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LUCIE DUFF GORDON



Lucie Duff Gordon, by Henry Phillips

LUCIE DUFF GORDON

*IN ENGLAND, SOUTH AFRICA
AND EGYPT*



GORDON WATERFIELD

With Illustrations

NEW YORK
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FIRST EDITION

TO MY MOTHER

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P R E F A C E

I AM indebted to my mother for many letters which were not available for publication until after the death of Mrs. Janet Ross, to my wife for her wise advice, and to Miss Molly Hornsby for having typed the manuscript.

I wish to thank the following for allowing me to make considerable use of certain publications: Messrs. J. M. Dent and Son Ltd. (*Lady Duff Gordon's Letters from Egypt*); Mr. John Murray and Messrs. Ernest Benn Ltd. (*Mrs. Janet Ross's Three Generations of English Women*); Messrs. Humphrey Milford (*Lady Duff Gordon's Letters from the Cape*, edited by Dorothea Fairbridge, and *Guests and Memories*, by Una Taylor), and Messrs. Constable and Co. (*Mrs. Janet Ross's Fourth Generation*).

I also wish to thank the relations of the late Mr. William Thayer for allowing me to make use of his unpublished diary, which he kept while he was United States' Consul-General in Egypt.

The 'love' letters of Sarah Austin and Prince Puckler Muskau were copied from the originals in the Berlin State Library by courtesy of the Director.

41 RUE MADAME,
PARIS.

INTRODUCTION

'LUCIE DUFF GORDON,' wrote George Meredith, 'was of the order of women of whom a man of many years may say that their like is to be met with but once or twice in a life-time.'

No full story of her life has so far been written. She has been known only through her *Letters from Egypt* and *Letters from the Cape*, by the account in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and the short memoir by her daughter, Janet Ross, in *Three Generations of English Women*.

Mrs. Ross in her accounts of John Austin the Jurist, of his wife Sarah, translator and reformer, and of their daughter Lucie, confined herself to describing what remarkable people they were, and editing the letters of famous people with whom they corresponded. Nearly everything intimate was omitted.

An early diary kept by John Austin, a unique letter of proposal to his future wife, and love-letters exchanged between Mrs. Austin and Prince Puckler Muskau are published for the first time; as are also a number of Lady Duff Gordon's letters which were considered too outspoken on questions of sex for an age which had banished Fielding and Sterne for the novels of Thackeray and Dickens.

The originals of these, and of Sarah Austin's vast correspondence with Lord Brougham, Victor Cousin, Auguste Comte, Ampère, de Tocqueville, Sydney Smith, Lord Lansdowne, John Stuart Mill, Guizot, Gladstone and others, lie in an old chest of drawers at Poggio Gherardo, near Florence, which has been inherited from Mrs. Ross by Lucie Duff Gordon's granddaughter, Mrs. Aubrey Waterfield,

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Sarah Austin was the unusual combination of a good-looking blue-stocking. Her vitality, combined with John Austin's exceptional abilities, produced an attractive daughter who possessed more humour and originality than either of her parents. It is said that to Sarah a joke was 'a detestable interruption of serious reasoning,' and John Austin's letter of proposal is sufficient proof that he lacked humour.

Lucie had none of the consummate self-confidence of her cousin, Harriet Martineau, or the enthusiasms and industry of Sarah Austin. She had instead a quality—an attitude to life—which makes her a member of the twentieth rather than of the nineteenth century.

Born in 1821, the year of Napoleon's death, she was brought up in much the same atmosphere of disillusionment and change after a long period of warfare as those born a century later. The passing of the Reform Bill resulted in a breakdown of aristocratic privilege, and as a Radical and a Benthamite she learned to question all things for herself.

'Her humour was a mouth-piece of nature,' wrote George Meredith. 'She inherited from her father the judicial mind, and her fine conscience brought it to bear on herself as well as on the world, so that she would ask: "Are we so much better?" when someone supremely erratic was dangled before the popular eye. . . .

'In her youth she was radiantly beautiful, with dark brows on a brilliant complexion; the head of a Roman man and features of Grecian line. . . . Wherever she appeared she could be likened to a Selene breaking through cloud; and, further, the splendid vessel was richly freighted. Trained by a scholar, much in the society of scholarly men, having an innate bent to exactitude, and with a ready tongue docile to the curb, she stepped into the world armed to be a match for it. . . . Her quality of the philosophical humour carried her

easily over the shoals or the deeps in the way of a woman claiming her right to an independent judgment upon the minor rules of conduct as well as upon matters of mind.'

She was not trammelled by Victorian conventions and disliked all pose and snobbery. When riding she smoked a cigar because it eased her consumptive cough, and when her son began at an early age to be attracted by women she made arrangements which were far from being in accordance with Victorian practice. She was a passionate defender of all whom she considered to be treated unjustly, and, when she could, gave them practical help; 'against the cruelty of despotic rulers and the harshness of society she was openly at war.'

She is often to be met with in the published diaries and letters of the last century; parties with Thackeray and Kinglake, charades with Charles Dickens, theatres with Lord Melbourne and Caroline Norton. Tennyson said that he had her in mind when he wrote *The Princess*, and Meredith described her in his novels. 'Perhaps no woman of our time,' wrote Caroline Norton, 'except Mrs. Somerville and Mrs. Browning in their different styles, combined so much erudition with so much natural ability.'

In the prime of her life Lucie was cut off from society and then from England and her family. Consumption drove her abroad to live a year and a half in South Africa and five years alone over the big Temple at Luxor in a house which has since been destroyed. She died and was buried in Cairo at the age of forty-eight, having lived the last few months of her life in great pain.

If Lucie had not been obliged to go abroad she would probably have emerged from the welter of Victorian personalities only as a talented and attractive hostess, having achieved a little fame through translations. But, thrown

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upon her own resources, her exceptional qualities were shown to the full, and in the collected editions of her letters home she left two volumes of writings, which are outstanding even to-day when so many publish accounts of their travels. These letters have been left as much as possible intact, and are drawn upon at considerable length in the last part of this work, for, as Meredith wrote, 'the letters of Lucie Duff Gordon are an introduction to her in person.'

When Mrs. Ross sent the manuscript of the memoir of her mother, subsequently published in *Three Generations of English Women*, to Lucie's friend, Kinglake, for his comments, the author of *Eothen* replied: 'You have inherited your mother's command of a pure, simple, classic diction, and so far nothing could be better, but I have a strong impression that the memoir should be written upon a somewhat larger scale, and that in that way it might be made very interesting. There was a classic grandeur about her which she maintained to the last. . . . Even in that part of her life covered by what you have already written, there are circumstances which, if told in a little detail, would be extremely interesting. A meagre memoir seems to me worse than useless.'

Janet Ross wrote a meagre memoir, and although Kinglake's advice was given sixty years ago it is well worth following to-day. Not only is Lady Duff Gordon's story of interest in itself, but no one has described native life in South Africa and Egypt with such sympathy and penetration. Her views and her manner of life are of especial interest now when a new technique of behaviour is being evolved to meet changes in political relations between Western and Oriental nations.

She describes graphically the misery of the Fellaheen at the time of the Khedive Ismail, before the British Occupation of Egypt. She wanted the British to administer Egypt if they

could bring justice, but she also wanted them to learn to adapt themselves with a little humility to oriental life and attempt to appreciate other races. 'To most Europeans,' she wrote from Egypt, 'the people are not real people but part of the scenery.'

Lucie Duff Gordon saw the friction created by the clash of different civilisations, and how the domineering manners of the British aroused the resentment of Boer farmers and of South African and Egyptian natives. She strongly criticised what she described as 'the damned nigger infection' of the English. She vehemently opposed the idea, still prevailing in some quarters to-day, that Orientals must be governed by force. 'I know,' she wrote from Luxor, 'the cruel old platitudes about governing the Orientals by fear, which the English pick up like mocking birds from the Turks. I know all about the "stick" and "vigour" and all that, but "I sit among the people" and I know too that Mohammed feels just like John Smith or Tom Brown would feel in his place. . . . I am fully convinced that custom and education are the only real difference between one set of men and another; their inner nature is the same all the world over.' This did not mean, however, that she ignored the differences, or that she was a sentimentalist.

Since her day the English have transported more and more of their own suburban life to the East. They have built sporting clubs and residential houses in nearly all the principal towns; they play bridge in the evening and mix even less with the natives of the country than they used to do, because of what is termed 'prestige.' Officials hardly ever 'sit among the people,' and are often taken by surprise when antipathy among the governed suddenly crystallises into rioting and bloodshed.

Egypt, for instance, has changed little from the 'sixties when Lucie wrote from Luxor that she was amazed at several

INTRODUCTION

instances of English fanaticism: 'Why do people come to a Mussulman country with such bitter hatred in their hearts?'

In the obituary notice of Lucie Duff Gordon in *The Times*, her friend Caroline Norton wrote: 'Sympathising, helping, doctoring their sick, teaching their children, learning the language, Lady Duff Gordon lived in Egypt and in Egypt she has died, leaving a memory of her greatness and goodness, such as no other European woman ever acquired in that country. It is touching to trace her lingering hopes of life and amended health in her letters to her husband and her mother, and to see how, as they faded out, there rose over those hopes the grander light of fortitude and submission to the will of God.

'Gradually hope departs, and she begins bravely to face the inevitable destiny. And then comes the end of all, the stronger yet tender announcement of her own conviction that there would be no more meetings, but a grave opened to receive her in a foreign land.

"Dearest Alick" (she wrote to her husband), "do not think of coming here as you dread the climate. Indeed, it would be almost too painful to me to part from you again; and as it is, I can wait patiently for the end, among people who are kind and loving enough to be comfortable (with) without too much feeling of the pain of parting. The leaving Luxor was rather a distressing scene, as they did not think to see me again. The kindness of all the people was really touching, from the Cadi, who made ready my tomb among his own family, to the poorest Fellaheen."

'Such are the tranquil and kindly thoughts with which she prefaces her death. Those who remember her in her youth and beauty, before disease rather than time had altered the pale heroic face, and bowed the slight, stately figure, may well perceive some strange analogy between soul and body in the

Spartan firmness which enabled her to pen that last farewell so quietly.

‘Who shall say what seeds of kindly intercommunion that dying Englishwoman may have planted in the arid Eastern soil? Or what “bread she may have cast” on those Nile waters, “which shall be found again after many days”?’

Thus died Lucie Duff Gordon in 1869. While there is hardly anyone who is old enough to remember her, there are many who knew her daughter, Janet Ross, and her son, Sir Maurice Duff Gordon of Fyvie Castle. Those who saw Mrs. Ross saw something of her mother. She had the same imperious manner and striking looks, the same amazonian qualities and spirit of adventure. But the daughter had not by any means as wide a range of interests and sympathy as the mother.

Janet Ross survived her mother by fifty-seven years. Just before her death a few years ago, at the age of eighty-four, she was still upright, stern and eagle-eyed. Visitors to Florence from many countries used to make a pilgrimage to see the determined old lady at her villa overlooking Florence, which Boccaccio chose as the background for some of his tales. To her the old days were the best, and she liked describing the famous people she had known. At the age of three she had told Carlyle not to be rude to her mother; with her parents she used to drink a ‘dish’ of tea with the Misses Berrys; she described how she had sat on Macaulay’s knee and how Thackeray used to draw pictures for her.

As a child, Janet Duff Gordon had lived through the momentous year of 1848 when the Chartists marched on London, and could describe the part taken in the threat of trouble by her mother; thrones had tottered on the Continent, and she had seen Guizot, the French Prime Minister, arrive at the Duff Gordons’ house, a fugitive from France

INTRODUCTION

after the overthrow of Louis Philippe. In her old age her commanding presence and fearlessness stood her in good stead in dealing first with Socialists and then with Fascists immediately after the Great War.

White-haired and erect, she used to sit at her writing-desk in the room where hung the same pictures which can be seen to-day, recalling the John Taylors, Sarah Austin, Lucie Duff Gordon and the nineteenth century.

She used to talk about them to her small great-nephew, hoping perhaps that he would follow in the steps of that heroic past of which she was so conscious. But he was apt to shrink beneath the sharp look from under her shaggy brows and at the sardonic twist of her slightly moustached mouth, and she concluded that he was 'a fool of a boy.'

Lucie was very much a product of this background. Like her Taylor grandparents and Austin parents, she was proud of belonging to a middle class which was the initiator of the great liberal movements of the nineteenth century in literature and politics. The women were the predominant members of the family, which prompted John Austin to say: 'the traditions of nobility and heroism are kept up by women and they are the only real gentlemen.'

For an understanding of Lucie, of her peculiarities, originality and her spirit of revolt, it is important to see her grandparents and parents, for her roots are in the past. While she was by no means a product of Victoria-Albert England in which she lived, she was very much influenced by the Radical and intellectual atmosphere in which she was brought up.

PART I
ENGLAND

Chapter I

THE MELANCHOLY JOHN AUSTIN

LUCIE'S father, John Austin, was handsome, brilliant and sociable, yet he led a miserable and impecunious life. His main troubles were self-pity and indigestion. "If Austin had had health," said Lord Brougham, "neither I nor Lyndhurst would have been Lord Chancellor."

He also inherited a deep-seated melancholia which unfitted him for the struggle of life in the hurly-burly of England's greatest period of political and industrial change.

He had all the qualifications to make him a great criminal-law reformer at a time when such a man was most required, since he combined high moral indignation with great knowledge. Unfortunately he was made so ill by his keen sense of injustices, and worked so hard in trying to attain too high a standard of perfection in all he did, that it ended generally in his achieving very little.

It was only after death that he became famous, and that was largely due to his able and attractive wife. He started as a soldier, tried to be a barrister, failed as a lecturer, and during fifty years spent in deep thought produced only one slight volume on jurisprudence and a few articles in the *Quarterlies*.

While John Austin was struggling vainly against a cold-shouldering world, his more robust brother, Charles, was making a brilliant career as a barrister. In one year he earned £40,000 and was able to retire comfortably at an early age.

"John is much cleverer than I," said Charles, "but he is always knocking his head against principles."

"I was born out of my time," complained John; "I should

have been a schoolman of the twelfth century, or a German philosopher."

But to-day John Austin is remembered and Charles is almost forgotten. His one published volume, expanded into three, with the help of his many notes, by his wife, made him the founder of the Austinian Theory of Law. His name is one of the first in legal history, and although he left few writings he exercised a big influence on his contemporaries.

Considering his character and his interests, it is surprising that he ever became a soldier; but he was born in 1790, during the stirring days of the French Revolution, and as a boy was caught up in the war fever of the Napoleonic campaigns. Brought up in Ipswich, then a garrison town, he was filled with military zeal by the bands and marching troops. At the age of seven he was found kneeling in the garden praying earnestly to God that he might be given a bow and arrow.

His father, Jonathan Austin, was a prosperous miller and corn merchant. He had earned big profits as a result of the wars against Napoleon on the Continent and could well afford to give his sons a good education, though he had received little himself.

John, the eldest, inherited a gentle disposition and nervous temperament from his delicate mother. He used to spend many hours as a boy reading the Bible to her, and he was nearly always to be seen with a book in his hand. While physically lazy, he had great mental energy, and he was fired by indignation at any account of despotic tyranny.

Napoleon was to Austin the embodiment of tyranny, and at the age of seventeen he insisted upon having a commission in the British Army. His younger brother, Joseph, had already entered the Navy. In 1807, a year after the death of Pitt, when Napoleon dominated the whole Continent and

SELF-CRITICISM IN AUSTIN'S DIARY

was faced by Britain alone, John Austin was gazetted as an ensign in the 44th Regiment. The next year he was promoted Lieutenant and went to serve under Sir William Bentinck in Malta and Sicily.

The first real picture of John Austin's character is contained in a diary that he kept at Malta during the Peninsular War. It is a thin manuscript book, written in a careful, clear and rather unformed hand, expressing unusual sentiments for a good-looking young officer of twenty-one.

The first entry is dated Malta, December 31st, 1811: 'The last day of December has irresistibly forced upon my attention the conduct of 1811. The retrospect has hardly given rise to one single feeling of self-satisfaction. During that period, the waste of money, of time and of health has been enormous; and indolence—always the prominent vice of my character—has within the last nine months assumed over me an empire I almost despair of shaking.

