of intellectual power and physical strength, than of that elegance of face and form we should have looked for in such a fanciful being as Sir Kenelm Digby. He looks more like one of the Athletæ than a poet, a metaphysician and a squire of dames."*

As a good specimen of the ingenious art by which a person conscious of some perfections in himself, may direct attention to them by praising the same graces in another, let the reader compare the description of Sir Kenelm, which I have given from Wood, with the compliments which Sir Kenelm passes

* Mrs. Jameson, "Visits and Sketches," vol. II, p. 243.

on the Earl of Dorset in his "Observations on the *Religio Medici*" of Sir Thomas Browne, which are inscribed to that nobleman. In the course of an argument about personal identity, Sir Kenelm says, "Give me leave to ask your Lordship if you now see the *cannons*, the *ensignes*, the *armes* and other martial preparations at Oxford with the same eyes wherewith many years agone you looked upon Porphyrie's and Aristotle's peeces there? I doubt not but you will answer me—Assuredly with the very same. *Is that noble and graceful person of yours, that begetteth both delight and reverence in every one that looketh upon it? Is that body of yours that now is groune to such comely and full dimensions*, as nature can give her none more advantageous, the same person, the same body which your virtuous and excellent mother bore nine months in her chaste and honored wombe, and that your nurse gave suck unto? Most certainly it is the same."*

I have noticed elsewhere that Sir Kenelm, whose head was filled with every kind of nonsense, is said to have put his wife on a diet of capons, which had been fed upon vipers, believing that this was a means of preserving beauty to extreme old age.

I think Sir Kenelm is better characterised in the mere allusion to his turn of mind made by Mrs. Jameson in her usual graceful and significant manner, than he is in the strange eulogium passed by Southey on the eccentric knight, "of whose conversion," he says, "were men to be estimated according to their talents and accomplishments, the Romish Church might be more proud than of any other in this country of which it may ever have had to boast."† We may give up the case of Gibbon's temporary conversion to Romanism, though in truth it gives a color to every page in which the great historian discusses any matter of controversy between the

* "Observations upon the Religio Medici," occasionally written by Sir Kenelm Digby, Knight, p. 49. Lond. 1659.

† Southey's "Essays," vol. II, p. 361. Lond 1832.

Church of Rome and the churches of the Reformation; it being the fact that a man may be a zealous Romanist or a zealous Protestant as far as he is called on to speak on the question between the two creeds, without being a Christian at all But should the instance of Gibbon be given up, surely Mr. Southey must have forgotten the conversion of Dryden in the maturity of his intellect to the Church of Rome; and there is no good evidence to lead us to doubt the sincerity of that conversion. The seduction of such a man as Dryden may be fairly set off as a parallel to the conversion on the continent in our days of the accomplished Friedrich Schlegel.

JOHN SOBIESKI.

John III. of Poland, better known as John Sobieski, the deliverer of Christendom from the Mussulmans, is one of the most romantic characters in history. His exploits, if they had taken place in the seventh and not in the seventeenth century, would have been read with disbelief by the present generation. In his own day he was called "The Wizard King."

In the year 1677 the famous Dr. South accompanied his pupil, the son of the Earl of Clarendon, on an embassy to Poland, to congratulate Sobieski on his election to the throne, which had taken place two years before. This was six years before Sobieski compelled the Turks to raise the siege of Vienna, the exploit with which his renown is now immortally associated, but already the King of Poland was looked on as the noblest soldier in Europe. After having been, like Cæsar, regarded as a fashionable and dissipated young man, his military genius had broken out in all its refulgence, and he had gained those great victories which are celebrated under the harsh-looking Slavonic names of Slobodisza, Podhaice, Kalusg, and Chocim, and been declared by his country to have ten times saved the state by his wisdom and valor.

Dr. South has left us a description of the person of Sobieski, in a letter addressed to the famous scholar Dr. Edward Po-

cocke. "As for what relates to his majesty's person," says South, "he is a tall and corpulent prince, large-faced and full eyes, and goes always in the same dress with his subjects, with his hair cut round his ears like a monk, and wears a fur cap, but extraordinary rich with diamonds and jewels, large whiskers, and no neckcloth. A long robe hangs down to his heels in the fashion of a coat, and a waistcoat under that of the same length, tied close about the waist with a girdle. He never wears any gloves, and this long coat is of strong scarlet cloth, lined in the winter with rich fur, but in the summer only with silk. Instead of shoes, he always wears both at home and abroad Turkey leather boots, with very thin soles and hollow deep heels, made of a blade of silver bent hoop-ways into the form of a half-moon. He carries always a large scimitar by his side, the sheath equally flat and broad from the handle to the bottom, and curiously set with diamonds."

The large full face of Sobieski is well shown in a portrait of him engraved in the "Mercure Hollandais," for May, 1674.* The king is represented without a neckcloth, and with a fur tippet on his shoulders.

The large person of Sobieski, like the gigantic figure of the ancient Mithridates, was the habitation of a mind of vast capacity. Besides his military acquirements, Sobieski was skilled both in science and literature.

"This prince," continues South, "is a very well-spoken prince, very easy of access, and extremely civil, having most of the qualities requisite to form a complete gentleman. He is not only well versed in all military affairs, but likewise, through the means of a French education, very opulently stored with all polite and scholastic learning. Besides his own tongue, the Slavonian, he understands the Latin, French, Italian, Ger-

* "Mercure Hollandais." Amst. 1676. This volume contains also spirited portraits of the Prince of Orange, M. de Raubenhaupt, Admiral de Ruyter Viscount Turenne, and Charles IV., Duke of Lorraine.

man, and Turkish languages; he delights much in natural history, and in all the parts of physics; he is wont to reprimand the clergy for not admitting the modern philosophy such as Le Grand's and Cartesius's into the universities and schools, and loves to hear people discourse of these matters, and has a peculiar talent to set people about him very artfully by the ears, that by these disputes he might be directed, as it happened once or twice during this embassy, where he showed a poignancy of wit on the subject of a dispute held between the Bishop of Posen and Father de la Motte, a Jesuit, and his majesty's confessor, that gave me an extraordinary opinion of his parts."

The hard life led by Sobieski in his earlier days—when his relaxations from war consisted in following the chase—had the effect of hastening on decay and old age. He was but fifty-four years of age, a period at which the mental and bodily constitution of a great general might be thought to be at its best, when by the terror of his name as much as of his arms, he drove the Turks from the borders of Christendom, and at that time he is described as broken down and infirm, and with difficulty able to mount his horse.

Long before his death, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, he was feeble and sickly in body and mind, and in allusion to his infirmities and his notorious subjection to his wife, he was caricatured in some prints at the time as an old man suckled in a woman's lap. In his last illness, immense quantities of mercury were administered to him by a Jewish physician. His death, however, followed a stroke of apoplexy, by which he was attacked on the 27th of June, 1696. When Charles XII. visited his tomb, he burst into tears, and said, "So great a king as this ought to have never died."*

* Solignac, "Histoire générale de Pologne,' Contin. tom. IV, p. 94. Ams. 1780.

Sobieski, all his life long from his marriage, was under the most submissive subjection to his wife, Marie Casimire de la Grange d'Arquien. She was the daughter of the Marquis de la Grange d'Arquien, had been married to the Prince Zamoisky, and was one of the maids of honor to the queen of King Casimir when Sobieski espoused her. During all his wars, he never ceased communicating everything that happened to his "beloved Mariette, only joy of my soul." He writes to her about his rheumatism and the pains in his back; he sends her the stirrup of the vizier, bestudded with gems, which had been found on the field at Vienna; and describes to her the magnificent furniture seized in the captured camp of the Mussulmans.*

Marie de la Grange is described as a beauty and a wit. In his fate in wedlock, Sobieski has been compared with the heroic Belisarius; but the comparison with the profligate Antonina does injustice to Mariette. His slavish subjection to his wife, indeed, brought ridicule on his illustrious name; but I have nowhere learned that there was any crime in the Queen of Poland.

* I have taken these particulars about Sobieski's letters from some source to which I have mislaid the reference.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA.

This queen deserves attention, were it only that the true politeness and graceful manners of her son, Louis XIV. of France, are said to have, in a great measure, been imparted to him or cultivated in him by her; while it is added that, in their utmost perfection in the great monarch, they were but a faint and feeble souvenir of the fascination which dwelt in his mother.