'But the expectations of my father, which I am bound in honour and gratitude to fulfil, command me to arouse myself from this lethargy of the faculties: and I am, too, convinced that my own happiness is commensurate with and inseparable from the progress I make in the acquisition of knowledge. Whenever I have consumed a day in all the listlessness of indolence and ennui, the *perdidi dei* stares me in the face and poisons those hours devoted to the relaxation which none but the industrious can relish.

'As the best corrective to this corroding disease, I propose to keep a regular journal of my actions, studies and of such occurrences as may more particularly regard myself. My great object is to *begin*:—to establish habits of regulated industry: the growing work may at length assume a more regular form and embrace more important matters.'

On the first day of the New Year, 1812, there is the

following staccato entry: 'Reading. Fears of never emerging from obscurity. Height 5 ft. 9½ in. in boots.' The train of thought is clear and ingenuous.

Another entry follows: 'This morning the Officers of the Garrison were presented to General Oakes. On this occasion I was guilty of an unseasonable affectation of wit which might, without much injustice, have been termed impertinence.' What the serious Austin said or did he keeps to himself.

Two days later he was 'guilty of the childish and unpardonable folly of lending my assistance to a *row*.'

'January 4th. During the whole morning I was agitated by the fear of the said *row* being discovered. My detention in the Island would have been a certain consequence of such a discovery.'

There were other worries; a tailors' bill of £30 which was overdue, uncertainty as to whether he wished to remain in the Regiment, and trouble with the Colonel. 'When going to parade, I was ordered to my room by Colonel Hamerton as a punishment, etc. etc.' (presumably because of the *row*). 'He is, I am inclined to think, determined on effecting my ruin. My own arrogance and want of caution will enable him to injure me essentially.'

He plans his week very carefully; two hours of one morning devoted 'to the careful perusal of some classic,' so that he may form 'the invaluable habit of reckoning time by hours and minutes and not by weeks and months.' In spite of this there is an entry on January 10th: 'I have consumed the last nine or ten days in doing all manners of nothings.'

After that he recovers and there is a careful analysis of Dugald Stewart's *Essay on the Beautiful*. 'The author in his defence of Metaphysics,' Austin comments, 'substitutes fine

writing for close reasoning.' He reads Locke's *Human Understanding*, Mitford's *Greece*, and Enfield's *History of Philosophy*, a book 'not characterised by much philosophical depth, but the author displays a mild and liberal spirit truly edifying in a theologian'; Drummond's *Academical Questions* he found 'tainted with a little school-boy pedantry.'

Then there is a relapse: 'Saturday, February 7th, 1812. Yesterday was consumed in recovering my senses—almost lost—from a debauch at the 14th mess in the morning.' On another day he awoke distracted with a headache and was not able to attend parade—because two fellow-officers had dined with him the night before.

There is in the diary a desire for moral perfection combined with a naïve wish to be friends with people who may help him to worldly success. On his way to Sicily from Malta he stated: 'I wrote from on board ship a letter to Colonel Adam, thanking him for attentions he had paid me on various occasions. Did not a wish of attracting new attentions and the vanity of displaying my epistolary talents induce me more than gratitude to write this letter? I am inclined to hope that gratitude was the primary and most efficient motive, though I must admit that some alloy of interest and vanity debased the purity of this noble feeling.'

'I have engaged to maintain a correspondence with Crewe of the 27th. I wish that indolence may not prevent the fulfilment of this engagement. Crewe's birth and talents may one day prove of some service to my plebeian fortunes.'

Then, suddenly, on March 2nd, there arrived a letter from his father which changed his whole career. It stated that his brother Joseph had died of yellow fever on board the warship *Scipio* off the island of Java. Three years before, he had shown conspicuous bravery in an action against the French, when he was only fourteen.

THE MELANCHOLY JOHN AUSTIN

Mrs. Austin was inconsolable at the loss of her son, and Jonathan Austin wrote that he was fearful of consequences that he dared not describe: 'We all do most fervently pray that you will resign your commission as soon as is consistent with a due regard to propriety. Upon your return you shall have your choice of employment and my circumstances are sufficiently easy to gratify any reasonable desire that you may entertain.'

This family tragedy was a determining factor in John Austin's life. It is true that he wished to leave the Army and had already written a letter to his father expressing regret that he had ever decided to enter it; but even so, unless his father had taken the initiative it is unlikely that John Austin would have done so.

When he received the letter his instinct was to avoid doing anything incautious. 'Though I was dreadfully agitated I preserved sufficient reflection to embrace a less violent measure than that suggested by my father.' Instead of resigning he asked for six months' leave of absence, so that he would be able to return to the Army if he did not find any other suitable employment, and he sailed immediately for England.

On his way home he did another sensible thing. When his ship was becalmed in the Bay of Cagliari, off Sardinia, he saw the boat carrying the messenger to whom he had entrusted his last letter to his father. He went on board and recovered it, explaining in his diary: 'When I wrote this letter I was in an ill-humour and vented it in abuse of the military profession. Had my father seen this letter, he would have mistaken a momentary disgust for a settled antipathy; and in case of my refusing to resign my commission, would have accused me of acting in direct contradiction to my own sentiments from no better motive than a capricious opposition to his wishes.'



Sarah Austin, by Linnell
(by courtesy of National Portrait Gallery)

RETURN TO ENGLAND

Thus at twenty-two years of age a precocious, good-looking, self-analytical, cautious, proud and diffident John Austin arrived in England to look for another career. He knew his own strength and weakness better than most young men of that age. 'The only excellencies of my style,' he wrote, 'are clearness and precision.'

The diary ended soon after his return to England in March, and he turned to the beginning to write the following verse of Voltaire :

*Nous tromper dans nos entreprises
C'est à quoi nous sommes sujets ;
Le matin je fais des projets
Et le long du jour des sottises.*

Chapter II

THE TAYLORS OF NORWICH

JOHN AUSTIN lacked confidence in many ways, but he was never timid in conversation. He talked much, enthusiastically and well. All who met him were impressed by his talent. It was decided that he should prepare for the Bar.

While he was doing this he used often to go over to Norwich to visit some old friends of his family, the John Taylors, who were also merchants. They were a large family, conspicuous for their common sense and intelligence. Lord Sussex said of them that they reversed the usual saying that it took nine tailors to make a man.

The youngest of the family of seven was Sarah. While it cannot be said that John Austin fell in love with her at first sight, which would have been too impetuous an act for him, it is certain that she made a deep impression on him from the first. She was nineteen years old, handsome, independent, full of high spirits and beset with admirers.

The fact that she was rather a flirt worried Austin considerably. Sarah was quick to realise that Austin's large expressive eyes were often fixed on her. She herself was attracted by his good looks, slim military figure and his intelligence. She began to show him that she had other accomplishments besides flirting.

Mrs. John Taylor, the dominant member of the family, had brought her up with all the intellectual accomplishments which John Austin considered were important in a wife. She knew French, German, Latin and Greek, and although she was by

ADVICE TO A DAUGHTER

naturé gay rather than studious, her abundant energy led her to seek interest in books as well as in men.

Whenever she went to stay with friends her mother wrote her long letters of advice giving quotations from Longinus and Aristotle and full of maxims which were nearly always to the point.

‘The character of girls,’ she wrote, ‘must depend upon their reading as much as upon the company they keep. Besides the intrinsic pleasure to be derived from solid knowledge, a woman ought to consider it her best resource against poverty. A well educated young woman may always provide for herself, while girls that are but half instructed have too much cultivation for one sort of life and too little for another. Besides that, the stiff aristocratical carriage produced by the idea that they are born to be young ladies and to spend their time in frivolous occupations is an impediment to everything valuable, for we must mix kindly and cordially with our fellow creatures in order to be useful to them or to make them useful to us. . . . The way to stand well with people is not to make them feel your consequence but their own, and while you are conversing with them to take an interest in whatever interests them.’

She encouraged Sarah to maintain her relish for reading, ‘for nothing will serve through life better, and nothing will obtain so much credit even from those who cannot avail themselves of its advantages.’

Mrs. John Taylor and her family were extensive readers. With their friends, such as Basil Montagu and Sir James Mackintosh, Amelia Alderson, who later married Opie the painter, Mrs. Barbauld and Dr. Enfield, they subscribed to the new novels of Fanny Burney and Jane Austen as soon as publication was announced. They used to collect in the Taylors’ drawing-room, while one of their number read aloud.

THE TAYLORS OF NORWICH

Sarah was brought up to this family reading, which was the custom throughout the country and was one of the chief influences in leading to the change from the outspoken novels of the eighteenth century to the 'respectable' novels of the nineteenth. The Taylor family at Norwich, the Edgeworths at County Longford, the Bowdler family at Bath, were among the many groups who, through their guinea subscriptions, became the controllers of taste. Thomas Bowdler went as far as to emasculate Shakespeare and Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, so as to bring them into that class of book which could be read in the family circle and 'not raise a blush on the cheek of modest innocence nor plant a pang in the heart of the devout Christian.' The little Edgeworths were not even allowed to read fairy-tales, since they did not convey any true moral lesson. The Taylors, however, were very much more liberal.

Susan Cook, before she became Mrs. John Taylor, was well-read, literary, and fond of acting. But on marrying she decided that it was better 'to be useful than accomplished,' and she learned to find stimulus in 'the constant desire of giving pleasure to her husband which made even trifling affairs seem of importance.'

With the increase of her family she became more and more domestic, but while she sat mending her family's clothes she used to discuss politics and literature with eminent Whigs who came to visit her, like Coke of Holkham and Lord Albemarle. 'Life,' she said, 'was either a dull round of eating and drinking and sleeping or a spark of ethereal fire just kindled.'

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refrain: 'Fall, tyrants, fall! fall! fall! These are the days of Liberty.'

Basil Montagu said that the chief delight of himself and Sir James Mackintosh was in the company of Mrs. Taylor, 'the wife of a shop-keeper,' and he refers to her 'manly wisdom and feminine gentleness, which were in her united with such attractive manners that she was universally loved and respected.'

Mrs. Taylor had a great respect for intellect, and a strong belief in the middle classes, among whom 'true elegance as well as information are to be found.' She vehemently attacked those members of the House of Lords 'who laughed at the recital of cruelties and ridiculed the advocates of the oppressed negroes'; at the same time she was gratified that 'virtue and philanthropy were becoming fashionable.'

The Taylor and Martineau relations used to hold very much together in Norwich, with the Octagon Chapel and Mrs. Taylor's drawing-room as their rallying-grounds. Every now and again there was a general assembly of all the relations. In 1814 there was a meeting of forty-four members, and another year there were sixty-five. This clannishness had a considerable influence on Sarah, who throughout her life kept in touch with the Norwich relations.

At one of the meetings Philip Taylor, the doyen, read an address which clearly expresses the solidarity which was felt. He praised their 'firm union of hearts' and said: 'Had our early moral discipline been neglected, had envy, selfishness or inordinate ambition been allowed to grow up among us, and especially had we been suffered to learn the polite lesson of not knowing our own relations, except when perfectly convenient, we should have been scattered asunder like chaff before the wind.'

Besides this family solidarity, they were bound together by

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a strong belief in the Unitarian faith. The Taylors were direct descendants of Dr. John Taylor, who in 1733 had been elected to the charge of the Presbyterian Congregation of Norwich and who published *The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin*, which aroused a violent controversy with the orthodox. He founded the Octagon Chapel, which John Wesley described as the most beautiful in Europe. His grandson, John Taylor, carried on the religious traditions as Deacon.

Harriet Martineau has described her reactions to the Chapel services as a child, and the religious zeal of some of her relations made her eventually a Freethinker. Sarah used to go regularly to pray there and was brought up to read her Bible assiduously. But she was never as fervent a Unitarian as her sister and some of her relations.

Chapter III

SARAH TAYLOR'S ENGAGEMENT

SARAH TAYLOR was lucky in having five brothers living in London, where she could pay them visits. John, the eldest, was an engineer and had superintended the excavation of one of the first tunnels in England, for the Tavistock Canal; Richard became Editor of the *Philosophical Magazine*; Edward studied music, Arthur was an archaeologist, and Philip was a scientist. Michael Faraday, Baron von Humboldt, MacAdam and others used to come to Philip Taylor's house at Bromley, for he had earned an international reputation.

Sarah used to have a gay time, meeting their friends, going to the theatre to see Mrs. Siddons and riding in the Park. When she was nineteen she rode with one of her brothers to Bath. On the way she was taken ill and spent ten days in a friend's house with no other clothes than her riding-habit. She lay on the sofa in the drawing-room, 'which,' said her hostess, 'was besieged by the young beaux of Bath anxious to see the recumbent beauty.'

'The experiences you have had are considerable for your age,' wrote her mother; 'by a more rigid plan with you I might have spared both you and myself much pain, but you would have known much less of the human heart.'

There is little doubt that Sarah by the age of nineteen, when she fell in love with John Austin, had had a number of more or less serious flirtations. It came as a surprise to her friends that she should fall in love with Austin, who was too serious by temperament to make a good lover. While she had

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admired energy and bravery in other young men, she did not seem to expect it in Austin. She was not shocked when, in reply to a question as to why he had left the Army, he said, with his usual excess of honesty: 'Because I was a coward; I felt sure I would disgrace myself and run away.'

Even before the Battle of Waterloo, when Napoleon threatened to invade England, there was no war mania in the Taylor family. 'I hope means will be found,' said Mrs. Taylor, 'to provide for the dear little boys of our family without making soldiers and sailors of them. Let them be chemists and mechanics, or carpenters and masons, anything but destroyers of mankind. This is not very chivalrous, but, I hope, something better.'

Sarah was not apparently worried, either, by Austin's marked lack of humour, and she was quite prepared to abandon dancing for the study of Adam Smith, Bacon, Blackstone and Locke. Austin begged her to read what he was reading, to study Latin hard and to read Tacitus attentively, 'for I shall desire to talk with you on all subjects which engage my attention.' Sarah worked with enthusiasm, and there is a formidable list of books which she read at this time to please John Austin.

Sarah's parents liked John Austin, and they did not raise any objection to Sarah seeing him constantly and to their writing to one another as much as they wished.

There was, in fact, little in Austin's letters likely to sweep a young woman off her feet. While studying in lawyer's chambers, when they were on the point of becoming engaged, he wrote to her: 'I almost apprehend that the habit of drawing will in no short time give me so exclusive and intolerant a taste (as far, I mean, as relates to my own productions) for perspicuity and precision, that I shall hardly venture on sending a letter of much purpose, even to you, unless it be laboured

AUSTIN'S LETTER OF PROPOSAL

with accuracy and circumspection which are requisite in a deed of conveyance.'

In the meantime, Sarah, surrounded by such books as Stewart's *Philosophical Essays*, Smith's *Moral Sentiments*, Malthus on population and Tacitus on agriculture, which she was reading at Austin's inspiration, waited rather anxiously for some sign from him that he wished to marry her.

At last the letter came, one of the most remarkable letters of proposal written by any young man who was very much in love; it was certainly laboured with circumspection.

In this letter, which, long as it is, must be given in full, the conflict between conceit and humility, ambition and despondency, is even more apparent than in his diary. Austin realised that he possessed great talents, but feared that he would not have the strength of mind to exploit them. He looked to Sarah to save him from himself. Without her he felt that he was nothing, for sympathetic encouragement was the breath of life to him. Although she was so necessary to him, he was not afraid to state his case with the same intellectual honesty which won him fame as a jurist, but which might well have ruined his chances as a lover.

When Sarah, breathless and with a beating heart, tore open the fat envelope, she found a letter written in a careful, almost copy-book, hand, probably the final draft of numerous discarded attempts. It was dated November 12, 1814, and said:

'As the business of this letter may have a mighty effect upon the future happiness of us both, I am convinced that you will perceive the good taste, as well as the good faith, of setting about it simply and directly; and of rejecting all those paltry tricks and devices and obliquities, with which it is sometimes, I believe, thought necessary, or graceful, to introduce an avowal of love.

SARAH TAYLOR'S ENGAGEMENT

'If you dislike either the subject or the lover . . . you will of course read no further, will return my letter and may rest assured that I shall never again presume to violate that respectful silence to which these intimations of your displeasure will instantly reduce me. . . .