Anne, the wife of Louis XIII., was, as we learn from the description of her given by Madame de Motteville, her maid of honor, collated with other accounts, tall in stature, with an air of mingled majesty and sweetness in her deportment. Her hair was light brown, slightly curled, and fell in profusion over her shoulders. After the fashion of the times, she wore powder. The complexion of her face was not delicate, and she painted grossly. Her skin otherwise was soft and very fair. Her nose was rather large and unfeminine; her eyes were pleasing, though there was observable in them a tinge of green —her forehead and the contour of her face were excellent; her mouth was small, but well made; her lips were rosy, and her smile exceedingly fascinating. Her neck and bosom were beautifully formed. Her arms and her hands, which were finely shaped, were widely celebrated for their exquisite pro-

portions. On her hands, one of Menage's friends made the following lines:

> "Il pendoit au bout de ses manches,
> Une pair de mains si blanches,
> Que je voudrois en vérité
> En avoir eté souffleté."

Anne was one of the numerous gluttons of royal rank. As a general rule, women are neither epicures nor gluttons as compared with men; and spareness in eating, with something like an indifference to the quality of what is eaten, are recommendations of a woman to the other sex. Yet Ælian has a chapter devoted to the voracity of Aglais, the daughter of Megacles, who consumed at one meal twelve pounds of flesh (pounds of twelve ounces, it is understood,) and four chœnixes of bread, and drank a measure of wine (about a gallon.) The chœnix was usually baked into four small loaves. This female glutton, it is mentioned, played on the pipe, and wore false hair, with a crest on the crown of her head.*

A female writer of royal blood, who knew Anne, and has made some terrible revelations of the grossness of manners which prevail at courts, tells us that the queen eat in a manner perfectly frightful—*d'une maniere toute effrayante*—four times a day. To this voracity, some thought that the terrible disease of which she died was owing.†

In her latter years, Anne, who had been scrupulously and sensitively delicate about the care of her person to make herself agreeable to all around her, so that no linen or cambric was fine enough for her, suffered dreadfully from sores, which covered her whole body. Under this affliction—a terrible one to a beauty—her patience was heroic, and she struggled to the

* Ælian, lib. I, c. 26.

† "Mémoires sur la Cour de Louis XIV. et de la Régence, Extraits de la Correspondance Allemande de Madame Elizabeth Charlotte, Duchesse d Orleans, p. 326. Paris, 1823.

last to make her person as little offensive to those about her as possible by using perfumes—"the strongest perfumes of Spain," says the Duchess of Orleans. When she observed that her beautiful hands began to swell, she said: "It is time for me to depart."

The moral character of this queen appears, on the whole, to have been good; but she had the weakness to encourage, or at least not to discourage, declarations of passionate love, and of admiration of her beauty, which ill-natured observers have turned to account against her fair fame. The Duchess of Orleans, her daughter-in-law, assures us that she was secretly married to the Cardinal Mazarin; and as that princess, of all scandalous chroniclers, appears to have had no special ill will to Anne, it is difficult to refuse her testimony on this point. The cardinal was not a priest, the duchess tells us, and there was nothing to hinder him from contracting a marriage.

It is to be observed that, if the queen had been a Messalina, it would not have degraded her in the eyes of the duchess; but to have been honorably married to a person below her royal rank was a guilt not to be effaced.

It is confirmatory of the existence of the marriage that Anne, who, at one time, showed every manifestation of love to the cardinal, exhibited, at a later period, the most decided enmity—perhaps the sole enmity of her gentle life. "He tired dreadfully of the good queen," says the duchess, "and treated her harshly, which is the ordinary consequence of such marriages."*

There was a woman, Madame la Beauvais, the confidante of the queen-regent's secret marriage, who held the situation of first lady of her bed-chamber; *Scire volunt secreta domus, atque inde timeri.* La Beauvais was old and frightfully ugly —"blind on one eye and bleared on the other," says the Duc de St. Simon. This woman, however, was experienced in

* "Mémoires de la Cour de Louis XIV." p. 320.

affairs of profligate love—the very picture, physically and morally, of a malevolent and licentious witch in a fairy tale. She had in her keeping the secret of the queen's marriage, and could show at any time, if offended by neglect, the private passage by which the cardinal every night entered her royal mistress's bed-room. Hence she ruled the good-natured Anne, and made her do what she pleased. The great, and all who desired to be great, paid their devotions at the shrine of this ugly goddess. La Beauvais appeared at court in the splendor of a lady of the highest rank, and was treated with every distinction till the hour of her death.

The queen's great powers of eating descended to her royal successors. The polite Louis XIV. had the appetite of an ogre; and the communicative Duchess of Orleans, the king's brother, was little less distinguished in this faculty, which flows in high blood, and lost nothing of its strength in the daughter, and in the Duc de Berri.

"I have often seen the king," says this female Suetonius, "sup four dishes of different soup, then a whole pheasant, and next a whole partridge, after these a great plate of salad, then mutton with gravy and garlick, two large slices of ham, a dish of pastry, and after that fruits and confectionary. Both the king and the deceased monsieur (the duke, her husband) were extremely fond of hard-boiled eggs."*

The duchess adored Louis, and was his most intimate friend. Her testimony as regards him cannot be set aside. The details I have here given are disgusting, but they would not offend such an admirer of royal blood as the duchess: and what the Bourbons did in the way of eating down to Louis XVI., who ate with great vigor up till the hour that he laid his innocent head on the block, there is abundant historical evidence to prove to be entirely after the fashion of princes and princesses, and of the highest of the male and female aristocracy, and a

* "Mémoires de la Cour de Louis XIV." p. 51.

thing only regarded as vulgar in humble and undignified circles.

Louis's queen—the good, affectionate, amorous, little, fair and fat Maria Teresa, the Infanta of Spain—did not sit down to any of these terrible devourings, but kept eating and munching continually at nice small bits, as if she had been, says the Duchess of Orleans, "a little canary."*

* "Memoires,' p. 84.

NINON DE L'ENCLOS.

The famous Ninon de l'Enclos, the object of the admiration of Paris for the greater part of a century, is known upon unquestionable evidence to have been one of those rare women who have preserved their beauty from childhood to an extremely lengthened period of life. At every stage of her girlhood, her maturity, and her old age, up till her eightieth birthday, she made fresh conquests. She is farther remembered as being the only woman, except perhaps Madame Duchatelet, who in modern times has successfully filled in society the place which was held by the Aspasias and other *Hetaires* of ancient Athens, educated and accomplished women, all of them importations from Ionia, who, while allowed to have many virtues, and all kinds of modern graces, did not even profess that virtue, the want of which in a different state of society, entails along with it in public estimation, and often in reality, a want of almost every other.

We read, with amazement at the state of ancient manners, that in Greece, the most refined people of antiquity, at the period of their greatest refinement denied education to those who were to be their wives and the mothers of their children, and bestowed instruction in every kind of learning on those women who were deliberately trained to indulgence in sensual

pleasure. We read with more amazement how generally these women, thus educated, were possessed not merely of those virtues which are not incompatible with the absence of chastity, but of others, which a woman who throws away her honor is generally believed, as a matter of course, to fling along with it. Aspasia was the counsellor of Pericles, if not also his speech-maker; Socrates listened with admiration to her lessons in wisdom, and those men who did not wish their wives and daughters to be entirely ignorant, brought them to the house of Aspasia to be instructed. Something of the same kind has not been unknown in the East;* and in one of the best of the ancient Indian dramas, the courtesan of the piece is painted with every amiable virtue, and with the most charming meekness and modesty to recommend her, and is made the instrument of bringing about that moral and happy *denouement* which the laws of Hindu tragedy inexorably demand.

The history of Ninon is well known, and I have nothing farther to do with it, than to remark that all the most marvellous parts of it appear to be perfectly true. She was the child of a pious mother and of a licentious father. From the mother she received the best of Christian instruction, while her father, who was vicious from principle, diligently taught her to follow his example. Ninon preferred her father's instruction. Her mother died when the daughter was only fourteen years of age, and her father followed her to the grave within a year after. If that be a good child which obeys the dying injunctions of a parent, Ninon did her duty in becoming a voluptuary;—she sinned in obedience to the fifth commandment. Her father regretted that his career of licentious indulgence had been cut short, and with his dying breath beseeched his daughter to make the best use of her years, and to be quite unscrupulous about the number, but at the same time select and delicate in the choice, of her pleasures.

* The "Vesay" of the Hindus is the Greek ʽεταιρη.

Never did child in this world more faithfully obey the last will of a dear parent. And plenty of time was afforded her to manifest her unswerving obedience. Her father was no sooner dead, than she foreswore marriage and devoted herself to literature and love. One amour succeeded another with her, from her first avowed lover, the Count de Coligni, whose mistress she became at eighteen, to the Abbe Gedouin, whom she chose as her favorite when she was eighty.

The advice of Ninon's father recalls us to the palmy days of the Greek and Roman heathenism, when the consideration of the near approach and certainty of death was urged, as it is urged in the loveliest and most pathetic of the odes of Catullus (*vivamus, mea Lesbia, et amemus*,) as the strongest motive to omit no opportunity of enjoying this world's pleasures. Under the better influence of the religion which points to the world hereafter as the only abode of true bliss, the same consideration is pressed upon us as a motive to self-mortification, and the abhorrence of sensual indulgences.

All the portraits and descriptions of Ninon present us with a woman of that face and figure which promise enduring beauty. She was above the middle height—stout and well-proportioned; the face is round rather than oval; the whole features are vigorous, decided and intellectual. The eye is beautifully large, open and soft. "Decency and passion," says one of her biographers, "disputed in those eyes for empire."* The nose is particularly fine, and the mouth, where we look for the indication of taste and the love of pleasure, is exquisitely formed. The hair is long and beautifully curling, and tastefully arranged and adorned with pearls. The bust is full and handsome; the fall of the shoulders extremely elegant; her complexion was fresh and brilliant.

Lady Lytton Bulwer has introduced a description of Ninon into her novel, "The School for Husbands." As this pic-

* Vie de Mademoiselle de l'Enclos, p. 5, Lettres, &c. Lond. 1782.

ture has evidently been accurately and laboriously worked up from portraits and contemporary testimony, I give it entire.

"Rupert now directed his attention to the boxes on either side of him, which were rapidly filling: the stage box more especially, on his right hand, excited his curiosity, from seeing a young lady, apparently about eighteen or twenty, of great personal attractions, enter it, surrounded by a perfect swarm of men; one removing her hood, another carrying her fan, a third her bouquet, while a fourth arranged her chair, and a fifth stooped down to place a footstool for her: the whole house, including *les somites aristocratiques*, evinced the greatest *empressement* to bow to this lady, who returned their greetings with a circular salutation, which included them all, in the most graceful manner, and with the least possible trouble to herself, as she sank into a chair, and leant back to speak to one of her satellites, who was in waiting at the back of it. She was very little above the middle height, of beautifully rounded proportions, and plump, without being fat; her skin was of a dazzling and satiny whiteness, her bust, hands and arms being most symmetrical; her face was more round than oval, her forehead was high and intellectual, the brows being low, straight, and beautifully pencilled; her eyes were large and liquid, and of a dark hazel; her nose small, white, and excessively *piquant*, having the end descended a little below the delicately chiselled nostrils, which had those little *fossettes* at each side, that a century and a half later Madame de Genlis was so vain of possessing. Her cheeks were suffused with that vivid, yet delicate and peach-like bloom, so rare among her countrywomen; her mouth was a little large, but the lips were so deep and bright a red, and formed such a perfect Cupid's bow, from the short upper lip to the dimpled chin, and the teeth within it were so dazzlingly white, that envy itself could find nothing to criticise. Her magnificent hair (which was a dark brown, with that Georgione or horse-chestnut-red

varnished tinge through it, as if sunbeams had got entangled amongst its meshes) she wore, according to the fashion of the time, wreathed in plaits round the back of her head, and divided very low on the forehead, with a profusion of long tendril-like ringlets on either side, which were tied with knots of blue ribbon, over which, so as to show the ribbon through, were large bows of set pearls, with streamers and tassels of fine Oriental, pear-shaped, strung pearls, and the shoulders and front part of her *Berthe* were also fastened with the same, likewise the centre of her bodice, down to the point of her stomacher, where hung one large pearl, nearly the size of a pigeon's egg; her dress was composed of white *moire*, with a broad sky-blue velvet stripe upon it, while the *Berthe* was entirely of blue velvet, with a *Resille* or network of pearls over it, which formed no contrast to her snowy skin. 'What a beautiful girl!' exclaimed Rupert. 'Who is she?' 'You are partly right, and partly wrong: beautiful she most unquestionably is, but for her girlhood! if you want to find *that*, you must go back to the time when our friend Moliere accompanied his late Majesty, Louis Treize, to Narbonne, in 1641, and even then she was not over girlish, being at that time five-and-twenty, as last Tuesday she completed her forty-sixth year.' 'Impossible,' said Rupert. 'Nothing is impossible to Ninon de l'Enclos, except, perhaps, ceasing to *be* Ninon,' rejoined Rohault.

Ninon, we are told, and need not doubt it, had a soft and interesting voice; she sung with more taste than brilliancy, and danced admirably. She played well on the lute, in which she had been instructed by her father.

From early life she cultivated her mind by reading. When a mere child, we are told that her favorite authors were Montaigne and Charron. Montaigne is certainly not to be perused without pleasure at any age; but notwithstanding the great reputation of Charron, we fear that most of his readers, if they

dared to speak the truth, would confess that they find his work on "wisdom" very tedious. When taken to church by her mother, Ninon used to pass the time there in reading romances, when she appeared to be looking on her prayer book.

There is nobody perfect, and the biographer of Ninon whom we have already quoted, admits that there was some slight defects which obscured her numerous good qualities. Firstly, he tells us that she was naturally jealous of the merit of other women; secondly, she could not suffer a man who had large hands and a big belly (which was illiberal;) and lastly, though she played perfectly well on the lute, she required too much pressing to begin. Upon the whole, this was a moderate share of the frailties of humanity. The first-mentioned fault is to be found in the very best of women, and has by excellent judges been reckoned a virtue. "To say the truth," says Dean Swift, in his "Letter to a Young Lady," "I never yet knew a tolerable woman to be fond of her own sex." The Dean speaks strongly; but in fact, a woman who delights, or affects to delight in the society of her own sex is far from being amiable in the eyes of the more judicious of the other.

It is strange to find admirers of Ninon, like St. Evremonde and others, writing to her and complimenting her with the classic name of Leontium—the name of that woman on whom Cicero, Diogenes Laertius, and all who have spoken of her, have bestowed the most opprobrious designations that can be inflicted on even a courtesan. The title was first bestowed in the most eulogistic manner on Ninon, by the Abbe Chauteauneuf, in his "Dialogue sur la Musique des Anciens." The name of Leontium is greater in literature and philosophy than that of Ninon; but her extreme licentiousness has thrown scandal on the whole school of Epicurus in which she studied.

MADEMOISELLE DE MONTPENSIER.

THERE have been some women, who have taken care not to let the world to come after them lament its ignorance of their personal appearance and their characteristic habits, as far as these were fairly known to themselves.

Amongst these is Henrietta de Bourbon, daughter of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, the brother of Louis XIII., who has left copious memories of her times. These memories are the most decidedly personal memoirs that have ever been given to the world. They are wholly about Mademoiselle de Montpensier herself; nobody else, and nothing else being alluded to except in so far as their connection with herself obliged her to notice them. In matters of court introductions and entertainments, and in details of the vulgarities of the great, she is perfectly silly; but in such rubbish, and in the explanations of the genealogies of the illustrious obscure, she has since been quite outdone by the Baroness d'Oberkirch.

Mademoiselle—this is her designation in the French histories and memoirs of the time—tells us that her figure was good and graceful, her aspect open, her bosom rather handsome, while her hands and arms were good but not fine. "My legs," she adds, "are straight, and my feet well-made. My hair is of a fine ash-color, my face is long, my nose large and aqui-

line;" which, it may be mentioned, as she has made no reflection on it herself, might be and is said to be royal, but is not beautiful. "My mouth is neither large nor small, but well proportioned, and my lips are of a good color. My teeth, though not fine, are far from being bad; my eyes are light blue, clear and sparkling."