'Assuming then that we feel a mutual inclination to each other ; our great object should be to enquire as calmly as we can, whether it is or is not likely that we should promote our well-being by *yielding* to that inclination. And as in enquiries of this nature, the judgment is disingenuously inclined to blink at those facts upon which it ought to dwell the longest, I shall sincerely endeavour to lay before *you* those harsh but useful truths relating to myself, without a due consideration of which you would be mad to decide in my favour, . . . and feel confident that you would with equal sincerity intimate to *me*, whatever might render it expedient for me to withdraw these merely conditional proposals.

'I shall accordingly proceed to enumerate the greatest and most comprehensive of those evils which you must or may undergo from an attachment to me ; and having thus fairly and steadily presented to your view the facts most unfavourable to my suit, I shall then require you to submit to a self-examination which may perhaps severely wound your vanity, but which you must triumphantly encounter before I can dare to hang the fate of my feelings upon the chance of your consistency.

'Primo: The first grand evil to which the connexion I have conditionally proposed will, if you enter into it, subject you, is, the great length of time that it will necessarily require, to place me in such a situation as will enable me to marry. . . . I shall complete my twenty-fifth year on the 3rd March, 1815. My call to the Bar, even supposing my father is willing to make it practicable so soon, cannot take place till Michaelmas Term,

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November, 1817. It is therefore morally impossible that my professional exertions should enable us to marry before I am thirty, and very improbable that they will enable us to marry before I am four or five or six and thirty.

'Secundo: But it is also very probable that my profession may never bring me into one shilling. And that after having sacrificed everything to *me*—all the chances of an establishment which the years of your youth might have otherwise afforded—you will eventually suffer the mortifying necessity of renouncing that cherished hope to which you have devoted every other hope—enhanced and aggravated by the unworthy spectacle of my protracted dependence.

'Tertio: It is, too, not impossible that I *may* play the fool and the scoundrel, and prove false both to myself and you,—that I may be turned aside from the straight and narrow path of duty and affection either by caprice, or by impatience of poverty, or by some other of those unruly and miscalculating motives which so often disconcert the combinations of a long-sighted and generous self-love; that at the moment you are expecting from fortune the completion of your long deferred hopes, I may forget your love and your faith in the wane of your beauty; or that basely yielding to despair, I may damn myself to wealth and contempt in the arms of age and ugliness and folly.

'I am, however, vain enough to think that of all our adverse chances, *this* (if *you* will but lend your efforts to prop and secure my constancy) is to be dreaded the least. I hope—I am (or fancy I am) convinced—that if your heart can but kindle and exalt itself into such a passion as would appease the wants of my own; if your soul is really worthy to hold communion with mine; if you can resolve to restrain the wanderings of your coquetry and your vanity—not by the purposeless or the preposterous self-denial of a methodist—but by cultivating

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that quick and subtle perception of propriety, that anxious and vigilant prudence which would surround you with an atmosphere of purity and safety repulsive even to the insolence of fools; if you can determine sedulously to form yourself to that enlarged yet feminine reason, which could at once enter into my most comprehensive views and soften my technical asperities; to brace yourself up to that fortitude of affection which could wipe the damps of anguish from my forehead, or playfully tease my sinking spirits into alacrity;—if you can resolve to feel and be and act all this; I am convinced that I can never so utterly lose my sensibility to the great, the generous, and the lovely as to forget that in *me* alone is your hope and your stay, and that your very heart-strings have inextricably entwined themselves with my fidelity and honour. . . .

‘Such are the principal of those certain evils, arising from my situation, which you must endure, and of those probable evils, arising from my situation and character, which you may endure, should you centre your hopes of marriage upon my contingentability to maintain you at some remote future period, and upon the chances of my inclination to exert that ability whenever it may reward my labours.

‘If they do not appal you; if you can resolve to brave them all for me; proceed to examine your past conduct, and then determine whether you can either in honour or safety accept my proffered love.

‘If you feel secure in the unviolated integrity of your principles; be not dismayed at those slight stains upon your reputation, which a more guarded deportment, combined with my respectful and (may I presume to say?) *protecting* attachment, will gradually wear away. But you will, for your own sake, remember that no hypocrisy, however refined and vigilant, could eventually conceal the want either of truth or of mental

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purity from the earnest gaze of a lover : And however you *may* have erred ; I am sure that you are still too generous to immesh my affections by artifice,—far, far too generous to convulse with all the agony of abused and baffled tenderness, a bosom already agitated by anxiety for your welfare and holding forth an asylum to your innocence from every calumny and every indiscretion. . . .

‘I neither shall, nor need I, make any apology for the plainness of this language. The business I am about is the most important in my life. I am tortured by an interest too vehement and too painful for doubt, in your unsullied honour, in your unbroken rectitude, in the freshness of your unpractised feelings. And my happiness, my peace, nay my safety, loudly command me to ascertain whether you are in truth that volatile, vain and flirting thing, hackneyed in the ways of coquetry, and submitting its light and worthless affections to the tampering of every specious cox-comb ;—or have really *nerve* enough for the deep-toned, steady, and consistent enthusiasm, upon which both my pride and my tenderness might securely rely ; which would strengthen and sustain the weakness of a spirit that must cling to sympathy for support and would urge me on to heroic industry, by presenting to my perseverance that strongest of all motives in that best and dearest of all rewards—the full and exclusive and proud possession of a thinking, feeling, high-minded woman, “loving, lovely and beloved . . .”

‘When you have subjected yourself to this ordeal of self-examination make me acquainted with the issue of your scrutiny. Should you find it unfavourable, we will both of us retire.’

It is not a letter of proposal which would have gained Austin a satisfactory answer from many members of the twentieth century. While John Austin waited anxiously

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for the reply, there is, unfortunately, no way of telling whether Sarah laughed, cried or sighed with relief when she read this extraordinary letter. She probably did not take the ordeal of self-examination very seriously. She was in love and, unlike John Austin, prepared to be guided by her feelings. She knew that the person who wrote this legal exposition of their case was in reality a nervous young man, who was much in love, needed her sympathy and, for all his high-sounding phrases, was very dependent upon her. It was the legal Austin who showed himself in the letter because he was proud and over-honest.

Austin could, however, be the sentimental lover. Once he sent her a copy of Byron's newly published *Lara* and a volume of *The Pleasures of Hope*, which he had had bound in a colour 'which,' he said, 'either is or is very like the colour you told me was "Hope's Gay Livery!"' You may have forgotten this: but I shall never forget it; for at the moment your arm was locked in my own, and my own still twitters with its gentle pressure. All I request of you in return is a common Bible. You know my meaning. If I can make you happy, my Beloved, trust me I will. God Bless you. Believe me, your sincere and affectionate friend, John Austin.'

Sarah accepted John Austin's proposal, and wrote to a friend of hers: 'After some weeks of suspense and anxiety which have been sufficiently trying to me and which have prevented my writing to you on this most interesting subject sooner, I am enabled, thank God, to tell you that my doom is most happily sealed. I know that you will rejoice for me and with me, when I assure you that my heart and my judgment are equally satisfied with the man of my choice, that he is all and more than I ever *imagined*, that he loves me dearly, and finally that I am the happiest girl in the world. This is an effusion just to give vent to the overflowing of a full heart

A CHANGE IN CHARACTER

but you shall have a sober and rational account of the affair in a short time. . . . But who is he? You have heard me mention my dear friend Miss Austin—it is her elder brother. He is studying for the Bar where I hope to see him distinguish himself. He has confessedly superb talents and will I know study hard for my sake, but it must be some time before he can maintain a wife. This will be no affliction to me. I have no idea of *impatience* to be married and I can imagine no greater happiness than to possess his affection, to write to him and occasionally to see him. I have great doubts, dear Mary, whether he will entirely please you, as he is certainly stern; but I am sure you would admire his lofty and delicate feelings of honour towards our sex. At any rate if you don't like him never tell me so; you know I love you very dearly and it would give me pain. So, dear, let him be all perfection with you. If you tell me he is not I shall doubt your word or your penetration for the first time in my life. I am much dissatisfied with this hasty scrawl because its wild, rambling manner does injustice to the dignity and solidity of his character and of my love—a love which I firmly believe will do more for the elevation and improvement of my character than anything in the world could. Pray burn this immediately.'

The engagement was announced, and Mrs. Barbauld wrote Sarah a poem which began:

*Sweet are the thoughts which stir a virgin's breast
When Love first enters there a timid guest.*

Mrs. Barbauld liked John Austin, with whom she had 'some pleasant argumentation on moral and metaphysical subjects.'

It is not surprising that the process of falling in love with Austin had produced a change in Sarah which was noticeable to her friends. 'I have just seen Sally Taylor,' wrote a friend after the engagement, 'but alas! How changed,

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—from the extreme of display and flirtation, from all that was dazzling, attractive and imposing, she has become the most demure, reserved and decorous creature in existence. Mr. Austin has wrought miracles for which he is blessed by the ladies, and cursed by the gentlemen, and wondered at by all. The majority say it is not natural and cannot last. Some abuse the *weakness* which makes her, they say, the complete slave of her lover; others praise the *strength of mind* by which she has totally transformed her manners and habits.'

They were engaged for five years, and during that time Austin sent her letters which were not encouraging. One of them, written a year after his letter of proposal, concluded: 'And may God, above all, strengthen us to bear up under those privations and disappointments with which it is but too probable we are destined to contend.'

Sarah's adventurous spirit was attracted by the uncertainties of such a struggle, and she now devoted her energies to study. She admired the sincerity with which he regarded himself and their future: 'He never attempted to excite brilliant anticipations in the person whom he invited to share that future with him,' and she referred later to 'a destiny distinctly put before her and deliberately accepted.'

Chapter IV

BIRTH OF LUCIE

FIVE years passed while John Austin and Sarah studied and waited to be married. The war ended on the Continent with the victory at Waterloo, but the advent of peace meant that there were no more big orders for the manufacturers nor for Jonathan Austin's corn. Many farmers hanged themselves and hundreds of firms were ruined.

Everywhere was post-war unrest and demand for parliamentary reform, which the Tory Government met with repressive measures. The landlord, aristocrat class had begun to be nervous of the people, who were gradually organising against them because of the manifold injustices of the time. John and Sarah watched the tyranny of the ruling class with bitter feelings.

At last, after John Austin had been called to the Bar, it was decided that they could be married, and in 1819 they left their homes to set up house in London. It was the year of the 'Peterloo' massacre, which at last roused the middle class as a whole to take up reform in earnest against the Tories who had ruled England since the Whig Ministry of All the Talents had been dismissed by George III in 1806.

The story of 'Peterloo,' when the authorities took fright and ordered the cavalry to charge a peaceable, unarmed Manchester crowd, suddenly revealed the hostility and fear which existed between rulers and ruled.

John and Sarah settled at Number One Queen Square, which is now engulfed in the monster Queen Anne Mansions,

BIRTH OF LUCIE

and Austin began his work at the Bar. Near them lived two men whom Austin knew well by their writings, and who did more than almost anyone else to break down the supremacy of the ruling landlord class. They were Jeremy Bentham and James Mill. Austin had already acquired a reputation as a talented young man, and he soon made acquaintance with Bentham, who was an old friend of the Taylor family, while James Mill and his son, John Stuart, used often to visit them.

All seemed to go well at first, and two years after their marriage their only child, Lucie, was born, on June 21, 1821.

George IV was on the throne, and many prophesied that England would soon be a republic; unrest was growing throughout the country. The idealistic enthusiasm which had been launched by the French Revolution, and which had been taken up in England by the Romantic poets such as Shelley, Keats, Byron and Wordsworth, had begun to expend itself. Malthus had published his dismal doctrine; economists and political theorists, like Bentham, were asserting their influence, since practical methods were demanded for setting a disordered world to rights. The poets were nearly all in virtual exile abroad. Keats had died in Rome at the beginning of the year; Shelley lived near Pisa; and Byron was at Ravenna, while England still discussed the Augusta Leigh scandal, which had driven him abroad five years earlier after the estrangement from his wife. 'She, I think, did more than becomes a wife, *whatever her provocation*, to undraw the veil a wife ought to throw over the frailties of her husband,' wrote Amelia Opie to Sarah Austin, 'and I think, too, she had little temptation to do it. Why then did she, as if in self-justification, make everyone in her circle acquainted with his most secret depravity.'

Whigs, Radicals and political refugees from abroad came and went in the Austins' house, being old friends of the

SARAH'S 'SALON'

Taylors, or attracted by the rising fame of John Austin and the charm of his pretty wife.

To Sarah, after her life in Norwich as the youngest of a large family, the excitement of presiding over a minor 'salon' was considerable. She was launched into an exciting world, in close contact with people who were among the principal actors in events about which she had read at her Norwich home. To her house came Sir Francis Burdett, who had been sentenced to three months' imprisonment and a fine of £2000 for his attacks on the authorities for their conduct at 'Peterloo'; courteous Lord Lansdowne, who had been a member of the All Talents Administration on the death of Pitt; Daniel O'Connell, and the younger Radicals, like Macaulay, Molesworth, Roebuck, Charles Buller, John Stuart Mill, Charles Austin and John Sterling. 'It was,' said *The Times*, 'as remarkable an assemblage of persons as ever met in a London drawing-room.'

Mrs. John Taylor wrote to say that she was glad that Sarah did not find a life of economy 'such an insuperable barrier to good society.' She thought that lavish expenditure would soon go out of fashion, 'for men who are really superior to common prejudices seem always glad to find a woman who can understand and feel with them.'

These 'salons' were a delight to Sarah but rather boring to Lucie as she grew up. When they discussed Catholic emancipation, the Corn Laws, political reform, the immoralities of George IV and the iniquities of the Tory aristocrats, Lucie used to watch them with large astonished eyes. But when Sydney Smith was there she enjoyed it, for he would dance her on his podgy knee and say amusing things, and little Francis Jeffrey could be funny, too, mimicking his fellow judges.

She liked to listen to the Italian and French of the political refugees who used to come to visit her mother: men like

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Charles Comte, Ugo Foscolo and Santa Rosa (Count Annibale Santorre di Rossi de Pomerolo) one of the leaders in the Risorgimento. 'I like you because you are good,' Santa Rosa wrote to Sarah, 'because you are most affectionate to your fireside. Let foolish people open a large yawning when they must remain at home a whole day. You know I only wish two things in the world: my country's deliverance, and obscure, private life amongst my wife, my tender wife and my children.' Those were the dreams of many of the exiles who came to England at that time, having conspired against the hated Austrian rule in Italy or the Bourbons in France.

Sarah, with her strong liberal sentiments, was particularly anxious to help political refugees who were the victims of despotism; she translated their articles for the *Quarterlies* or helped to find them posts as teachers.

Ugo Foscolo, whom she helped at first, was the only one whom she did not like. She considered that he lived in luxury on other people's charity and 'kept three maids—all handsome—a regular hareem'; he also, she said, gave large breakfast parties, at which 'every lady received a nosegay worth half a sovereign.'

The Austins' closest friends were George Grote, the historian, and his determined wife, described as the only man in the Radical Party. Sydney Smith said that he liked Grote because he was so ladylike, and Mrs. Grote because she was such a gentleman. The Austin and Grote couples had married within a year of one another, in very similar circumstances. Harriet Lewin, like Sarah Taylor, had prepared herself for the intellectual ardours of marriage by studying under George Grote's written instructions. It was she who managed their financial affairs, and kept her husband to the task of completing his monumental work on Greece. In this she was more successful

JEREMY BENTHAM'S GARDEN

than Sarah. John Austin was not doing as well at the Bar as she had hoped. The stuffiness of the Courts made him ill; he was often late for appointments and he lost his eloquence in public.

Sarah, therefore, started her career as translator in order to try to earn some money. She also had to nurse her husband and entertain their many visitors, with the result that Lucie was left very much to herself, and was taught none of the usual accomplishments of girls of the period. She hated music, did not care for sewing or knitting, and was 'wild and undisciplined.' She had a passion for animals and kept numerous mice, canaries and newts, often coming home filthy from paddling in the Regent Canal. She played much by herself in Jeremy Bentham's garden, which was next door. It was gloomy with dark mulberry trees, and she had to be careful not to disturb the tapes which marked out on the flower-beds the ground-plan of Bentham's famous ideal prison.

Occasionally the fantastic figure of the eighty-year-old Bentham himself would loom out of the shadows to take the 'ante-prandial circum-gyrations' or the 'post-prandial perambulations.' He used to wear a loose-fitting grey coat, breeches and white woollen stockings which hung in folds on his legs. His white hair fell over his shoulders, and on his head he carried a grotesque straw hat. But he was still a hearty old man, 'codifying like a dragon,' and full of ingenious ideas for turning everything to some utility. Lucie, in her dream world, with animals and grown-ups, played Alice to his White Knight.