Upon one point there is a discrepancy between different parts of her own evidence. There is reason to believe that her teeth were very bad. While here in one place she tells us that they were far from being bad, in another she lets us know that it was characteristic of her royal race to have bad teeth. "I believe," she said one day to Monsieur de Lauzun, as she relates the conversation herself, "that my teeth are not beautiful, but this is a defect belonging to our family, and ought therefore to be less displeasing to you than another."

Her air, Mademoiselle tells us, was stately, but not haughty. "Une grande fille be belle taille," was the description of her figure which she one day overheard from the mouth of a person of taste.

In her girlhood she had small-pox, but according to her own account that cruel malady treated her gently, and did not leave on her face even a redness behind it.

She does not take much credit for her taste in dressing, as she lets us know that whatever dress she assumed was sure to become her admirably. "I dress," she says in one place, "negligently, but not slovenly, and whether in dishabille or attired magnificently, I always preserve an air of distinction. Negligence of dress does not misbecome me, and when I do adorn myself, I venture to say that I disfigure the ornaments which I put on me less than they embellish me."

This is complimentary enough, but she is still more decided on her power of charming, independently of intrinsic ornaments, in a description which she gives of herself as she shone forth in full splendor at a fete in the Palace Royal. She had

been attired for the occasion under the direction of her aunt, the Queen Dowager, whose remarkably good taste is noticed by all who have spoken to her. If it was Mademoiselle's usual practice to be negligent in her dress, she made up for much arrear in care by the patience with which she submitted to be made a block for showing off court dresses and fashions upon.

"They were three whole days," says Mademoiselle, "in arranging my finery. My dress was studded with diamonds and colored flowers. I wore all the crown jewels, and also those of the Queen of England (Henrietta Maria,) who at that time had still some remaining. Nothing more magnificent could be seen than my dress on this occasion; yet did I find many gentlemen who told me that my beautiful figure, my good looks, the fairness of my complexion, and the brightness of my light hair were more dazzling than all the riches that shone on my person." Mademoiselle would find many gentlemen who would tell her this, when once it was discovered that she would believe it.

Mademoiselle's favorite amusements were dancing, riding on horseback, and joining in the chase.

THE DUCHESS OF ORLEANS.

The most singular portrait, personal, moral, and intellectual, which we have of a woman of royal blood, and proud to insanity of that blood, is perhaps that of the Princess Palatine, Charlotte Elizabeth, second wife of the Duke of Orleans (brother to Louis XIV.,) and mother of the more famous Regent, the Duke of Orleans. The picture in every respect is complete as we find it in the memoirs of her times, but particularly as it is portrayed in all its coarse, vulgar, and disgusting details by herself, in those of her letters which have been published; and though decency has induced the booksellers to suppress much of what was in their hands, and though hundreds, if not thousands, of her scandalous letters are still, it is believed, extant in manuscript in various royal and noble houses, she has revealed so much of herself and others, that, considering what her pictures are like, it would be unreasonable to desire more.

Her writings and descriptions, addressed to various princes and princesses, dukes and duchesses throughout Europe, and as we must suppose, acknowledged on their part by letters partaking at least of much of the grossness of those which they continued to receive,* are useful in dispelling that extremely

* The French Editor is struck with horror at the filthiness of two letters, one written by the Duchess and another by the Electress of Hanover,

ignorant delusion that courts are the seats of politeness, refinement and elegance. The court of Louis XIV. was perhaps the most refined court ever seen. Louis himself was unquestionably a man of genuine politeness; of that true politeness which is not in the least conventional, and is not, except in a very slight degree, to be acquired by education, but is a natural gift, partaking of the character of a virtue, as with the world it passes for virtue itself, and is to be found in whole nations and races of men, while it is wanting entirely in other whole nations and races; and which is to be met with as frequently in the humblest ranks as in the highest; though as a rule it is most rare in the extremes, in the lowest and in the most exalted stations in society, amongst those who are either below or above the necessity or temptation of cultivating the favor and good opinion and love of their fellow creatures.

In the polite court of Louis XIV. Charlotte Elizabeth, Princess Palatine, and Duchess of Orleans, with the utmost conceivable brutality in mind, manners, and language, held divided reign with Maintenon, the insidiously polished Maintenon herself.

I may, first of all, take Madame's minute description of her own person. "Madame" is the title which she bears in the French memoirs of her times. As, however, she is unreasonably deprecatory of herself, I must, in justice to her memory, compare her own sketch with the rather more favorable portraits drawn of her by others.

It may be thought strange, though Madame was sensible that she did not excel in beauty of face and person, that

which had been printed entire, without alteration or suppression of anything in the German edition of Strasbourg, 1798. "L'on a poussé l'exactitude jusqu' a imprimer textuellement deux lettres, une de la Princesse Palatine, et l autre de l Electrice d'Hanovre, toutes deux si orduri-eres, qu'on les prendrait pour un assaut. C' est un énigmedont le mot n est pas connu"—MEMOIRES, AVIS DE L' EDITEUR, p. 7.

she should be more severe on her own ugliness than any other person who had seen her; but this is not inconsistent with such a character as hers. It might be also wondered at that her own pen should describe scenes in which she herself is represented as behaving herself like a beast, and talking language which it would have called up a blush in the face of the poorest unfortunate woman walking the streets of Paris to have listened to.

It is all accounted for by the fact that, in Madame's belief, there was just one thing, and one thing alone, that gave dignity and nobility of character to man or woman, and that was old blood royal. Beauty, virtue, intellect, manners, were all perfectly worthless without this; with this, nothing else was necessary for procuring the worship of the world. This she had in the highest possible perfection; for though her father—a poor German prince, the Elector Palatine Charles Louis—was a brute, who, at the royal table in his savage palace, would give her royal mother a blow on the face when she happened to say anything that did not please him, Madame held her family to be far exalted above every other royal house in Europe, and believed that she herself had shown a marvellous condescension, when she stooped to bestow all her personal plainness, all her coarseness, rudeness of manners, vulgarity, and ignorance, the hand which she herself describes as the ugliest in the world, and the heart which was certainly none of the purest, on a beautiful prince, the brother of the most powerful monarch of the times.

"I must be ugly," says Madame. "I have no features; I have small eyes, a short and thick nose, and long and flat lips. All this won't make a physiognomy. I have, besides, great hanging cheeks, and a large face, yet I am very short in person. My body and my thighs are also short; in one word, I am truly a little ugly creature (*en petit laideron.*) If I had not a good heart (there is reason to dispute her title to a good

heart,) I would not be tolerated anywhere. In order to ascertain if my eyes indicate my mind, they would require to be examined by a microscope, or with spectacles, otherwise it would be difficult to judge. Uglier hands than mine are, it would probably be difficult to find in the whole world. The king has often remarked this, and has made me laugh heartily. As not being able in conscience to flatter myself that I have anything pretty about me, I have adopted the course of being the first to laugh at my own ugliness. This has succeeded well with me, and I have often had occasion to laugh."*

This is the portrait of the duchess drawn by herself; but in consideration of the modesty which this woman, grossly immodest in every other respect, displays in disclaiming all personal attractions, she is entitled to the benefit of the moderate commendation which her outward appearance has received from others. In another part of her narrative, she tells us that in youth she was slender, but grew stout in mature womanhood. Madame Sevigne simply tells us that she was by no means a brilliant beauty, that her features were masculine, her figure coarse and full, and her countenance robust.

The Duc de St. Simon has, however, been able to point out some merits in her face and figure, and is pleased even with her small eyes. "Her complexion," he says, "her bosom, and her arms were admirable, and so were her eyes." These particulars, we should think, would have made her at least tolerable. "Her mouth," he adds, "was well enough. She had fine teeth, a little long; her cheeks were too large and too hanging, which spoiled her, but did not destroy her beauty. What disfigured her most were the places for her eyebrows, which were peeled off and red, with very few hairs. Her eye-

* "Mémoires sur la Cour de Louis XIV. et de la Régence, Extraits de la Correspondance Allemande de Madame Elizabeth-Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orleans," p. 2. Paris, 1823.

lids were beautiful, and her chesnut hair was well arranged. Without being a hunchback or deformed, she had one side larger than the other, and walked awry."