While she amused herself in the garden her father would often be arguing in Bentham's study, oppressive with heavy furniture. On the window-curtain were stuck numerous pieces of paper; memoranda of new ideas for reforming the world.

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Many a Constitution for the Continent was born on that curtain. Bentham had long been a world figure, in touch with prominent men in Russia, on the Continent and in the Near East. He had even written to Mohamed Ali, urging him to give Egypt a Constitution and to declare the country independent of Turkey; he had offered to educate his son, the swashbuckling Ibrahim, at his house, so that Egypt might have an enlightened ruler.

'Jeremy Bentham, Codifer and Legislator to the French and Spanish nations and the world in general,' wrote Charles Austin, 'condescendingly informs mankind, and Reformists in particular, that he continues to carry on business as usual at his Hermitage, Westminster, for reputation only. . . . All sorts of Political Plans, Projects and Schemes built. Old plans fresh cast and remodelled, equal to new. Words coined, motives analysed, intrinsic values examined and moral prejudices decomposed and carefully weighed. N.B.—No credit given but as much taken as can be obtained.'

John Austin did not adopt so frivolous an attitude towards a master who was the greatest legal and political reformer of the period. Austin started as a disciple, but was one of the first to detect the fallacies in the famous 'Table of the Springs of Action' based on the one motive of self-interest. He strongly contested Bentham's main tenet that nearly all the evils in the world sprang from bad institutions and governments. Austin argued in Bentham's study that it was a fundamental error to think that the people themselves had no sinister interests, and that these were quite as dangerous as the 'sinister interests' of the governing classes. His arguments with regard to the wrong-headedness of the people and the need for leaders was not popular with his Radical contemporaries. They were especially distasteful to Bentham, who was too old to accept criticism of his simple cut-and-dried

JOHN STUART MILL

theory of democracy with the formula of the greatest good of the greatest number.

John Austin was more in touch with the world than either of his seniors, Bentham or James Mill. His period of service in the Army had given him a useful knowledge of his fellow-men, which made his views more practical. Nor was he like George Grote, who worked with ardent zeal to make all men free and equal, but avoided talking with common people because he found their habits so disgusting.

Indirectly John Austin came to have an important influence on the development of the Utilitarian Philosophy evolved by Mill's son, John Stuart. The latter, who was fifteen years old when the Austins married, used to come to their house to read Roman Law with Austin and learn German with Sarah. He was very fond of Lucie and Sarah, to whom he wrote many letters, and he had a great admiration for John Austin, who helped to humanise the narrow and harsh views on which the young Mill had been brought up. 'These readings with Mr. Austin, who had made Bentham's best ideas his own, and added much to them from other sources and from his own mind,' wrote John Mill in his autobiography, 'were not only a valuable introduction to legal studies but an important portion of general education. He was a man of great intellectual powers, which in conversation appeared at their very best; from the vigour and richness of expression with which, under the excitement of discussion, he was accustomed to maintain some view or other on most general subjects.'

Although the Austins' house was frequented by Radicals, they were not true Radicals themselves, though they were eager reformers. Born at the time of the French Revolution, and having seen the results of the 1830 troubles, they had learnt to distrust mobs and wished England to be ruled by an intelligent oligarchy drawn from the middle class.

BIRTH OF LUCIE

Lord Brougham on one occasion seized Sarah by the arm and shook her for being 'such a friend to despotism.' She told Jane Carlyle that she excited horror among her Radical friends for not believing that 'all salvation comes of certain organic forms of government.'

'No, my dear, I am not a Radical, far from it,' she wrote to Victor Cousin, 'but read the description of our factory children—unfortunate victims of our commercial greatness—and then mock at me if you dare for being dissatisfied with a Government who permits so many innocent creatures to be condemned to nothing but suffering. Mr. Babbage, our great mathematician, quietly told me the other day, that calculation shewed that in the manufacturing towns a whole population exists who are "*worked out*" before attaining thirty years of age! Such words made me shudder. Is it possible thus to speak of our brothers; and of human beings born with brains, hearts and souls? But I am persuaded that the remedy will not, cannot come from the people. How many and what cultivated intellects it needs to throw some light on this question.'

Chapter V

AUSTIN'S DIFFICULTIES

AFTER only a few years of married life Sarah Austin experienced her first grave disappointment. The close air and the excitement of a Court of Law brought on such severe feverish attacks that John Austin had to abandon his career at the Bar.

Fortunately they had friends who were eager to help him, and he was eventually appointed Professor of Jurisprudence at the University of London, which was then being founded.

The first stone of the University was laid in April 1827, and the family went to Germany so that Austin might study German writings on jurisprudence and prepare his lectures. In such work of preparation Austin was happy and confident in himself; it was only in execution that he became depressed. He worked hard all day, and in the evenings he and Sarah went to parties; 'tea, coffee and conversation' with Niebuhr, von Schlegel and other German philosophers. Sarah wrote proudly to Mrs. Grote: 'My glorious man lays on them' (that is, the philosophers) 'with all the force he can muster in a strange language, but the Hercules is in chains.'

Lucie became like a little German girl, speaking the language fluently and wearing long pigtailed; sometimes she could proudly tell her father the meaning of a German word he did not know. She went to a German school to learn writing, geography and arithmetic, and used to teach English games to Niebuhr's little son and to parties of German children who used to come to her mother's house. She had a great

AUSTIN'S DIFFICULTIES

deal of self-confidence and a quick intelligence which made her a favourite with her parents' philosopher friends.

When the University opened in 1828, the Austins returned to London. He started with a good class of talented young pupils, many of whom became prominent later in politics and law and recognised the debt they owed to Austin.

He had all the qualifications for a good lecturer; rare eloquence, great variety of knowledge and originality of mind. The lectures were packed with information; 'what he uttered in an hour,' he said, 'often cost him a month of assiduous enquiry and reflection.'

His passion for accuracy, however, prevented him from covering the ground as rapidly as he should have done in view of the fact that most of the students were intent upon making a living out of law rather than studying it as an exact science. The result was that his class did not increase, which was a serious matter for the Austins; he did not feel that he could indefinitely ask the University to make up the difference between his salary and what was obtained in fees from the pupils, since the institution's finances were not in a very satisfactory state.

Sarah found it a constant struggle to make their income go far enough, although she was making money with her German translations. She consulted John Mill, who was a member of Austin's class. He wrote her a long, sensible letter, explaining that Austin made the mistake of trying to over-improve and over-elaborate his lectures, whereas they were really in need of great curtailment. 'It is impossible to do everything,' said Mill, 'and there are other things which the class are much more anxious to know.' But Austin continued to mark time in search of the correct expressions.

In November 1831 he found himself without any pupils at all. His lectures were postponed until January, but even

'NO SECOND SPRING'

by then there were only eight in the class. It was evident that he would have to resign and be obliged to find a cheaper home than Queen Square. 'Resigning his Chair at the University,' wrote Sarah subsequently, 'was the real and irremediable calamity of his life—the blow from which he never recovered. . . . In a temper so little sanguine as his there could be no second spring.'

Sarah was now thrown upon her own resources. She had to summon all her vitality and patience to deal with a hypochondriac husband, who, except for two short periods, was to spend the rest of his life living at home without paid employment. Periods of irritability alternated with periods of lethargy, when he felt that it was not worth making any effort on behalf of mankind, or even on behalf of his own family.

Sarah, young, attractive and vigorous, and with Lucie to educate, was not to be easily defeated. She rallied her 'Hercules,' chained now by ill-health and lack of enterprise, and insisted that he should publish his lectures. At first he would not even consider the idea, and it was only after incessant argument that she extracted an unwilling consent. It was given on condition that he should incur no risks and have none of the bother of negotiating with publishers. Sarah took the matter in hand herself, and with the help of John Murray the lectures were eventually published in 1832.

The small volume was not much noticed at first. On paper Austin lost all his eloquence. His aim was to be above all things accurate, and he did not mind how tedious he might be with repetition or how unlovely the printed page might look with italics. The following is an example of his style: 'The right of *possession* must be distinguished from the right of *possessing*, or (changing the expression) from the right to *possess*. For the right of *possessing*, or the right to *possess*, is

AUSTIN'S DIFFICULTIES

a property or integrant part of the right of *possession* itself, and also of numerous rights which widely differ from the latter.'

Lord Melbourne considered it 'the dullest book he had ever read and full of truisms elaborately set forth.' That was the general opinion of those ignorant of jurisprudence, but many realised that it was a book of high value.¹

The year that the book was published and the Reform Bill was passed, the Austins moved to cheaper lodgings in Bayswater. This made little difference to their life, and friends continued to come to visit them as usual to discuss the exciting events of the time.

The country had been almost on the verge of revolution such as had been witnessed in France in 1830. When the Reform Bill was thrown out by the House of Lords nearly all the London newspapers appeared in heavy mourning. The country was organising against the anti-reformers; workmen were drilling in the north of England ready to fight, and ricks were being burnt in the south; the Army was too small to keep order throughout the whole country, and Peel's Police only functioned as yet in London.

At last in May the Peers gave way and the Bill was passed establishing 'the fundamental principle of the "new Constitution," namely, that in the last resort the opinion of the nation was to count for more than the opinion of the legislators.'²

The Austins were almost as delighted as the John Taylors

¹ 'This is acknowledged to be one of the most valuable contributions to the philosophy of Law and Legislation that has been produced in modern times, and entitles the author to rank with Hooker and Montesquieu,' stated Marvin's legal Bibliography. 'Jeremy Bentham, in his Principles of Morals and Legislation, has in part occupied the same field, but his work falls far below the one under consideration.'

² G. M. Trevelyan, *British History in the Nineteenth Century*.

had been when the Bastille fell, but they were not quite so enthusiastic as their Radical friends, who had pushed the Whigs into passing the measure. 'All young ladies,' said Sydney Smith, 'expect that as soon as the Bill is carried they will be instantly married; schoolboys believe that gerunds and supines will be abolished, and that currant tarts must ultimately come down in price; bad poets expect a demand for epics and fools will be disappointed as they always are.'

The aristocrat landlords were in a fury, for it was a big loss to them financially as well as in political power. The nominations to the Boroughs were often a family investment and could be sold for as much as £6000. One old Tory cut off his pigtail, exclaiming: 'Ichabod, the Glory is departed.'

In the same year died the Austins' old friend, Jeremy Bentham, who had done more than anyone else to get the Bill passed. A fortnight before he died he sent Sarah a lock of his long white hair, and a ring, 'the only ring he ever gave a woman.'

Sarah was a little shocked when she opened a newspaper some days later and saw that the old man, utilitarian to the end, had left his body to University College to be dissected. His skeleton, according to his will, was to be placed in a cupboard of the College, filled out with wax and dressed in his usual 'habiliments.'

There he remains to this day, looking very much as Lucie used to see him in the garden, but with his stockings pulled up a little tidier, carrying out his peculiar idea of the 'auto-
icon, or the Uses of the Dead to the Living.'

On rare occasions he is brought out, a skeleton from the cupboard of the past to remind everyone that institutions are not yet fashioned in the interests of 'the greatest good of the greatest number.'

Chapter VI

SARAH, CARLYLE AND PRINCE PUCKLER MUSKAU

LUCIE continued to remain rather in the background, overshadowed by the bustling, dominating Sarah. There is a glimpse of her every now and again, looking after her canaries, reading *de Viris Illustribus*, 'parsing well,' and studying Greek.

'She has an insatiable love of reading,' wrote her mother. 'Her original way of thinking will save her, I hope, from a trivial or vulgar taste. I am quite willing to forgo all feminine parts of her education at present. The main thing is to secure her independence, both with relation to her own mind and with outward circumstances. She is handsome, striking and full of vigour and animation. . . . She is, at any rate, intelligent and simple and strong, and not like the children of the *upper classes*.'

It was Sarah's pride that she encouraged Lucie to think for herself and to be independent. "My mother never says, 'I don't know,' or 'Don't ask questions,'" said Lucie to a friend who was being reprimanded for being too inquisitive.

The books that she loved best were *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Arabian Nights*, *Cook's Voyages*, *Don Quixote* (she nearly always cried when the knight was beaten), the Bible, and *The Story Without an End*, translated by her mother from the German of Carové and dedicated to Lucie. It was a most popular book, and Sarah's translation is still reprinted. The story concerns a fatuous angel-child 'who lived in a little hut, and in the hut there was nothing but a little bed, and a looking-glass which hung in a dark corner. Now the child cared

LUCIE'S LOVE OF ANIMALS

nothing about the looking-glass, but as soon as the first sunbeam glinted softly through the casement and kissed his sweet eyelids, and the finch and the linnet waked him merrily with their morning songs, he arose and went out into the green meadow. And he begged flour of the primrose, and sugar of the violet and butter of the buttercup,' etc. etc. The angel-child talks to the bee, the butterfly, the dragon-fly, the mouse, the lizard and so on. There is a moral vein through it all, but not quite so apparent as the Letitia Barbauld child morality on which Sarah herself had been brought up.

Carové described his story in a letter to Sarah as being 'one of the few wild flowers (*sic*) which I have been able to pluck in a pleasant oasis in my journey through life,' while Carlyle refers to it, a little more appropriately, as 'the dainty little book.'

Lucie was too young to worry about the style and the sentiments. She liked the idea of the child being able to talk to flowers and animals. Lucie herself was found one day disconsolately standing in front of some sunflowers in Regent's Park, bemoaning that she could not carry on a conversation with them, and she used in her loneliness to tell long stories to her mice and canaries.

In such company Lucie has to be left, for the interest of the story still centres round the determined Sarah, with the talented John Austin in the background trying to obtain a livelihood while handicapped by bad health and too high a sense of perfection.

Following the failure at the University he was asked to lecture on jurisprudence at Lincoln's Inn, but his severe headaches forced him to discontinue. He was appointed a member of the first Criminal Law Commission by his friend Henry Brougham, then Lord Chancellor. This again seemed to be just the work for which he was fitted, but

he used to come home from every meeting of the Commission 'disheartened and agitated.' Austin did not feel that the Commission's work was any good, as it had not been granted the powers to carry out the fundamental reforms which he considered were essential, and as always, he disliked compromise.

Although he and Sarah were by now exceedingly poor, considerable persuasion was necessary before he would accept the £800 owed to him, since it came out of public funds and he did not consider that the work was of much benefit.

Austin, aged forty-two, was already nearing the end of his professional career. Sarah continued to be patient, attentive and sympathetic. She wrote to Jane Carlyle: 'He is ever daily and hourly converting, purifying and elevating—himself; for which small business your reformers of crowds have little time and less taste.' But this process of elevating himself was by no means financially profitable. It was Sarah's ability which kept the home together. She has been praised for her determination and good management, but one wonders whether, if she had been less efficient, Austin might not have rallied. He may well have resented being indebted to his wife for any success that there was.

Austin's personal life lies hidden, for he seems only to have expressed his feelings in his letters to Sarah during short periods of absence, and most of these were destroyed. Those that remain refer generally to his ill-health. From Hastings he wrote: 'My dear heart; pray tell me of your health. I am sorry to say that I am still in a state of incessant malaise, stomach deranged and a most distressing languor. This morning, however, I have begun with the cold bath; and that, I have little doubt, will set me up.' He was, for once, over-optimistic.

Sarah's personal life, on the other hand, is easy to follow

'BRAVE LIFE FIGHT'

through her vast correspondence, which has been kept. At the age of thirty-nine she was attractive and gay, as can be seen from the drawing made at about this time by Linnell and which hangs in the National Portrait Gallery. It was not easy for her to change at first from a life of freedom and flirtation to the responsibilities of educating a daughter, encouraging a melancholic husband and earning a livelihood. Sometimes she herself 'fell short in her internal supply of hope and cheerfulness,' and she got none from her husband: 'my dearest partner has not, and never had, enough for home consumption, much less to give to his neighbours.'

It was natural that she should turn to others for comfort. She flirted, very innocently, with Sydney Smith and little Francis Jeffrey, and she became friends with Thomas and Jane Carlyle. 'To my wife,' Carlyle wrote to her, 'I believe you are literally the best of all woman kind; neither for me is there any figure in that huge city (London), whom I can remember with purer satisfaction. This, if it be a comfort in your brave life fight, is a quite genuine one. Continue to bear yourself like a brave, true woman, and know that friendly eyes and hearts are upon you. . . . On the whole, my dear Heroine, there is no rest for us in this world, which subsists by toil.'

Carlyle's friendship was certainly a comfort to Sarah. He was then, not as Whistler drew him, old and dour-looking, but youthful and full of humour, tall and spare, with thick black hair and searching blue eyes. He appealed to Sarah because of his confidence, vitality and love of German literature, and he drew out the best that was in her. 'I would fain tell how I love you and your husband,' she wrote to Mrs. Carlyle; 'how I want your sympathy and approbation, and sometimes comfort.'

Carlyle was very fond of her. She was, he said, 'a true

Germanised, spiritual screamikin,' and he praised her for her translation of Falke's *Characteristics of Goethe*: 'A book more honestly put together I have not met with for many years. A discreet, gentle, feminine touch runs through it, with quiet lookings nevertheless into much that lies beyond the English horizon. . . . You have fairly and clearly (and in your case, almost heroically) stated the true principle of translation; and what is more acted on it. I hear the fine silver voice of Goethe sounding through your voice, through your heart; you can actually translate Goethe, which (quietly I reckon) is what hardly three people in England can. Finally I have said several times in words, and now again I say in ink, that you may find a higher task one day than translating, though I praise you and honour you much for adhering to that as you now stand, and keeping far from all ambition but the highest, that of living faithfully.'

At one moment Carlyle thought that Sarah with her 'salon' and reputation as a German scholar might be spoiled by fame, but he decided that she would be saved by her natural goodness and lack of affectation.

Carlyle did not, however, care for John Austin, and described him as 'a lean, grey-headed, painful-looking man, with large earnest, timid eyes and a clanging metallic voice that at great length set forth utilitarianism *steeped* in German metaphysics, not dissolved therein; a very worthy sort of limited man.' So much for Austin's eloquence in Carlyle's opinion. He never cared for Utilitarians: 'Logic is their sole foundation; wherefore their system is a machine and cannot grow and endure. . . . Alas, poor England! stupid, purblind, pudding-eating England! Bentham with his *Mills* grinding thee out morality.'

After some months in London trying to persuade publishers to accept his *Sartor Resartus*, which was meant to stir up the

'pudding stomach' of England, Carlyle retired in disappointment to Craigenputtock. But he had every intention of returning to London. He left Sarah and Lucie looking for a house which would suit him and Jane. He himself had grown sick of house-hunting and began to think, 'with a kind of comfort, of the grim house six feet by three which will need no seeking.' Eventually Sarah and Lucie found the nice Queen Anne house in Cheyne Row, and Carlyle wrote: 'The house which Luciekin and you describe so hopefully seems as if it had been expressly built for us.'

Carlyle was himself going through a period of gloom and wrote depressing letters to Sarah. 'As for myself I think I have reached a kind of pause in my History, a kind of "Enfant Perdu."'

If she were to find comfort she must, she felt, turn elsewhere. Drudgery and domestic virtue were beginning to get upon her nerves, and she longed for some opportunity of giving expression to the passionate and sentimental side of her nature. John Austin lacked the fire of a lover, and even the reserved amorousness he had occasionally shown in the days of their courtship had been dried up in melancholy. She laboured long hours with her translations and scanned every new German book for fresh subjects to work on. In this way she was trapped into committing an indiscretion which would have seriously affected her reputation, if it had become known.

One day she opened a book by Prince Puckler Muskau, *Tour in England, Ireland and France*, in which the author described his impressions of English society. The book was highly praised by Goethe and Heine, and Sarah was amused by it.

She began a correspondence with the Prince, translated the book, and gradually fell in love with the author without ever

having seen him. For the same reasons which prompted people of all classes to write sentimental letters to Lord Byron after they had read *Childe Harold*, Sarah wrote to Prince Puckler Muskau. Her love-letters are prompted by a sentimental yearning for a life of bohemianism made up of castles and princes, as a contrast to her own cramped domesticity.

Eight years older than Sarah, he was handsome, daring, a fine horseman and duellist, an extensive traveller, an experienced and attractive lover, an occasional homosexual and a great spender. In 1811 he had become owner of the estates of Muskau, Groditz and Branitz, exercising sovereign rule over forty-five villages. When his domain was subsequently incorporated in the State of Prussia he was compensated by the expensive privilege of a princely title.

He was perpetually in debt, and the land that he owned was heavily mortgaged. It was essential to him to find large sums of money, and the only way open seemed to be to marry a rich heiress. At the beginning of the century, while Sarah was still with her family at Norwich, he came to England in vain to look for one. Eventually he married a German heiress, Lucie, Countess of Pappenheim, daughter of Prince Hardenberg, the Prussian Chancellor. 'She calls herself my mother,' he wrote to Sarah subsequently, 'and no mother could love her son more and better. She is ten or twelve years older than I am, and when we married she was a little in love with me, but I was not the slightest bit with her, and I told her so in plain terms and that I reserved every liberty on my behalf. This passes your English comprehension, dearest Sarah, but we Germans are "odd" people.'

The marriage was a comparative success, except that he continued to spend enormous sums of money and he once more became urgently in need of funds. The only way out seemed to be to marry another heiress. His wife was willing,

and he went to England once more in 1826, the year that his divorce was made absolute.

He cut a dashing figure in London society, but though a number of rich *débutantes* fell in love with him, he was either not attracted by them or it was against their upbringing to marry a *divorcé*, and he was handicapped by the reputation he had by now acquired. 'You misunderstand me if you consider me as a fortune-hunter,' he explained to Sarah. 'I am in no way "*dérangé*," but my big estates are 50 per cent. mortgaged (I inherited them so). I have still enough to live decently, but not enough to carry on my great and beautiful plans, and therefore I wish to marry a rich wife. *C'est une affaire de convenance et très usité dans les grandes familles par tous les pays du monde.* A woman with £100,000 would not bring in as much as I own myself, and my title and name would also come into the bargain on my side, and all that is very fair, I think.' In the meantime his ex-wife remained at the Muskau Castle and he kept her posted with his successes and failures.

Sarah never met him while he was in London, and probably hardly knew of his existence. He returned to his castle and his divorced wife, devoting his energies to writing his caustic impressions of English society. Much of it was bowdlerised by Sarah in her translation (published under the title *Tour of a German Prince*), to the annoyance of Puckler Muskau. 'Really, Signora,' he wrote to Sarah, 'your womanly fear to offend one or other person, and still more your dislike of appearing before the public in person because you are a woman, makes you such a little coward, that you are taking away all the spice of my book.'

The translation was quite successful, for Sarah did not omit all the amusing criticisms of well-known people in London society. The 'new rich,' with fortunes made in the East, or

in the manufacturing north of England, were eager to read of the eccentricities and weaknesses of aristocrats, partly in order to vent their contempt and also because some wished to obtain social eminence themselves.

The correspondence between Puckler Muskau and his translator did not take long to develop from business into love-letters, and Sarah described herself as his 'petite femme par distance.' She began lightly enough. She, too, knew how to philander, 'Mon Prince,' she wrote from 26 Park Road, Bayswater, to the Castle of Puckler Muskau, 'don't fall in love with me, because il n'y a pas de quoi; secondly, because it would be of no use—unless indeed you have a passion for writing love-letters, no matter to whom.'

Puckler Muskau did have such a passion, and gradually Sarah's affectionate heart was stormed. 'Last night I had a dream of you, dear Sarah,' he wrote, '—a rapturous dream—Oh, it was life itself! I dare not say more; don't be angry, but indeed I believe I was your husband and you were my wife; fantastic charming vision. I pressed a lovely form in delirious madness to my heart and thought to feel her burning kisses on my thirsty lips. It was but a dream but had all the true sensations of reality. Oh Heavens! if I could by enchantment give you an equal one. . . . What power there is in nature. It not only enables you to love an unknown being; you can even possess it and sink into a sea of bliss with it, breast pressed to breast. . . . I must have the privilege of thinking aloud with you or no more write at all.'

There were a number of letters like this; not very good love-letters, but they won Sarah's heart, probably because she had fed so long on the barren, precise letters of John Austin. It is not long before she abandoned entirely her flippant vein, and wrote: 'Hermann, Beloved, how did you have the heart to write like that? I forget you? Thank

God you do not know yet how uninterruptedly my thoughts are with you—how tender, how passionate my longing is for you. Thank you for all your kind thoughts of me; for your pretty fête' (on her birthday), 'for my path where I shall never tread' (a path he had made for her in his garden at the Castle), 'for your flowers, in short for your love. Tell me your birthday. I can feast it only by the love and tenderest wishes for your happiness shut up within my own heart.

'I have just read a book which I would have given anything to read with you—seated by your side, my hand in yours, my head on your shoulder so that when our hearts were moved by the same touching or burning words our eyes and lips might meet. It is a strange book. It is called *The Adventures of a Younger Son.*'

Sarah was very much in love, as much in love as it is possible to be by post. She was attracted by the very fact that he had lived and adventured, whereas Austin was timid of the least publicity, and she defended Puckler Muskau courageously whenever she heard him attacked, and this was often enough.

'They call you even to me,' Sarah wrote to him, 'a liar and a swindler, an adventurer, a coward; they say you were compelled to quit England on account of the commission of an offence inter Christianos non nominendum (the black-hearted wretches, the priests must have invented that), in short, my dear, je ne suis pas sur les roses, on your account.

'One said that he had met you at a dinner party and that you were pointed out to him as an impostor. Murray, who lives in the centre of fashion, as you know, told me that he had understood you were an adventurer "without a shilling" (the English comble of criminality) and faisait les grands yeux when I told him that he could find Muskau on the map, if he chose to look.'

SARAH, CARLYLE AND PRINCE PUCKLER MUSKAU

But though she championed him, handled his business in England, arranged payment of his debts, shopped for him (curtains for the Castle), and negotiated with publishers, no one suspected that she was in love with him. John Sterling, for instance, wrote to her: 'I have been reading the travels of that Prince Prettyman, to whose book you have shown more favour than you would have bestowed upon the author.'

In the meantime Carlyle had returned to London to see about taking the house that Sarah and Lucie had found. Sarah greeted him with a kiss and a 'Niagara of gossip.' There was excitement because the serious John Mill had fallen 'desperately in love with some young philosophic beauty (yet with the innocence of two sucking doves) and being lost to his friends and to himself and what not.'

The lady was Mrs. Taylor, the wife of a wealthy manufacturer whom Mill considered to be a worthy man, 'but without the intellectual or artistic tastes which would have made a companion for her.' The behaviour of all three was model. Taylor was considerate enough to dine out twice a week while Mill and Mrs. Taylor ate at home together. The liaison was in fact so moral that Mill had a nervous breakdown, and the whole affair remained a problem to his friends.

'I have never seen any riddle of human life which I could so ill form a theory of,' said Carlyle. 'They are innocent, says Charity; they are guilty, says Scandal; then why in the name of wonder are they dying broken-hearted?'

The hard things that were said about Mill, which made him withdraw more and more from the society of his friends, must have often made Sarah thankful that no one knew of her affair with Puckler Muskau. As it was, she nearly had a nervous breakdown like Mill, and for similar reasons.

Carlyle frequently visited Sarah, and it was largely owing

STRANGE PASTURES

to her admiration for him that she kept to her work. 'How I wish Mr. Carlyle may like in any degree what I have done,' she wrote to Jane Carlyle after sending two of her translations, one of which was *The Tour of a German Prince*; 'and yet it is nothing but compilation and translation—mere drudgery. Well, dearest friend, there are men enough and women enough to dogmatise and invent, and to teach and preach things, political economy included' (a dig at her cousin Harriet Martineau). 'I can write nothing and teach nothing; but if I can interpret and illustrate it is something; and I have the advantage of remaining, what a remnant of womanly superstition about me makes me think best for us—a woman. These are "auld world notions." You know that word in any vocabulary excludes no particle of strength, courage or activity. But a *well-chosen field* is the thing. What say you?'

Poor Sarah, she recognised what field she should keep to in literature, but she was getting into strange pastures in her love-affair. Life was becoming very difficult, entertaining her friends, working all day, and educating Lucie, while her mind was filled with visions of a castle and a dream prince.

'I am half killed,' she wrote, 'with expenses, anxiety, sorrow and physical fatigue. Courage! I shall go through with it and remain what the Lord Advocate calls me, "the Heroine of Domestic Life"; I must; if I were not high-spirited I could not go through with it and stand where I do in our purse-proud, aristocratic society. I know you, Hermann, can only like me the better for it.'

Sarah had great resiliency and continued to enjoy life in spite of her many worries. She took things very much as they came and did not suffer from the feeling of impending disaster which was often in the back of Carlyle's mind. 'At

Mrs. Austin's,' he wrote, 'I heard Sydney Smith for the first time guffawing; other persons prating and jargoning. To me through these thin cob-webs Death and Eternity sat glaring.'

She agreed with Carlyle that 'the signs of the times were despicable in England,' but she had a great belief in the possibilities of national education, which then scarcely existed. When she first read Victor Cousin's report showing the remarkable things that had been done for public education in the State of Prussia she nearly wept with emotion, much to the amusement and annoyance of Lord Jeffrey, who thought it was ridiculous to be so moved by a report.

But in the midst of all her activities the arrival of the postman was the most important event of the day. There were periods when she was miserable at not hearing from Puckler Muskau. 'I had determined not to write again until I had heard from you, but this womanish sort of idea is unworthy of me and of all true affection and I disown it. . . . I can hardly believe that your romance will last. Were you a young enthusiastic novice, I could, but alas! Dear One, you have taken the habit of enjoying the present and your pauvre petite femme par distance vanishes into the air while you grasp something substantial. And yet, dearest Hermann, you will never replace me. I have the most intimate persuasion that we should live together in a sort of oneness such as is not to be found twice. I have all your tastes, animal, social, intellectual—above all, the urge for loving and being loved, au suprême degré; and in that which is the life of life and the sense of my whole being, Oh! how have I been bitterly disappointed. No more of that, but you would not disappoint me. See what a dreaming fool I still am—how credulous and confiding. And yet I think you would love me dearly. Most people, I think, find me loveable, so I have reason to

think, and to him whom I should live for, could I seem less so ?'

Somewhere among the letters which Sarah carefully kept was Austin's letter of proposal: 'You will, for your own sake,' it said, 'remember that no hypocrisy, however refined and vigilant, could eventually conceal the want either of truth or of mental purity from the earnest gaze of a lover.' But Austin's gaze was no longer that of a lover.

There was not any real danger, as far as can be judged from the letters, that Sarah would leave her husband. She knew that Puckler Muskau was far too unreliable. In the background, too, there was always the Taylor and Martineau clan watching closely, and she inherited from them a strong sense that the family tie should not be broken.

Above everything there was Lucie. She knew that her mother wrote frequently to Puckler Muskau, but she had no idea at that time that she was in love with him. At the age of twelve she wrote a letter to him in neat Latin script German: 'Mein Lieber Prinz, many thanks for the pretty verses. Since I received them I have been to Cornwall and was very happy there. I have brought home a sweet little dove. Its mother was killed by a cat when it was only a few hours old and I have brought it up. Now he perches on my shoulder and chirps its love into my ear, for it loves me very much and I love it too. I am sending you some book-marks.'

Puckler Muskau often wrote to Sarah that he liked to include her daughter in his thoughts and in his picture of her, but that he did not want to hear about her husband. He said he was sorry, however, that their many friends were not able to find Austin a good post; 'if he were a German things would be settled very soon here.'

The Austins had to consider the question of looking for even cheaper lodgings, perhaps abroad. Sarah was still earnestly

SARAH, CARLYLE AND PRINCE PUCKLER MUSKAU

longing to see the Prince: 'Strange, and as hard as strange, that one who could understand and love you so much should be for ever parted from you,' she wrote; 'my mind returns constantly to the dream of seeing you, but with ever less hope. I embrace you, Beloved, and kiss your eyes, and—Oh—your lips! Keep well.'

Chapter VII

LUCIE'S FRIENDSHIPS

SARAH'S affair with Puckler Muskau made it still more difficult for her to attend to Lucie's education. Lucie knew good French and German, a little Italian, also Latin and Greek, but of a number of subjects studied by the average girl and boy of the period she was very ignorant.