Here, it will be observed, is a discovery of beauties and of defects which Madame herself had omitted, or affected to omit discovering. The swelling on her side is, however, noticed in another manner by the duchess. She tells us that, "I am naturally a little melancholy, and when any thing vexes me, my left side swells as if I had a ball of water within me."*

With characteristic coarseness of mind and manners, the duchess, no doubt considering that no kind of polite acquirements can add lustre to royal blood, never learned to either speak or write decently the language of her adopted country. The puppyism of the great Frederick, in encouraging the use of French at his court, and discouraging his own nobler German, was not better evidence of vulgarity of mind than the duchess's neglect in learning the language of the court in which she lived, and the pride she took in her ignorance as something quite in accordance with the dignity of her royal birth and ancient lineage.

The rudeness of John Bull is sufficiently marked in his adherence, wherever he is placed and whatever lands he may visit, to the monotonous round of English eating and English cookery. This weakness was intense in the duchess At the court of France, she would neither eat nor drink anything that was French. She would defile her royal mouth with nothing but German dishes. She stuck spitefully to her saur-kraut and salad dressed with hog's lard; and persuaded Louis to join her in her omelette with pickled herrings.

"I breakfast rarely," she says, "and on nothing but bread and butter. I take neither chocolate, coffee, nor tea; I cannot endure these foreign drugs. I am German in all my habits—and I think nothing good either in eating or drinking except

* "Mémoires," &c. p. 3.

what is in conformity with our ancient usages. I taste no soup, excepting what is prepared with milk, beer, or wine."

She then alludes to the ordinary French dishes, the tasting of which makes her sick. Her body, she says, swells, and she suffers from colic, sometimes vomiting till the blood comes. In this case, the duchess assures us that nothing but ham and sausages were capable of putting her stomach to rights again. "I never had French manners," she says, "and I could not adopt them, as I have always regarded it as an honor to be a German, and to preserve the maxims of my country, which rarely succeed here."

This repulsive woman regretted that she had not been created of the other sex. In her girlhood, she preferred swords and guns to dolls, and made some desperate attempts to become a boy. Having heard the story of that Marie Germain, who, by practising leaping, had changed her sex, she imitated her example, and made, as she says, such terrible leaps, that it was a miracle that she did not a hundred times break her neck.

In an after part of her work, this repulsive woman expresses something like dissatisfaction with the means appointed by Providence for the continuance of the human race. Agreeing with Sir Thomas Browne on this point, she does not express herself with Sir Thomas Browne's politeness.*

* "J'ai eté bien aise quand, apres la naissance de ma fille, mon époux a fait lit a part, car je n'ai point aimé le metier de faire des enfans. C'était aussi, bien desagréable de coucher avec Monsieur; il ne pouvoit souffrir qu'on le touchat pendant son sommeil; il fallait donc me coucher sur le bord du lit, d'ou je suis tombée quelquefois comme un sac."—MEMOIRES, p. 12. Those to whom details of the lives of the great have a peculiar value, will be pleased with these little domestic events, related by a lady, of the unapproachable grandeur of the duchess. In an after part of her Memoirs, she lets us know that Louis's amiable queen, of whom it may be remarked that she has no slander to tell, by no means sympathized with her in the peculiar notion which she shared with the philosopher of Norwich.—SEE MEMOIRES, p. 84.

I have noticed in another place that a young man on being reproved by Pythagoras, is said to have died of grief, to the deep affliction of the philosopher. The Duchess of Orleans tells us with infinite satisfaction, that she caused the death of a young lady by an admirable scolding which she gave her, and which the duchess herself reports, adding that Louis would say in allusion to this event, "One must not trifle with you in regard to your house; life depends on it." The crime which this lady committed, was that she and her sister had stated, probably with perfect truth, that they were Countesses Palatine of Lutzelstein. The duchess in a fury, called her a liar and a bastard, and her mother the worst of all names; assuring her that if even the Count Palatin had been regularly married to her mother, who belonged to the house of Gehlen, her daughter was not the less a bastard for all that, as in the case of Counts Palatin, marriages with women below their own rank are not valid, and that her mother's real husband was a hautboy player; and that if she ever dared again in her life to say that she was a Countess Palatin, she would cause her petticoats to be cut off. "The girl," adds the duchess, and this is all she does add, "took this so much to heart, that she died of it very soon after." The other sister and Countess Palatin she caused to change her name, and allowed her to fly; *je l'ai laisse courir.**

* "Mémoires." p. 81. I have not been able to do justice to the brutality of the duchess in this scene. The following is an extract from the French: "J'appelai l'une des filles et lui demandai qui elle était. *Elle me dit en face*, qu'elle etait une Comtesse Palatine de Lutzelstein. *De la main-gauche?* "Non," repondit elle; "je ne suis point batarde; le jeune Comte Palatin a epouse ma mere, qui est de la maison de Gehlen." Je lui dis: "En ce cas vous ne pouvez etre Comtesse; car chez nous autres Comtes Palatins les mesalliances ne sont d'aucune valeur; je dirai encore plus; tu mens en disant que le Comte Palatin a epouse ta mere; c'est une putaine avec laquelle le Comte Palatin peut avoir couche comme tant d'autres; je sais qui est son veritable mari, c'est un hautbois. Si a

It is only a selection of the personal characteristics of this repulsive woman as described by herself, that can be presented to a modern reader. She has told of her own sex, as for instance of Madame Maintenon, and of Catharine of Sweden, horrible things, as horrible as any that Suetonius has related of Tiberius or Caligula; things not hinted at, even by the most scandalous of male writers. She wrote continually, and circulated amongst the princesses, and the female nobility of the continent, such abominable letters as the most despised of her sex would hardly read, receiving, it must be presumed, from some of her fair and royal correspondents, returns of a quality not unsimilar to that of the communications which she sent them.

"The numerous correspondences," says the French editor of the selected letters which I have used, "are probably yet buried in the archives of Spain, of Naples, of Berlin, and other great cities. Two or three correspondents only have been published, at least in extracts. The princess wrote a barbarous German, mingled with the provincialisms of the Palatinate and French phrases; there is in her expressions an indecency which treats nothing gently, and which contrasts strangely with the delicate and graceful style of the Sevignes, Cayluses, Maintenons, and other women of the court of Louis XIV. The correspondence forms, however, a true *Chronique Scandaleuse;* all the anecdotes afloat find a place in them. What an increase of light there will one day be, when these archives will be open to give to the public the rest of this voluminous correspondence! Many families may be offended at it, but the history of manners will gain much. A false brilliancy has long dazzled the eyes of posterity in regard to the age of Louis XIV; it is well that this illusion should be destroyed by persons who were close witnesses of its pretended grandeurs, and

l'avenir tu te fais pesser pour une Comtesse Palatin, je te ferai couper les jupes au ras du cul."—MEMOIRES, p. 81.

who had the good sense to appreciate them at their true worth."*

As there is here a compliment paid to the good sense of Madame—the existence of which is extremely doubtful—and as other writers have spoken of her virtues, it may be as well just to notice, that her possession of virtue, in the restricted sense, has not been disputed. She is just a specimen of the fact that as a woman may lose her honor without losing that modesty which should have been its safeguard, so a woman may be perfectly virtuous in the qualified sense of the word, as Madame was, and utterly destitute of a rag or shadow of shame, as she also was. Neither the Greek Theodora (whose history Madame had studied in the free pages of Procopius,) nor the Roman Messalina, was in heart and soul more debauched than this virtuous Duchess of Orleans.

* "Memoires," Avis de l'Editeur, p. 33.

MADAME DE MAINTENON.

The great personal beauty of Madame de Maintenon is admitted by all her contemporaries, even by those women of her time who hated her most; and never, certainly, was woman more sincerely and ardently hated. This hatred has descended to our own times, and I have never met a woman, and certainly not often a man, acquainted with her history, who did not regard Madame de Maintenon, the decorous, prudish, and apparently devout wife of Louis XIV., as by far the worst of all the ladies of the French court in her days.

The Baroness d'Oberkirch speaks the general opinion of this beautiful, accomplished, and highly intellectual woman when she says: "Of all the women of infamous celebrity, I feel the greatest antipathy to Madame Maintenon, notwithstanding the marriage, which cast a veil over her errors." It is here assumed that Madame de Maintenon was profligate; a charge for which, whatever faults she had, there is certainly a want of proof; while it is certain that, for many a long year, she endured the greatest poverty, which she could at once have relieved, if she had been regardless of her reputation. Her marriage with the king was, I suspect, an unforgiveable crime with the Baroness d'Oberkirch.