The fact that her mother left her alone encouraged her to think out matters for herself and to read books on her own with the zest of discovery. She was learning, as Sarah wished her to learn, 'to secure her independence, both with relation to her own mind and with outward circumstances.' This does not fit with Sarah's eulogies of the Prussian system, which was to cram knowledge into the pupil without paying much attention to the development of character. But Sarah herself came eventually to abandon her championship of German State education.

At the same time she was distressed at seeing her daughter 'but half educated,' and decided to send her to a boys' school at Hampstead kept by Dr. Biber, a German. There Lucie's rather tomboy qualities were encouraged. She only stayed a short time, and after leaving continued to develop on her own rather haphazard and original lines.

At the age of twelve, precocious and introspective, she was more at home with her mother's intellectual friends than with her contemporaries. With the latter she was either patronising and a little contemptuous, or shy and lacking in confidence, but the few friends that she had she loved devotedly.

LUCIE'S FRIENDSHIPS

Among these were the young Spring Rice brothers and sisters, whose father, afterwards Lord Monteaigle, was in the Colonial Office. Her especial friend was Alice, known as 'Dofu,' three years her senior, but in many ways less mature than Lucie. 'Lucie's attachment, the attachment of the child who was too much woman to the girl who was still so much a child, whose home windows opened upon so different a world, had in it a curious, almost a tragic, note of self-distrust, apparently, though not actually, at variance with the more obvious qualities of her generous, frank and many-sided personality.'¹

'How is it, how can it be, that you love me so much?' Lucie wrote to Alice Spring Rice. 'When I think of it I feel bewildered and wonder whether I am really that Lucie Austin whom the Spring Rices are fond of. Do you know me? If you do not you have shut your eyes and your ears to me, for I never, to the best of my knowledge, said to you or to anyone else anything that I did not think, and I generally have said everything that I do think; and yet you love me, and yet no one else loves me or ever did love me. How is it, what is it in me that you above all others see to love? I can think of but one thing. Look round the world and find one who will love you more, and then cast off Lucie. I am without fear then; you will find "Anthropophagi and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders" before you will find that person. But enough, enough, raisons-nous.'

Lucie indeed had a fervent admiration for the large Spring Rice family, gay, Irish, wealthy and aristocratic. Alice shared Lucie's liking for German literature, and they exchanged views on life, religion and literature over a period of several years. But there was a side of Alice's life which Lucie could not share. 'The girls,' wrote Alice, referring to her elder

¹ *Guests and Memories*, by Una Taylor, Oxford University Press, 1924.

sisters, 'are gone to town to the Duke of Kent's fancy ball; I go to a party there on Wednesday; on Thursday they go to a drawing-room in the morning and to a ball in the evening; on Friday I go to a ball; on Saturday we have a large party; on Sunday we have a large party, to which Mrs. and Miss Austin are coming!!'

The two exclamation marks were probably due to general exuberance in writing to her brother, but Lucie would have interpreted them as referring to herself. She was not entirely at home with the wealthy and independent Spring Rice brothers and sisters, who had an assured place in society and were confident in themselves. The Austins were among those members of the middle class who, by their ability, were invading the hitherto exclusive life of the aristocrats. Lucie was sensitive to class distinction when she was with the Spring Rices, though it was only later that she gave expression to it. Brought up in a hotbed of intellectualism, already something of a philosopher, she was in a state of uncertainty about herself and her religion. Alice was her one intimate friend, the sheet-anchor for her affections. When, a few years later, Lucie felt that Alice had broken their friendship because of the difference in 'social station,' she felt very bitter.

Lucie was destined always to move in new and unaccustomed surroundings, which made her self-contained, feeling herself in a world apart from others. It made her, too, a little proud and self-conscious, inclined sometimes to dramatise situations. Henry Taylor, who after many vicissitudes eventually married Alice Spring Rice, noticed this. 'I saw Lucie Austin last night,' he wrote. 'She is excessively odd and perhaps a shade of affectation comes over her now and then; but she is also really remarkable. When she does affect anything it is an air of inspiration and abstraction; and I dare say she has the thing in reality, only she puts it

LUCIE'S FRIENDSHIPS

out a little further than is necessary. She gazed up from her Latin lesson last night looking as if she might be exclaiming within herself: "Say, Heavenly Muse!" and when she spoke it was:

"Mother, what is the genitive case of felix?"

'But what there is of affectation will wear out of her as she grows and ripens, for there is also a great deal that is natural and substantial; and she is upon the whole a very curious and interesting, dark, pale, twelve-year-old young lady, solid, independent and self-possessed. . . . She is rather handsome and very striking, with a stern, determined expression of countenance which might qualify her to sit for the picture of Cassandra or Clytemnestra. . . . She speaks German and French like a native, and knows as much of Greek and Latin, I believe, as most boys do at that age. . . . I have mounted her upon the outside of a horse and she is the companion of all my rides.'

Lucie's rather unhappy state of mind made her inclined to be resentful of snobbery, and her strong feelings made her violent in defence of those suffering from injustice. 'She is pleasant when she is pleased,' wrote Henry Taylor, 'but I cannot help thinking that if anyone were to inconvenience her and there were to be at hand a dagger, a pair of scissors, or any other sharp-pointed instrument, she would be hasty and inconsiderate in her manner of showing her resentment; or, in other words, and mixing the language of law with that of philosophy in the description of the daughter of a philosophical jurist, I regard her as a potential homicide.'

Chapter VIII

LIFE AT BOULOGNE

WHEN Lucie was thirteen the Austins had to pack up and go abroad to find a cheaper home. An invitation came from Puckler Muskau that they should all come to stay with him at his castle, adding, 'qui sait ce que arrivera?' Sarah may have been tempted, but she feared, indeed, what might happen. Life en famille in the Puckler Muskau Castle would not have improved John Austin's nerves; she decided that it was wiser to go to Boulogne. It was a favourite resort for the English with small incomes, and for those who wished to escape their creditors in England.

'Lucie, Lucie, my dear child,' wrote Sydney Smith on her departure, 'don't tear your frocks: tearing frocks is not of itself a proof of genius. But write as your mother writes, act as your mother acts: be frank, loyal, affectionate, simple, honest, and then integrity or laceration of frocks is of little import. And Lucie, dear child, mind your arithmetic. You know in the first sum of yours I ever saw there was a mistake. You carried two (as a cab is licensed to do), and you ought, dear Lucie, to have carried but one. Is this a trifle? What would life be without arithmetic but a scene of horrors? You are going to Boulogne, the city of debts, peopled by men who have never understood arithmetic. By the time you return, I shall probably have received my first paralytic stroke, and shall have lost all recollection of you. Therefore I now give you my parting advice—don't marry anyone who has not a tolerable understanding and a thousand a year. And God Bless you, dear child.'

Sarah's nerves were in a bad state, but the tranquil life in what was then a quiet French fishing village soon helped her to recover. She began to limit her letters to the Prince, and it was now he who complained of lack of attention. 'The only thing of which I suffer,' he wrote, 'is a longing for you, who won't give me a sign of a similar longing, and who only translates books instead of translating pleasures, as I do.' It was a shrewd hit, but Sarah was determined to restrain her wandering affections. As she began to think more of her position as a married woman and as a mother she grew nervous about the many letters she had written: 'You must realise, Hermann, how entirely and absolutely my life is in your hands, and that an indiscretion on your part—the vanity of shewing a letter, of quoting a fond sentence—might as effectively kill me, as if you poured down my throat the poison I should swallow. I know you only from report . . . I must be mad or stupid not to see the risks I run, nor could you as a man of sense be flattered by such blind-fold, insane security. . . . Nevertheless I love you so dearly, and my nature is so frank and confiding, that I shall invent no pretexts to back out of my dangerous position. . . . If you can trust yourself with the sacred keeping of the lives and happiness of three persons—each of no common value—then I will trust you. But in the name of God, Hermann, as you are a man and a gentleman—if you doubt your discretion, your self command, your earnest sense of the solemnity of what I say to you, in the name of God, be frank and candid and save me, save us all from danger. Imagine me on my knees before you, my eyes full of tears.'

For Sarah it would have been a calamity far worse than Austin's loss of jobs if her affair with Puckler Muskau had led to a break-up of her home. She would have lost the position she had attained in society through her literary ability, which

FRENCH SAILORS

she prized, and she would have been deprived of the respect and friendship of such men as Guizot, Gladstone, Dr. Whewell, Dr. Hawtrey and their like.

Lucie, too, was feeling despondent. 'I am in a most unsatisfactory state of existence,' she wrote to Alice; 'I am not absolutely idle and yet I do nothing and think very little. I am not absolutely miserable and yet I am far from being happy. . . . You cannot conceive what a desperately humdrum life we lead here, perfectly wretched. . . . In the way of society I like either nobody at all, a great many people for a short time, or one or two whom I love extremely, and as the names of those people would go in a nut-shell and as I have little or no chance of having them, I must e'en have one or other of the two first. . . . It is a lucky thing for me that I am seldom tired of a tête-à-tête with Lucie Austin, and as I am always (and generally alone) with her it would be a sad mishap if I grew tired of her.'

But she enjoyed her life with the French fishermen and their wives. She helped them to mend their nets, sang their songs, sat with them in their houses, swam with them and sometimes went to their dances.

'My best friend is Fleuret, the handsomest matelot and the best bred and most gentlemanly man in Boulogne or almost anywhere else that I know. A propos de cela, I must pay him a visit of congratulation to-morrow, for his wife a fait un enfant aujourd'hui, at which he is much pleased. I can't think why; for he has five already and only one room to put himself and his family in. I wish you could see Madame Fleuret's room, it is the neatest and cleanest one I ever saw, as are herself, her husband and children. Now I am on the chapter of the matelots I must tell you something about them. The men are null except at sea: they bring home their fish, the wives go down to the boat,

each takes her husband's share on her back in a basket, trots off to market and sells it, never giving her husband any account of the money : the wife furnishes the house, clothes her husband, children and self, so the husband has nothing to spend at the ale-house and is entirely under the dominion of his, usually, ugly and old-looking wife, and a very excellent thing for him too.'

She had many friends, too, among the English sailors who came to Boulogne. When she was stopped from using the Consul's diplomatic bag for her letters to the Spring Rices and others, she sent them by a friend on board an English boat. 'How glad I am that I had the prudence to make friends with the mate of the London packet, who is very good natured and handsome and a thoroughly merry, wild, English sailor. England after all is the only country that produces the best of mankind, sailors in perfection.'

Her letters to Alice on the theatre, life and religion are remarkably original for a girl of thirteen. She lived and had developed very differently from her English contemporaries closeted in the school-room, reading such puerilities as Mangnall's *Historical and Miscellaneous Questions for the Use of Young People*; nor could she have replied to many of the questions in Butler's *Exercises on the Globes*, such as, 'The difference in latitude between the places where Burns was born and Lazarus was raised from the Dead.' Lucie's mind was full of quite different things.

'Last night I went to the play to see a celebrated Parisian actor, Borage. Never, never will I go to see any modern French piece unless it be a comedy : I have suffered for seeing *Anthony* and *Le Duel* by a severe head-ache. I have a horror of horrors : to what a dreadful pass is French literature come, nothing will go down but horrors or disgusting indecencies, or better still, both combined. The man to be admired, the hero,

is always one who finds nothing in this world good enough for him, who is always reproaching God for having given him life, a burden too heavy to bear, and which, selon les règles, he must end by shaking off instead of waiting for the proper time of being released from it, and who is also so weak and so selfish as not to attempt to restrain his own passions and desires but to give way to them without any regard to the pain inflicted on others. In short, this beau idéal, this perfect character, is to have neither religion, morality, strength of mind, firmness or humanity and kind feelings for anyone, nothing but unrestrained passions to make himself and those around him wretched. . . .

‘And now I will tell you what my religion was and is. Like you, I never had any religious instruction but I had religious feeling and when very young my religion was that of the birds and flowers—gratitude. I felt aware, without having ever heard it, that there was some Being that gave existence and happiness, for both of which I was very grateful. I had a sort of idea that to pray for anything was impious and ungrateful, and my only form of prayer was thanks for all that I or others enjoyed and, for the future, “Thy will be done.” God knows better than I, so what he sends I will gratefully receive and not ask for more. I grew older and found out that people were unhappy as well as happy, and wicked as well as good. I could not give up my kind and good Spirit and another came in. I believed that there were two principles, good and evil, both equally powerful and constantly striving against each other. My family are all Unitarians, that is on my mother’s side, and amongst them I got an idea of Christianity, but the aunt that told me about it was a bigoted and intolerant Unitarian, and I thought to myself, if this religion is to produce hatred my own is better, for I believed that all good people of religion quelconque were acceptable to God,

but I got an intense love for Jesus Christ, whom I considered as the best man ever born and a great philosopher who had constructed the highest code of morality, which I determined to follow to the best of my power. I can prier Dieu just as well in one church or chapel as another, and I cannot say that I belong to any particular sect. If it were necessary for me to choose a particular sect I should hesitate between the Catholics and the Unitarians for I am loath to part with our Lady; it is so delightful to pray to a woman, but I cannot believe in the Trinity; you do, dear Dofo, but you wish me to tell the truth, and you will be too tolerant to think worse of me, besides which nous adorons toujours le même Dieu . . . which is the best form of religion is not for such as me to determine. I hope you will not think my religion too vague. I daresay you have always heard religion spoken of as a thing to be believed in without a doubt and not to be reasoned upon, well, you must make allowances for the great difference in what I have heard.

‘Do you know Shakespeare’s *Sonnets*; if not pray read them, for surely they are not whipped out of your Shakespeare, though the other poems may be, they are so beautiful.’

Lucie was not afraid of expressing her religious views boldly, although it might well have destroyed her friendship with Alice, since the Spring Rices were fervent and orthodox Protestants. The mere mention of the possibility of Lucie turning Roman Catholic must have deeply shocked Alice. It was only a temporary phase, and it is probable that a young priest at Boulogne influenced her. She wrote to a friend, Janet Shuttleworth: ‘A young Curé tried to convert me to Catholicism; it is useless to say that he did not succeed, but I liked him very much, as he was very tolerant and took a great liking and admiration for me. His was not a very superior intellect, however, and I rather frightened him by bringing

WRECK OF THE 'AMPHITRITE'

up one or two unanswerable reasonings of my father's, which silenced him; and he then said no more about it and we became very good friends.'

In the summer life was very attractive at Boulogne, but in the winter the days were long, and Lucie had plenty of time for reading, thinking and introspection.

In the evenings she and Sarah would often walk by the shore together, or stand vigil with one of the fishermen's wives, who was waiting for the return of a husband and a son.

One stormy night in December a high wind lashed the waves against the rocks as Lucie and Sarah stood by the shore. Groups of fishermen were standing looking out to sea, and one had swum out in spite of the high waves. From the shore they could just see a large sailing vessel rapidly sinking. She was the *Amphitrite*, carrying women convicts to Botany Bay. As the survivors struggled to shore, Sarah and Lucie did what they could to drag them to safety. At one moment Sarah plunged into the cold water and pulled out a woman who was about to sink for the last time.

In spite of the heroic work accomplished that night many lives were lost. Transportation to Botany Bay was one of the methods which had for a long time been used by the Government in their attempt to stamp out disaffection among the working classes and to prevent the formation of Unions. It was the year that the Dorchester Labourers, the Tolpuddle martyrs, were transported for attempting to form an agricultural labourers' Union.

Sarah, who was known as 'La Belle Anglaise,' became the heroine of Boulogne for her behaviour that night, and as a mark of her bravery the Royal Humane Society presented her with the Life Saving Medal, for her 'presence of mind, perseverance and humanity' in helping to recover three of the sailors, who were washed on shore insensible.

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Sarah, for all her activity and growing determination to break with Puckler Muskau, was still depressed and wrote to her friends for comfort. Lord Jeffrey replied: 'One of the cures for despondency is to look upon life as but a poor play. Have you not health and a great intellect, and a good conscience, and a kind heart, and devoted friends, and a fair measure of fame and admiration, and a generous disposition, . . . and a power of engaging love and respect wherever you go? How dull this writing is! I think I could talk soothingly to you, if we were sitting in the clear sun on the green downs near Hastings, or in the soft shade of my dear Kensington, for then I could see your deep grand eyes and your moving lips, and know when to stop and when to go on.'