The figure of Mademoiselle d'Aubigne was tall and graceful, and when, as the widow Scarron, she was brought to court at the age of forty, she was a perfectly charming woman. Her air and walk were dignified and modest beyond description. Her arms were beautiful, and her hands, as her whole complexion was, were exceedingly fair. All who have spoken of her have noticed her remarkably fine large black eyes, which charmed those on whom she smiled, and overawed those who dreaded her enmity.

Her first husband, the hunchbacked, invalid, and witty Scarron, whom she married when she was but sixteen, has given a humorous enumeration of the items of her marriage portion, particularizing amongst the stock "a pair of large, black, killing eyes, an elegant figure, a pair of fine hands, and a great deal of wit."

The lovely Montespan, who, like Louis, regarded Maintenon as her religious instructor, and looked up to her with awe, on the occasion of her being delivered of a daughter, writes to Maintenon praying her to come and see her; "but do not," she says, tremblingly, for Montespan's religion was sincere and deep, and the pious reproofs with which Maintenon visited her frailty often shook her soul with terror, "do not glare at me with those black eyes of yours; they frighten me." The ugly Duchess of Orleans, who hated Maintenon not certainly for her vices, even the horrible and unnatural vices which she falsely attributes to her, but for having dared to marry the king, admits that Maintenon "was eloquent, and had fine eyes."

The expression of Madame de Maintenon's face was extremely varied. There was usually a calm gravity about her features, which, at first, repelled the king; but when Maintenon had a purpose to serve by being agreeable, her smile was perfectly bewitching, and her manners sweetly gracious. The form of the lower part of her face was particularly fine, the chin and the mouth being exquisitely shaped. The

fairness of her skin was remarkable. "Her black eyes," says her biographer, La Beaumelle, "contrasted with the whiteness of her skin, like fire sparkling amidst snow."

The art of dressing to advantage, Madame de Maintenon, whose taste was, like that of Louis, exquisite in everything, understood far better than any other woman in the court where she reigned, where every one exerted all her talents and skill, and art to please, fascinate, and seduce. Her attire, according to Madame Sevigne, was rich, but modest; other accounts bear that a plain, unexpensive dress, when she put it on, assumed an appearance of costliness. Like the ancient Poppæa she is said to have heightened the effect of her charms by a modest concealment of them. The Countess of Blessington, who had in her possession a neckerchief pin, said to have once belonged to Maintenon, attributes, in a very indelicate passage in one of her works, the modest style in which the royal favorite dressed to true art; maliciously insinuating that a more loose fashion of attire would have been injurious to the effect of what was concealed. In other words, the bust of Madame Maintenon was not so elegantly formed as that of the "gorgeous Lady Blessington."

The Duchess of Orleans, who cannot allude to Madame Maintenon without prefixing to her name the worst epithet which her impure mind can suggest, and who seldom speaks of her without charging her with some crime, tells us of one innocent art which it appears Maintenon had recourse to, to make her person agreeable, or rather to conceal a defect. "Nobody at court," says Madame, "used perfumes, except Old Maintenon." *La vieille Maintenon* is the expression of her French translator, but he lets us understand in his preface that he has been obliged to curtail the exuberant filthiness of Madame's vocabulary, and that in the original German the substantive never fails to be accompanied by a shockingly offensive adjective—*die alte Zote;* "an expression," he adds with

infinite grace, which the delicacy of the French language does not permit me to translate, and which contains nothing flattering to the morals of her to whom it refers. What a hatred must have existed between these two women to carry them to such extremities! It is well that the public should know these things, in order to avoid the chimerical notions which are usually entertained about the amenity of courts, and particularly that of Louis the Fourteenth."*

For whatever reason Madame de Maintenon might have used perfumes, it could not have been to please the king; for if we are to believe the Duchess of Orleans—his most intimate friend, next to Maintenon—Louis hated all perfumes, and could not, she says, endure them on any one but on Maintenon. Yet it appears from the context of this passage that he could not suffer them even on her; for she says that when in his company Maintenon always laid the blame of the perfumes on some other lady.

I have no doubt that this revelation about the perfumes and the deceptions of Maintenon is made by the ugly duchess from the most malevolent motive, as it certainly is brought forward with all the skill of a malignant woman. In stating the bare facts, she leaves the intelligent reader to save her the trouble of drawing the obvious inference which must be drawn from them, that after all Maintenon had not every personal charm, and that nature, so liberal to her in face and form, had neglected to besow on her " the cow's ambrosial breath," and in its stead had given her that which is popularly said to be a usual accompaniment to a skin of extreme whiteness such as Maintenon's was. Louis had a pure taste, and he no doubt held with Montaigne that there is a natural defect to hide where grateful odors are had recourse to; and with the ancient dramatists, that a woman is the most pleasantly perfumed when she smells of no perfume.

* "Memoires sur la Cour de Louis XIV.," p. 31.

Besides those great powers of conversation which are attested by so good a judge as Madame de Sevigne, and so fiendish an enemy as the Duchess of Orleans, Maintenon possessed that rare and enviable art of telling a story beautifully, which has made the name of the gifted Princess Scheherazade immortal, and rendered her memory dear to all generations of the human race. What a compliment is implied to this talent of hers in what is related of her when she was the humble wife of Scarron, and when her visitors were the most intellectual that Paris could afford, that her guests fed on her discourse, in disregard of the quality of her dinners, the occasional meagreness of which was overlooked and forgotten in the delight inspired by the fascinating hostess. "There must be another story, Madame," whispered a female attendant to her one day, "*for the roast is too small.*"

The truth of all the eulogies bestowed on her tongue is more than substantiated by this anecdote. At these parties there would be present the very learned Manage and the graceful Count de Grammont; the pleasant Marchioness de Sevigne and the voluminous Mademoiselle de Scuderi; the beautiful Ninon de l'Enclos and the ill-favored Pelisson, he to whom a lady once said: "Sir, you positively abuse the privilege which men have of being ugly."

The presence of the famous Ninon at Madam Scarron's parties has been laid hold of as a proof of the licentious life which some of her less judicious enemies have charged against her. But the charge, it must in fairness be recollected, would involve in the same censure Madame de Sevigne, Mademoiselle Scuderi, and many other women whose reputations have come down untainted to our times. The testimony of Ninon herself, who despised chastity out of principle, may be received in behalf of Madame Scarron. She has told us contemptuously of the poet's wife, that she was virtuous, not so much from coldness of constitution as from weakness of mind. "I might

easily have cured her of that, had she not been afraid of offending God."

Madame de Montespan also, though profligate herself in morals, appears to have regarded Madame Maintenon as perfectly virtuous. She committed the education of her children to her, and Madame de Montespan was just the woman to desire that her children should be brought up in the paths of virtue, and taught to avoid the errors of their mother. Throughout her whole wicked career, in the mind of Montespan a painful conflict between the love of pleasure and the most fervid religious impressions tore and wrung her soul with remorse. Her history relates to agonizing and convulsive efforts which at different times she made to divorce from her heart the love of the king; and they are but ill-read in the deep and mysterious histories of the human heart who will attribute to hypocrisy the religious professions made by such a woman as she was. The histories of the pious King of Israel, of St. Augustin, of St. Theresa, and of many more obscure saints of both sexes, furnish abundant proof that that constitution which is most naturally susceptible of high devotional feelings is, as a natural consequence of its capacity for heavenly love, the weakest to resist the assailments of mere earthly passion.

Madame de Maintenon has been charged with hypocrisy in her religion as in every thing else. However much truth there may be in this, it is certain that while the utmost outward decorum marked her whole behavior in every station in life, the wife and widow of Scarron, and the favorite and wife of the king, never omitted the regular discharge of all the religious observances of her Church.

There are strange stories told of the mere chances by which this woman, whose name bears a conspicuous place in the annals of Europe for a considerable part of a century, escaped death in her childhood. She came to the world in a loathsome dungeon, where her father and mother were confined, and

where they were discovered and relieved by a relative when emaciated with hunger; the infant Francis d'Aubigne, then two days old, crying for the food which her mother, whose breasts were dried up by distress, could not give her. After being thus once saved from the jaws of death, a second deliverance still more wonderful, awaited her when a girl. While with her father and her mother on their passage to America, she fell sick, and the vital energies sunk so low that she was believed to be dead. The gun was loaded which was to give the signal for committing to the deep that beautiful person which was destined to rule the most splendid court in Europe. A sailor had the body of the little Francis d'Aubigne in his arms, when her mother desired once more to press her to her bosom: she felt her heart beating; and the future wife of Louis XIV. was restored to the world.