Staying in the Austins' inn was another person who had taken shelter there because he was love-sick, and, as it happened, he knew Puckler Muskau. This was Heinrich Heine, who had fled from Paris to try to forget his passion for the dark-haired Mathilde, whom he had first met working with her aunt in a little Paris shop. Separation from her made him more irritable than usual, and he vented his spleen against the English, who were numerous at Boulogne. On one occasion in the reading-room of the inn he interrupted two chattering Englishwomen, saying that if his reading disturbed them he would be very glad to leave. Heine never liked the English, and still less the type of English who migrated to Boulogne and lived in boarding-houses.

To Sarah and Lucie, however, he was more amiable. He began to speak to Lucie when he heard her talking German to her mother. 'He was then,' Lucie described later, 'a fat, short man with a sensual mouth.' Heine, who had been forced to leave Germany because of his revolutionary poetry and political satire, was excessively vain. After he had quarrelled finally with his rich uncle Solomon and had told him that he ought



Lucie Austin while at school, drawn by a girl friend

to consider himself lucky in being related to so famous a poet, Heine had to make his own living by journalism in Paris. Heine told Lucie who he was, expecting to create an impression, but Lucie only asked abruptly: "And who is Heinrich Heine?" He was amused, however, and they became friends. They often walked together by the sea, and he told her stories in which 'fishes, mermaids, water sprites and a very old French fiddler with a poodle, who was diligently taking three baths a day, were mixed up in the most fanciful manner.'

Lucie sang him English ballads, one of which 'recounted the tragical fate of Ladye Alice and her humble lover Giles Collins, and ended by Ladye Alice taking only one spoonful of the gruel "with sugar and spices so sweet," while after her decease "the parson licked up the rest."' This amused Heine a great deal.

Lucie was especially flattered and delighted when Heine told her that he had written his well-known poem, 'Wenn ich an deinem Hause' to her 'black-brown eyes.' She did not know that it had been published in his *Book of Songs* seven years before he met her.

With Sarah and John Austin, Heine discussed Bonn and the state of Germany; perhaps they talked a little, too, of Puckler Muskau. The Prince and Sarah still continued to write to each other fairly frequently. He was planning one of his grand tours which would eventually bring him to Sarah.

She had by now come to a decision. 'Do not think me either fickle, hypocritical or prudish,' she wrote, 'if I tell you to lower your expectations of what I may and can be to you. Were I free I still think I could be everything to you. . . . Let us not deceive ourselves, there is an object between us. . . . I may be worn out, but I shall have done my duty.'

After a little over a year in Boulogne there was a sudden change in the Austins' fortunes. He was asked by the Colonial

Office to be a member of a Commission to visit Malta to enquire into grievances. The other Commissioner was to be George Cornwall Lewis, who had been one of Austin's pupils at the London University and was subsequently Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Austins returned to London, where they once more took rooms in order to prepare for their Malta visit, which was likely to last some time. Still Sarah had not quite broken with Puckler Muskau. 'With great joy I found two letters from you,' he wrote, 'one of which reports your truly heroic deeds at Boulogne, and the other that you are happy to be back in London, and that you have again found a nice little house, where I am going to visit you, which I do meanwhile with my thoughts. Within a few weeks I am going to start my big journey and I suppose I shall begin with Paris. Then I am already so close to you that I hope we shall find means somehow to meet finally face to face. If I please you then I shall be true to you as gold, because I am longing so much for a person who loves me and pleases me at the same time spiritually and sensually. Maybe that this is possible with us, maybe not, in any case we shall be the best of friends for ever. I want to surprise you and at the same time to test you—so beware! A thousand kisses for your sweet little one and a long and tender kiss for you.'

It was probably as well that Sarah was going to Malta. She could very easily have pleaded that there was Lucie to educate and that the climate of Malta was too hot for her. But she had decided that she would stay with her husband. They left for Malta in June, and the meeting was once more delayed.

For Lucie it meant a big change. She was to lose her freedom and be sent to a boarding school at Clapham kept by a Miss Shepherd.

Chapter IX

LUCIE GOES TO SCHOOL

By the end of a year and a half at Boulogne Lucie was very sad to leave: 'There was not a matelot or matelote in Boulogne or Partel (a fishing village two miles off) who was not delighted when Ma'mselle Lucie went into their cottage.'

At six o'clock on the morning of leaving she went over to say good-bye to Pierre Henin, who had swum out to the *Amphitrite* and had taught Lucie to swim. She found him by himself sitting on his bed with his hands up to his face, crying bitterly. She touched him on the shoulder and said:

"Mais dis donc, Pierre, qu'est-ce que tu as?"

He seized her hands and kissed them repeatedly, saying that he could not bear her to go away, that he loved Lucie as much as his own daughter, and wanted to know if there was not anything he could do to show how much he was attached to her.

Lucie began crying too; she promised never to forget him, and kissed him good-bye. Almost the last thing she saw from the boat was Henin's red cap being waved from the end of the pier.

Lucie came away from Boulogne a little more confident in herself. The adoration of her matelot friends had helped to establish a self-confidence which she had had little opportunity of acquiring with her mother's intellectual friends or with the wealthy Spring Rice family. It was as well, for there were numerous troubles in store for Lucie, left alone in England.

LUCIE GOES TO SCHOOL

The first blow to her was that Alice Spring Rice did not welcome her with the old affection. The truth was that Alice had begun to fall in love with Henry Taylor. She had, too, been a little shocked by Lucie's views on religion, and her independent boyish ways struck her as being unladylike.

'Lucie Austin was here for two or three hours,' wrote Alice to one of her brothers. 'She has still a most intense love for originality of all sorts—a most dangerous passion for anyone, but particularly so for a woman, and a young one.' And that was the last of their early friendship, which, on Lucie's side at any rate, had been almost adoration.

'I see,' she wrote to Janet Shuttleworth, 'that the Spring Rices intend to drop me, only Willy, dear, dear Willy, has written one little short note in answer to a long letter of mine to him and Dofu. Mr. Spring Rice called on Mamma and told her that he would be happy to see me whenever I came to London and so forth, but nothing beyond civility. It is a severe blow, for I love both of them dearly,—but it must be, one cannot have friendship with people in such a different station of life as to affect their opinions and sentiments, and those dear simple boys must be corrupted as they grow up, it is in the nature of things or of aristocrats, whichever you like.' In a letter to Mrs. Grote she complains that they had treated Janet Shuttleworth in much the same manner, though not quite so churlishly, 'for though she is too Radical for them, she is an heiress of very tolerable family. . . . But I do not accuse them, it is the fault of their station; it is what one must always be prepared for if one has anything to do with aristocrats—Mamma will think so too one day, though she would not be pleased at my entertaining such an opinion now.'

It was natural, considering her upbringing and her many young Radical friends, that Lucie should feel strongly about

‘PRODIGIOUSLY DRAGOONED’

aristocrats and be sensitive about social treatment. She had been taught to hate the autocratic power of the great Whig and Tory landlords, like the Duke of Devonshire, who kept one hundred and fifty servants in his house, and the Duke of Newcastle, who boasted that ‘he could do what he liked with his own,’ evicting thirty-seven tenants for voting against him, a few years before the Reform Bill was passed.

The prospect of school was particularly depressing to Lucie. She wrote to Janet Shuttleworth: ‘I hear that I am to be prodigiously dragooned at Miss Shepherd’s. I am neither to write nor receive any letters whatever, except from Mamma, and all that I write and receive from her must be read first by Miss Shepherd. Neither may I speak to one of my friends except in her presence. Now all this is annoying; but still more is that I shall have to sleep and dress in the same room with several other girls, which I think excessively improper. I don’t know whether you do, but I am very prudish about such things and do not like this at all. However I think that my imperturbable insouciance will carry me through anything, and whomsoever I offend I will quarrel with no one. . . . Pray write to me and tell me whether Miss Shepherd is Evangelical; whether I shall have to learn a Catechism, whether there are prayers there; whether Miss Shepherd will persecute me about my religion (if I, *bien entendu*, say *nothing* about it) and so forth.’

The Austins left for Malta, and Lucie found the school quite as bad as she had expected. Miss Shepherd was not used to having a girl of fifteen who had spent her days with fishermen in a French port; had been free to read what she liked’ (including the forbidden fruit, an unbowdlerised Shakespeare); whose critical brain analysed religion and many of the things regarded as sacred in middle-class England, and who was the friend of Radicals.

LUCIE GOES TO SCHOOL

One of the minor questions of discipline which annoyed Lucie was having to walk in crocodile :

“Here we go, two and two, like beasts out of Noah’s ark,” said Lucie’s companion.

“No,” replied Lucie. “I wish we did. *They* went male and female.”

Then there were depressing Sundays at church. They had to walk a long way, always in crocodile, and in order to have the benefit of the afternoon service as well as the morning, they took sandwiches to eat among the gravestones, under the yews. Lucie stated later that she believed she first developed consumption at those graveside picnics.

She found relief in writing letters and making an occasional thrust at Miss Shepherd, who she knew would read her letter before it went. ‘My Dearest Mrs. Grote,’ she said, ‘as I have permission to write (not without due inspection of all letters written and received, however) I shall put you to the expense of twopence to tell you how I am getting on. I like my *convent* very much. I cannot give my opinion of Miss Shepherd, for I won’t praise her to her face, and I dare not abuse her if I would, so we must wait until Christmas when I have a holiday for a fortnight.’

She asked Mrs. Grote to give her love to that ‘exquisite puppy’ William Molesworth and to Henry Taylor. The latter was going through the difficult early stages of his love-affair with Alice ; they had become estranged, largely because Henry Taylor could not bring himself to believe in orthodox religion and Alice was devout, like her father, Thomas Spring Rice.

While Henry Taylor was reading philosophy and religion to try to gain that faith which would bring him and Alice together again, Lucie was also seeking for some belief which would be a comfort in all her uncertainty and unhappiness ;

SHOCKS THE HEADMISTRESS

for she hated her school. During the two long Church of England services every Sunday she tried to think out her beliefs. She was as convinced as ever that she could not bring herself to accept the Trinity, nor that Christ was the son of God. In this she was still close to Unitarianism, but she was disgusted at the amount of intolerance she had experienced among Unitarians as among members of other religions. She toyed with the idea of becoming a Socinian, but this other form of Unitarianism was no more satisfying.

During this period of doubt and revolt there was more than sufficient in Lucie's letters from school to make the orthodox Miss Shepherd's flesh creep, and Lucie enjoyed thinking of her reactions. At the moment there was war between mistress and pupil, and Lucie was extremely unhappy in her new and unaccustomed life, with her parents busy in Malta.

Janet Shuttleworth, on a visit to the school, noted in her diary: 'We found Lucie looking ill and wretched, and Miss Shepherd cross and not amiable about her. Harriet Stone, who is at school there too, said Lucie had been crying violently. I, who know her pride, know full well how very miserable she must have been to have cried. When she embraced me at parting her eyes filled and her voice faltered. Dearest Lucie, she has much misery in store, with her strong feelings, philosophical pride and lack of religion. Insouciance' (a favourite expression of Lucie's) 'is nonsense; I have plainly told her so; it is even worse than nonsense and it is not her nature. By nature Lucie's disposition is perfectly good; she is a splendid creature, full of genius, of talent and honesty, simplicity and confidence in others and herself. I suspect that Lucie may have shocked Miss Shepherd's conventionalism. I never saw a creature shrink so instinctively from the least touch of vulgarity as Lucie; she is so totally without it herself

—so above it—that it jars like discordant sounds upon her mind.’

Although Lucie’s faith in Unitarianism was weakening, largely because of its sectarian nature, she continued to have violent arguments with Janet in defence of the religion in which her family had been brought up. She criticised Janet for her eagerness to make converts to the Church of England and for her intolerance ‘in refusing to Unitarians the name of Christians.’ She sent her a little book on Unitarianism which she wanted Janet to read. ‘I do not give it as my opinions,’ she said, ‘not being prepared to defend them as yet; and really, dear Janet, our views are, and are likely to remain, so entirely opposite, that it is but vanity and vexation of spirit to have any more discussion on the subject. Depend upon it that whatever my views may be, I shall always be of the opinion that one who follows his own religion quelconque, with a humble and a conscientious spirit, is sure of Divine Mercy; and my idea of the importance of *doctrines* is absolutely nothing.’

Lucie was wise enough not to come too directly into conflict with Miss Shepherd. She told Mrs. Grote that it was preferable that she should not write to her from school as it might cause some ‘*désagréments*’ between Miss Shepherd and herself, ‘which it must be my study to avoid as much as possible. On this account do not tell anyone that I find fault with anything; nothing makes her so angry as one’s not being happier with her than anywhere else.’ Miss Shepherd realised very well that Lucie was not happy, and this put her on her mettle. She used all her wiles to win her affection. The headmistress had seldom had to deal with so independent a young woman, but she was interested in her and gradually succeeded in softening Lucie’s attitude.

As time went on Lucie began gradually to fit more easily

DECIDES TO BE CHRISTENED

into school life, and she even took up the popular craze of keeping an album and wrote to ask for Mr. Grote's signature. The tone of her letters begins to change. She becomes less aggressive towards aristocrats and begins even to like Miss Shepherd; 'nay love her dearly, as must everyone who knows her,' she wrote to Janet; 'I hope you will think Miss S. has improved me, I think so myself.' During her stay with Taylor relations in Wales she wrote: 'I had not my own way, but I had that of people I was fond of, which is more agreeable. . . . Do you enjoy field sports?—hunting, racing, shooting, etc.? I have conceived a passion for them, more especially for such as concern horses. I used to go with John when he went shooting; till at last he used to call for his dogs, gun, Peter (the keeper) and Lucie, as part of his train, quite as much as the rest. You would have laughed at the torn, wet, scratched figure I came home after a day's shooting over the hills. You must expect me to be bitten Wales mad when I arrive at Hastings to spend Christmas with you.'

That Christmas, 1837, Lucie went to stay with Mr. and Mrs. North. He was Whig M.P. for Hastings and stepfather to Janet Shuttleworth. There, at the age of sixteen, she came to a final decision with regard to religion; characteristically she made up her mind without consulting her parents, relations, or even Janet.

The latter's baby half-sister¹ was about to be baptized into the Church of England, and Lucie suddenly announced that she was going to be christened with her. Mrs. North protested that she must wait and hear from her parents in Malta, but Lucie had made up her mind and would not be put off. She considered that 'in no better way could I honour my parents than by confident trust they will sanction my conduct.' Mr. Stephen Spring Rice, who had come to

¹ Subsequently Mrs. John Addington Symonds.

LUCIE GOES TO SCHOOL

be godfather to the baby, was her sponsor, and Miss Shepherd was asked to come for the ceremony.

Janet presented her with a Bible, and Miss Shepherd gave her 'a beautiful book—all Horsley's Works in 8 Volumes,' containing sermons, Biblical criticisms and Horsley on the Psalms. She said that she prized the book highly, though she had not changed so much as to stomach Bishop Horsley's famous statement that the English people 'had nothing to do with the Laws but to obey them.'

Lucie knew that her change of religion would arouse a storm in the Unitarian Taylor family, but she had taken her decision with her eyes open and was prepared for very much worse criticism than she actually received. Her parents raised no objection, considering it a matter for her to decide; while her aunt, Mrs. Reeve, was more upset that Lucie had shown a want of confidence in not talking over religious matters with her first, than by the actual change in religion. Nearly all her relations were annoyed that she had taken so important a step on her own responsibility, since they all felt that they could have given invaluable advice in the absence of her parents.

Only Mrs. Grote, to Lucie's surprise and mortification, wrote her 'a sarcastic and cutting letter.' This was in reply to an able defence of her action written by Lucie: 'I expect to be pitied,' she said, 'for the ignorance and weakness which has made me an easy victim to others' rule; but my own heart tells me I have no claims upon any such commiseration. My sponsors were wholly unprepared for my application to them to become such, and had not an unlooked-for and quiet opportunity of attending an infant of Mrs. North's to the baptismal font offered itself, I had probably remained in the same painfully unsatisfied state of mind that had so long been mine. Surely you, who have ever been to

A PET SNAKE

me the best and dearest of friends, will be the last to disapprove of anything which could attend to my improvement and happiness, which I feel must be the case with my present faith and feelings. Do pray then, my dearest Mrs. Grote, write me a few lines to assure me of your favour and that of dear Mr. Grote, to whom my very best love, and accept the same from Your ever attached and loving child, Lucie Austin.'