These tales do savor something of romance. The chief particulars are related in the "Memoirs of M. Anquetil;" but he is not so distinct as could be wished in reference to the authorities which bear him out in his marvellous narrative. One thing, however, is certain, that in childhood Francis d'Aubigne endured much poverty and harsh usage, having been particularly subjected for whole years to the tyranny of her own sex, a calamity which it may be believed exercised so far a baneful influence on her character—as it has on thousands of others similarly circumstanced—as to help to foster that cold selfishness which was the repulsive feature in it. It has been mentioned, that in her girlhood, as if foreseeing the elevation which she was one day to attain, Mademoiselle d'Aubigne took care to preserve her beauty. While employed in a farm-yard looking after poultry, she is said to have protected from the attacks of the sun's rays, by using a mask, that fair face which, with her other graces, afterwards raised her to the supreme authority in France.

There are several persons who have made a great noise in

the world, whose existence, immediately after birth, is said to have been almost miraculous; and what is observed, is that such persons, when the first danger is over, become more healthy, more beautiful, and often more long-lived than others. Such was Madame de Maintenon, who lived in the enjoyment of good health till the age of eighty-three. St. Francis of Sales was a seven months' child, and his death for many a day was daily and hourly expected; but he grew up to manhood in increasing beauty of person and elegance of mind, and constantly improving health, and died in a mature age.

Such was the profligate Marechal de Richelieu, "the Nestor of gallantry," as he was called, destined by the graces of his person to be for nearly a century the most beloved by the other sex, as he was perhaps in all other respects the most worthless man in France; to find himself surrounded by the hearts of constant women, while he himself had no heart at all, and to marry a young beauty at the age of eighty-four.

Richelieu, in this circumstance, if in nothing else, like St. Francis of Sales, was a seven months' child, and in the desperate hope of saving him, the infant was swaddled in cotton and placed by the fire; his parents in the mean time endeavoring to reconcile their minds to his death. His father, however, having a wise horror of doctors, kept them carefnlly away from the cradle of his child, and the result was that Nature took him into her own hands, and reared him up into the handsomest man in France. One day a sudden convulsion appeared to end his life, and he was for some minutes regarded as dead, but by the skill of a *femme de chambre* he was restored to the light of day. The singular beauty of this woman, his earliest female acquaintance, was afterwards remarked as prophetic of his future universal favor with her sex. "The Marechal," says one of his biographers with a delicate wit, "spent his lifetime in returning her thanksgivings."*

* "Vie privee du Marechal de Richelieu, contenant ses amours et intri-

There is rather a pretty epigrammatic epitaph on the Marechal, ascribed to the pen of Maintenon, who, however, died long before him. His name was Louis Francis Amand du Plessis. I can only now give an English version of the lines.

> "Here lies Amand,
> Whom Cupid gave, in malice to the fair,
> His smile, his quiver, and his wings to wear."

gues et tout ce qui a rapport aux divers roles qu'a joués cet homme celebre pendant plus de quatre-vingt ans. tom. I, p. 2. Paris, 1791. The following is an extract regarding the Marechal from the Editor's preface: "L'amour le traita encore plus favorablement; toutes les femmes se disputaient son coeur; les pleurs qu'il devoit leur faire repandre ne les empechoient pas de voler au devant de l'infidele; elles etoient encore heureuses de partager entr'elles la portion de l'amour qu'il daignoit leur accorder."

CATHARINE OF RUSSIA.

The personal appearance of this interesting woman, and her mode and habits of life, are easily gathered from the concurring accounts of various writers who had seen her familiarly. At the age of forty-three she was in the full power of her robust style of beauty, and perfectly elegant in her figure, which was purely feminine from the shoulders to the feet, which were remarkably handsome, and of which she was very proud.

In her latter years, her extreme corpulence made her appear not so tall as she was in youth. Her face had considerable comeliness in it. Her forehead, though well formed and free, was, however, larger than is pleasant in a woman—and there was something of a want of feminine grace about the lower parts of her face. Her eyes were large, and of a pleasant greyish-blue, as they have been generally described—though less favorable observers have noticed something of a disagreeable expression in them. She herself also was sensible of the ill-effect of a wrinkle at the base of her nose, and wished it to be omitted in her portraits.* Her neck was

"The celebrated Lampie had lately painted a striking likeness of her, though extremely flattering; Catherine, however, remarking that he had not entirely omitted that unfortunate wrinkle, the evil genius of her face.

thick, but well-turned, and not short. It was the neck which we see on the coins of the voluptuous Roman emperors and empresses. Her bosom was full and her shoulders very finely formed; and all who have spoken of her have admired the grace and dignity of attitude with which she wore the crown. Her hair, which was of a beautiful light brown, she dressed with much simplicity and taste; and her taste in matters of dress was good. She improved the attire of her time, and sensible of the fineness of her bust, she introduced a fashion at court calculated to do justice to a handsome figure. Since her time the ladies of Russia have relapsed into a former costume, which does the greatest injury to the best forms.

After the usage of her country, however, Catharine rouged grossly. Her walk was extremely dignified and graceful, and

was greatly dissatisfied, and said that Lampi had made her too serious and too wrinkled. He must accordingly retouch and spoil the picture, which appeared now like the portrait of a young nymph. The celebrated Le Brun, who was at Petersburgh, and who could not obtain the honor of taking her likeness when living, saw her after she was dead. and drew it from his memory and imagination. I saw the rough draught of this portrait, which was extremely like."—Secret Memoirs of the Court of Petersburg, particularly towards the end of the reign of Catherine, vol. II, p. 40. Dublin, 1801. This work, from which I have taken some of the particulars about Catherine's person, professes to be a translation from the French, though there is no reference to the name of the author. He is said, however, to have lived about ten years in Petersburgh, and to have been frequently near the person of the Empress. But for some unmistakable French eloquence in this work, there would be something suspicious in the statement in the advertisment prefixed, in which we are told that "the publishers of the following translation have been induced, by a sense of decency and propriety, to suppress or soften a few anecdotes contained in the original, the grossness of which would undoubtedly outrage the public and private feelings of Englishmen." Notwithstanding the sacrifice which has been made to the extreme delicacy of "the public and private feelings of Englishmen," the work is a very curious contribution to the history of Catharine.

her whole carriage and movements such as became a great empress. Her usual dress was very plain, but on great state and solemn occasions she appeared with her hair and the body of her dress glittering with brilliants. In public processions she wore a coronet of diamonds. The habitual expression of her features was that of the utmost composure, characteristic of the calmess and mildness of her disposition. As she walked, she usually threw her eyes on the ground. Before her death she had become excessively corpulent; her legs were swollen and diseased, which impaired her grace in walking; and most of her teeth were gone, which disfigured her face, besides rendering her speech indistinct. Her voice also was hoarse and broken.

Catharine had a cultivated mind, a love and a taste for music, painting and statuary, and a good appreciation of the value of literature, of which she was not merely a generous but a most judicious patroness. Like her lover Potemkin, she wrote poetry. She never danced, but in the ball-room occupied herself at a card-table, preferring those games which did not interrupt that pleasant and good-natured conversation in which she so much delighted, and of which she was so great a mistress. She was moderate in everything but in love. She contrasted favorably in all respects, except in respect of her one great failing, with her predecessor the empress Elizabeth, who had her fair share of that great failing also, and was besides, what Catharine was not, a religious hypocrite, a drunkard, and a truly royal and enormous eater.

Summer and winter, Catharine rose early, and as she desired to give as little trouble as possible to her servants, even in a country where servants are slaves, made her breakfast of coffee for herself, and generally finished her toilet without assistance.

It seems to be but seldom recollected that it is the splendor of Catharine's talents and the greatness of her virtues, as

compared with those of other sovereigns, that have brought so much to light, and placed in such strong contrast the weak part of her character. By those who speak of her in the coarse and viralent language which Lord Brougham has employed in reference to her amors, it is entirely forgotten that before her and around her on every side Catharine could never have seen examples of anything whatever but of the coarsest, the most undisguised, and the most regular and formal licentiousness.

At the court of Russia it certainly could not be said, in the language of Burke, that "vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness." On the other hand, Catharine could not, in the society in which she lived, see an example of any of the great virtues which she herself possessed, and which were wholly her own, being far above those of her country, her age, her rank, and in some respects even of her sex. She was one of those women who could neither be vicious nor virtuous on a small scale. There was a magnificence in her virtues, and she had no petty weaknesses.

Power and greatness, so generally injurious to the character of women, neither dazzled nor corrupted her. Though a despotic sovereign, ruling over a nation of barbarians, she ruled with singular humanity and beneficence. The good of her subjects was ever near and dear to her great heart; she pursued with energy every measure for ameliorating their social condition. Under her the toleration of all religious opinions was carried out to the full extent required by the Gospel, at a time when England was practising the basest and cruellest persecution. She improved the criminal law, and with less ostentation, but certainly not with less zeal, was a greater reformer of prison discipline than Howard, "the philanthropist," who when in her capital treated her, after his usual harsh fashion, with a rudeness ill-deserved by one who, besides her conde-

scension to him, had been so distinguished a laborer in the cause which he professed to have so much at heart.

She would not allow the execution of a criminal to take place in any part of her immense dominions till she herself had the fullest opportunity of making herself acquainted with the whole circumstances of his crime, in the hope of being able to extend towards him that mercy which she always delighted to exercise.

Such she was as a ruler. As a woman, in many of her virtues, she rose far above the general level of those of her sex who are free from her great vice, and are regarded by themselves and by the world as models of female virtue.

It has been said—and history shows that there is a certain amount of truth in the statement—that a woman cannot simply cease to love; that when her love begins to grow lukewarm, a reaction has commenced, which stops short of nothing but violent hatred. It may not be unnatural that a woman shall hate the man who is in possession of the secret of a passion which, in her, has died away, and that where the power exists she will desire the death of the forsaken lover.

Thus did the Assyrian Semiramis, if tradition so hoary as that which reaches from her day is to be credited; and tradition, though it may not be always true to history, is generally true to human nature.* Thus also did the three beautiful and voluptuous princesses of Burgundy, whose wantonness and cruelty have given a romantic interest to the history of the Tower of Nesle.

Catharine was more powerful than these princesses, and lived in a more barbarous age, and she was as powerful as the Assyrian queen; but she showed that cruelty is not the necessary companion of licentiousness. Those whom she divorced from her arms were not deprived of her favor and kindness. There is no intance of her ill-treating any of her discharged

* See Diodorus Siculus, lib. II, c 13.

lovers. But Catharine, who was in every way as great, was, in many respects, a very good woman. Her highest praise—and it is rare praise—is that she had completely overcome the characteristic guilt of women—the great and repulsive stain of the sex—even of those women who are otherwise commendable, and who regard themselves as perfectly pure, which Catharine was too humble in heart to do. She, before whose footstool the highest in rank were equally humbled with the lowest, was utterly divested of that passion which women have, where they have the power, of oppressing, degrading, and torturing their own sex—torturing them in their feelings, I mean.

Her delight was to make all her domestics around her happy, to consult their comfort, to gratify their feelings, and to surround herself with their affections. And when all Russia lamented the death of its great sovereign, the warmest tears were shed by the humblest of Catharine's attendants, who bewailed the loss of the courteous and gracious mistress, who never spoke to them but with the sweetest familiarity, and with whom they had freely shared in that cheerful conversation, the charm which was felt by the noblest and the most highly accomplished in the land.

MADAME DE STAEL.

The famous Madame de Stael, the most influential political writer in the earlier part of this century, and the greatest writer of her sex of whom any country can boast, is described by most of those who had seen her as having little pretensions to beauty, or being what in the slang of fashion is called "plain." The coarse lines of a poet in the "Anti-jacobin," about her "purple cheek and pimpled nose," lines no doubt inspired by that base and mean hatred with which feeble-minded men regard women whose intellect throws their own into obscurity have no doubt contributed to keep alive an erroneous idea that she was positively ugly. This is the opinion expressed by M. Chasles, in a passage which I have quoted in the sketch of Sappho. The modern Corinne was no ways the rival in beauty of her Bœotion namesake, whose charms deluded the sense of the judges who five times over awarded her the prize in lyric poetry over Pindar himself,* and with whose name

* Of Corinna, the most beautiful of the Greek poetesses, there was, according to Pausanias, a portrait in the public gymnasium of the city of Tanagra, representing her as a most beautiful woman, with a fillet wreathed round her temples, on account of her having excelled Pindar in poetry. The vanquished poet gave expression to his wrath by ungallantly calling Corinna "a pig" From this expression, handed down to

Madame de Stael has associated her own by adopting it as the title of perhaps her most celebrated work.

A woman, however, who had seen her, and must have despised her with all her transcendent intellectual gifts, for want of the dull, sluggish blood of high aristocracy in her veins, admits quite enough to redeem the modern Corinne from the imputation of being entirely destitute of personal attractions. "But for her eyes, which are *splendid*," says the Baroness d'Oberkirch, "one would almost say that she is ugly. *Her figure is beautiful*; she is very fair, and there is a sparkling intelligence in her glance."* A woman with splendid eyes, a sparkling intelligence in her glance, and a beautiful figure, cannot well be despicable in point of personal comeliness.

But Madame de Stael had more points of beauty than these. Her fair complexion was contrasted with her thick, strong coal-black hair. There was that largeness and bold outline about her features which mark a decided and intellectual character, and gratify a vigorous taste; and when such features have once made an impression, they retain their hold on the mind more powerfully than a face with gentler and more delicate lines. And though Madame de Stael was not a Nourmahal, her face, it is admitted, displayed a continually changing expression in accordance with the emotions of her soul, and with the infinitely varying tones of her voice.

us by Ælian, M. Philarete Chasles draws the inference that Corinna was very stout in person. I cannot see any other fair inference that can be drawn from it than that Pindar, as might have been expected of a poet under such circumstances, had lost his temper and behaved like a beast. The belief of the world is, that it was the beauty of Corinna's person, and not her poetry, that decided the award of the judges. "On reading her works," says Barthelemy, as the young Anacharsis, "we are tempted to ask why, in poetical competitions they were so often preferred to those of Pindar; but when we view her portrait, we inquire why they have not always obtained the preference."

* "Memoirs of the Baroness d'Oberkirch," I, 316

When her mind for a moment was but faintly excited, her eyelids appeared to be heavy. Her stout figure which, as the Baroness d'Oberkirch admits, was beautiful, was shown to advantage by the grace of her carriage. It is not always, though it might be thought that it should be always, that a woman with a fine figure has a long with it that grace of motion and attitude which arises from the control of a refined mind over the body.

Napoleon's Marie Louise had an admirable figure physically considered, but her heavy lumpish soul could not impart elegance, or anything but awkwardness to her postures

Madame de Stael's arms were particularly beautiful; their fine rounded form is to be seen in the common portraits of her. Some accounts bear that she dressed with tawdriness and vulgarity; it is certain that she loved decided and gaudy colors, and committed the grave offence against society of consulting her own taste in what she wore, rather than adopting the prevailing modes.

Madame de Stael loved poetry, painting, statuary, architecture, music and dramatic performances, all to enthusiasm, as she did everything that refines and elevates humanity. Though she was anything but learned in the technicalities and cant of criticism, there is no writer of her country who has given to the world so many bright, beautiful and profound thoughts on the sentiment of art, on the feelings and emotions which its master-pieces excite. There has been much written by both men and women on the greatness and grandeur of St. Peter's, but nothing that is worth reading when it is placed beside the reflections on it in "Corinne."

Madame de Stael was a musician, both vocal and instrumental, and in private theatricals acted with the enthusiasm and emotion which might be expected from her character. In company she was not merely a splendid talker, but to this proud character she added the more amiable one of being an

earnest and attentive listener. It has been remarked to her honor that she made no hypocritical avowals of humble talents and moderate gifts—avowals which in her would have been most offensive.

When we reflect that Napoleon did not only not admire and reverence this woman ; that he did not merely treat her rudely, but proceeded from rudeness to persecution, we are amazed that his mind could be so great in some things, so mean and miserable in others. I dare say, however, that Wellington could have seen nothing in her ; but Alexander would have honored her as a princess, and Cæsar would have adored her.

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* "Memoirs of the Baron

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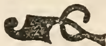

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