Having dealt to her satisfaction with the problem of her beliefs, Lucie began to refer more to politics in her letters to Janet. She was full of praise of liberty and pronounced herself 'a conscientious reformer.' When there seemed at one moment a danger that Mr. North might lose his seat at Hastings, she wrote to say that she hoped no Tory would get in in his place, 'at a time at which the nation and Sacred Liberty calls all her defenders to stand up boldly for her and maintain her rights to the utmost.'

While her parents were in Malta Lucie spent a number of holidays with the young Norths, who looked up to her as an attractive and romantic figure. They thought that her power over animals was magical. 'The person who made the strongest impression on me was Lucie Austin,' wrote Marianne North, the traveller, who was half-sister to Janet Shuttleworth; 'she spent many of her holidays with us and inspired me (then about seven years old) with the most profound respect and admiration—as one raised above ordinary mortals. Her grand eyes and deep-toned voice, her entire fearlessness and contempt for what people thought of her, charmed me. Then she had a tame snake, and must surely have been something more than a woman to tame a snake! She used to carry her pet about with her, wound round her arm (inside the large baggy sleeves which were then the fashion), and it would put its slender head out of the wrist-hole, and lap milk out of the

LUCIE GOES TO SCHOOL

palm of her hand with its little forked tongue. It was as fond of glittering things as Lucie herself, and when she took her many rings off her fingers and placed them on different parts of the table, it would go about collecting them, stringing them on its lithe body, and finally tying itself into a tight knot, so that the rings could not be recovered until it chose to untie itself again. Sometimes Lucie would twist the pretty bronze creature in the great plait of her hair she wore round her head.'

One evening the Norths were preparing for a large dinner-party of rather stiff, respectable neighbours. Lucie suddenly decided it would be fun to come down to dinner in her best dress, crowned like Medusa, with the snake in her hair. She was on the point of doing this when Mrs. North met her and was horrified to see the snake suddenly lift its head from her heavy coils of hair. Lucie had set her heart on giving a little excitement to the party, but Mrs. North knew the consternation that would be caused and pleaded with tears in her eyes, until Lucie agreed to take the snake upstairs and put him to bed in his box.

Lucie was a good actress and used to organise charades when staying with the Nassau Seniors. 'Wherever she went she commanded,' wrote Miss Nassau Senior. 'She was tall, handsome, precocious and self-confident, but so good-natured and amusing that we submitted willingly to her temporary rule. She used to organise wonderful games, especially charades. On one occasion the word was "romantic," and the last scene was to end in an elopement. The lover was bashful, so Lucie donned his cloak and hat and shewed him how to act his part with the most passionate emphasis and enjoyment.'¹

With the young Norths grouped round her Lucie used to

¹ *Many Memories of Many People*, by M. C. M. Simpson, 1898.

BEATRICE AND PORTIA

read Shakespeare. It is significant that her favourite characters were the determined, legal-minded Portia and the quick-witted Beatrice.

‘Wooring, wedding and repenting,’ said Beatrice, ‘is as a Scotch jig, a measure and a cinque pace; the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly modest as a measure, full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and with his bad legs, falls into a cinque pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.’

It was not long before Lucie was to be involved in a ‘Scotch jig’ with Sir Alexander Duff Gordon, but it was followed by no ‘cinque pace.’

Chapter X

THE AUSTINS IN MALTA

'YOUR reception at Malta was just what it ought to be everywhere,' wrote Sydney Smith to Sarah Austin at Valetta, 'for I have no doubt that all the "vivas" were intended for you and not for the philosophers. Doubtless the two disciples of Bentham thought that the Maltese were hailing Liberal Principles and transcendental enthusiasm, whereas it was their joy at seeing Donna Amabile Inglese.'

Sydney Smith was right. The Maltese loved Sarah almost from the moment that she stepped on shore. She had an easy sympathetic way with her, which was unexpected after the manners they had encountered from the English residents on the island.

As for Austin, he was back in the town where he had started to write his diary as a young lieutenant twenty-five years before. He experienced some satisfaction in the fact that he came now in triumph, brought by a British warship, and that everyone was eager to be nice to him, feeling that their future might depend on the report that he would make.

It had been an exhausting journey for Sarah, John Austin and George Lewis. They had travelled through France by carriage and then had been ten days at sea in Britain's largest frigate. 'I found it quite a mistake to suppose that there was no motion in large ships,' said Lewis.

There was plenty to do in Malta. The Maltese had expected the Commissioners to arrive with a Magna Carta in their pocket, and were a little surprised when an enquiry was

started which, as it turned out, dragged on for almost two years. Their instructions were to examine into Government administration, the laws and state of the judicature, the civil and ecclesiastical establishments, the revenue, trade and the resources of the island.

In the meantime Sarah had a wonderful opportunity for putting into practice her views on education and social behaviour, which she did with as much energy as she had preached them. She had already published her translation of Victor Cousin's *Report on the State of Public Education in Prussia*, which was intended to show the British Government what could be done in England, and had been highly praised by Sir William Russell, Robert Southey and others. Almost as soon as she reached Malta she wrote to Cousin and Nassau Senior for advice about managing schools.

When she arrived there was not one village school in the whole island. She searched the country for teachers and opened the schools herself. She could speak Italian but had difficulty in making herself understood in Maltese: 'My poor little Saraceni,' she said; 'we could only smile and gesticulate to one another.'

By the time she left the island there were ten schools functioning and the number rapidly increased. 'No country,' she wrote, 'can stand in greater need of enlightenment than this, where marriage is so criminally and disgustingly early and so dreadfully prolific.' The priests encouraged early marriages for reasons of virtue, and there were on the average ten children per family.

In order to collect funds for the Maltese institutions she worked hard to get their handicrafts known in England, and before she left there were so many commissions from Queen Victoria, who had just ascended the throne, Lady Lansdowne and others, that there was difficulty in getting them executed.

She was horrified by the general poverty and misery, increased by the spread of cholera, which led to four thousand deaths during the time that they were on the island. Sarah showed complete indifference to death while visiting the Maltese—in marked contrast to the English residents, who shut themselves up in their houses and would see no one.

She considered that much of the disgust and discontent in Malta which had given rise to the need for a Commission of Enquiry 'arose from the insolence, prejudice and want of breeding of the English. If they bully, where they are on suffrance (as on the Continent), what will they do where chaque petit employé se croit un roi. When it is a question of laughing at the Maltese, no words can be found contemptuous enough for their poverty. When it is a question to enquire seriously into their state—to give at least pity, attention, reflection, if not aid, then it is all exaggeration—they are not worse off than the Irish, perhaps not than some of the English.'

George Cornwall Lewis's views were similar. 'If an Englishman,' he said, 'is to preserve any vestige of sympathetic feelings towards his own countrymen as such, he should certainly never see them out of England.' Dr. Arnold had been bringing up young men to feel that they had a mission to reform the world: the Battle of Waterloo had fostered a native conceit, and the people looked on Palmerston as their hero, with his belief in England as 'the best and greatest country in the world.'

Sarah wrote to John Murray that England and the world ought to be told what was meant by 'colonial manners'; 'but it is so completely out of my line,' she added, 'to deal in personalities that I could not do it, even to answer a great end.' Subsequently she wrote in the *Athenaeum*: 'The English offend by a cool indifference, a haughty ignorance,

which is so wounding to a people of quick, sympathetic and susceptible vanity, like the French, while it is contemptible, as well as offensive, to an instructed people, like the Germans. Any candid, well-informed Englishman, who lives some time abroad, will find but too ample justification of any conceivable prejudices of foreigners as to our national character, in the specimens of it they are too often compelled to witness. I believe that the effects of these deplorable exhibitions of the worst side of Englishmen are more serious than are generally imagined, and that a great deal of asperity has been added to the envy and jealousy excited by the commercial greatness of England, by the impertinent, sneering remarks, the affronting comparisons and the insolent wonder of purse-proud travellers, who, profoundly ignorant of, and indifferent to, the language, literature, institutions and history of the country, can find nothing worthy their observation but the marks of material inferiority, which are quite undeniable, and which a well-informed man is fully prepared to encounter.'

In the meantime Sarah's friends in England became impatient for her return, as was Lucie at her school on Clapham Common. 'Is the Code of Laws nearly finished?' asked Sydney Smith. 'They say the Isles of Sark, Alderney and Man are jealous of the legislative opulence bestowed upon Malta and are determined to have a Constitution from Austin, Lewis and Co. Have you any little Constitutions to spare? . . . I sincerely hope to see you soon; if I do not I will not survive it but fling myself from the top of an omnibus on the pavement below crying out: "Austin! Austin! Malta! Malta!"'

Chapter XI

LUCIE MARRIES

WHILE Lucie was at school, Caroline Norton, who later became one of her greatest friends, was involved in a cause célèbre which nearly led to the fall of the Melbourne Ministry, soon after Queen Victoria had become queen.

Norton, described as 'the meanest skunk alive,' brought an action against Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister, on the charge of alienating his wife's affections. 'Nobody ever imagined that she (Caroline Norton) was a pattern of propriety and decorum,' wrote Greville, but the question was not one of chastity but of politics; an attempt on the part of Norton and the Tories to force the Whigs out of office as a result of a trumped-up scandal. Melbourne won his case, and the Tory Lord Malmesbury noted, a little contemptuously, that the trial showed that 'Melbourne had had more opportunities than any man ever had before and had made no use of them.'

As for the unfortunate Caroline, she was ostracised by society although there was no case against her. The woman could not then be legal party to such a suit and therefore had no Counsel. She had no means, for instance, of contesting the evidence of her maid, who stated at the trial that almost every day in July, August and September, 1833, Caroline used to spend her time 'painting and sinning.' This was unlikely, as Caroline pointed out to Mrs. Shelley, since her youngest child was born that August. 'Such are the ways of the world,' noted Greville, '. . . malignity must fasten upon the woman ;

ALEXANDER DUFF GORDON

some of those who took her up before the trial, when her guilt was at least questionable, now affect to be shocked by the evidence of levity and indelicacy which was disclosed.'

The Melbourne Government was for various reasons in a weak position, and this had its effect on the Malta Commissioners. Henry Brougham made the Government's difficulties with the Canadian rebellion the occasion for a violent attack on Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary, who resigned as a result. One of the criticisms was the high cost of Lord Durham's Administration. Glenelg's successor decided to economise by recalling Austin and George Lewis from Malta, and they were abruptly dismissed with no due recognition for their services. This was a grievous disappointment to Austin, for although the Commission had almost completed its task, there still remained the important work of codifying the laws, for which Austin was especially suited.

The Austins arrived in London in the summer of 1838, just after the bustle of the Queen's coronation. Lucie left school and prepared to come out.

At the age of seventeen her striking beauty and great vivacity made her a favourite and she had many admirers. The first big ball to which she went was at Lansdowne House, where were two people who had an important influence on her life. One was Sir Alexander Duff Gordon, and the other, Caroline Norton, who was making her first appearance in society after the Melbourne scandal. She was then thirty and in the full bloom of her beauty, 'with something tropical in her look.' She had remarkable dark eyes which shone so brightly, even at the age of three, that her grandfather, Sheridan, remarked: 'That's not a child I would like to meet in a dark wood.'

Lucie had a number of dances with Alexander Duff Gordon, and they liked each other from the first. Sarah invited him

to their house in Bayswater and a close friendship began. He was a good German scholar and an extensive reader, while his charm, witty conversation and good looks made him popular in London society. He was son of Sir William Duff Gordon and grandson of William Gordon, second Earl of Aberdeen. His father, who had married Caroline, daughter of Sir George Cornwall, died when Alexander was only eleven, leaving the family comparatively badly off. When Alexander left Eton he went straight into the Treasury and prided himself on having cost his mother very little from that moment. He was later appointed, through the influence of his cousin Lord Aberdeen, as Gentleman Usher to the Queen.

Sarah was busy translating Leopold von Ranke's monumental work on the Popes, and Lucie was left free to lead a very enjoyable life, riding, dancing, reading and seeing Alexander. They were much together, at parties in London and at the Norths' country-house at Gawthorpe, where they used to be invited for weeks at a time. Lucie was very gay and very much in love. When it was too cold to walk or to ride over the countryside, she would sit in one of the bow-windows of the long gallery, reading, or drawing intricate arabesques round her favourite poems, while Alexander amused the younger Norths by drawing devils in their notebooks. He had a passion for devils and used to draw the most gruesome monstrosities.

Mrs. North was still a little shocked by Lucie's independent ways, which were encouraged by Alexander. They used to walk about the flat roof of the house in winter wrapped together in a large Gordon tartan, until Mrs. North stopped them because she said that the villagers might think that it was her daughter, Janet Shuttleworth, 'who was quite innocent of everything but good works.'

Lucie and Alexander were about together so much that their

friends began to talk about the probability of their engagement. Alexander indeed was very much in love with Lucie. He had never met anyone with Lucie's extraordinary combination of beauty, intelligence and assurance. His mother, the Dowager Lady Gordon, was not at all pleased at his paying court to the daughter of a penniless lawyer, as she had very much higher ambitions for him, but Alexander was independent in character and determined to make his own choice of a wife.

One day, as he was walking with Lucie, he turned to her and remarked in an offhand way: "Do you know people say that we are going to be married?"

Lucie turned on him abruptly, annoyed that people should talk about them and that he should mention it in so casual a manner. She was about to give him as curt an answer as Beatrice might have given Benedick when he added: "Shall we make it true?"

Lucie's mood changed at once; "Yes," she said.

But matters could not be quite so easily settled. Lucie had forgotten Sydney Smith's advice about the £1000 a year. "Alexander has nothing," said Sarah, "but a small salary, his handsome person, excellent and sweet character, and his title (a great misfortune)." Then there was John Austin, who as usual was in a nervous fuss. He was disappointed at being recalled from Malta; he feared that the new Colonial Secretary would not enforce the Commission's recommendations, and he had not yet been paid. He was made quite ill by the worry, but Sarah took matters in hand and went to the Colonial Office herself to interview Ministers and Civil Servants, and demand recognition for her husband's services and for the Maltese claims. "I had to do strange things for a woman," she said, "contro il nostro decoro certainly; but a woman fighting for her husband is always right." Shades of Prince Puckler Muskau were at last banished.

Lucie and Alexander therefore waited. 'My dear Father,' said Lucie, in an admirable letter, written in her schoolgirl hand, 'I am much grieved I should have been the cause of so much uneasiness to you and would wish to relieve you from it as much as in my power. Will you consent to dismiss the subject of Sir A. G.'s proposal from your mind till your present business is over and your affairs in such a state as to give a more positive answer. I will promise in the meantime to behave in such a manner as shall meet your approbation as far as I can, and have no communication with Alexander but such as you shall approve. The suspense, I confess, will be painful, but it will be comparative happiness to the grief of parting with him altogether, a step, I trust, I shall not be compelled to take. I will promise to occupy my mind with other things and not give way to any repining or cause you annoyance by discontent. I would fain be allowed to hope that some years hence, when Alexander's salary is increased and the objection of my extreme youth removed, we may be allowed to marry. With this hope I feel confident I can make my mind easy and calm and submit cheerfully to see him but seldom, or, if you desire it, not at all. This I say, believing, as I do, his feelings towards me to be the same as mine towards him, and not feeling any fear that they will undergo change.

'If you will consent to this arrangement I shall feel very grateful to you and it is what I doubt not Alexander will concur in—Your most loving child, L. Austin.

'P.S. Pray understand that all my present request is that you will defer for a time giving a decided negative to Sir Alexander's proposal. I do not ask you to pledge yourself to anything.'

For an independent young woman of eighteen it was an excellent letter, obedient, restrained, yet playing all the time on Austin's feelings both as a father and as a lawyer. His own

‘SINGULAR AND MAJESTIC BEAUTY’

financial position, when he had proposed to Sarah, had been much more unsatisfactory and he had had a very much less assured future.

A letter from Alexander was equally sensible, and concluded :

‘My views of happiness differ from my Mother, as my conduct will shew, and I will study to deserve your daughter, at some future period, should she still have for me the same feelings and it should not meet with opposition from you.—With sincere sorrow for the annoyance I fear I have caused, believe me, dear Sir, Your most truly, Alex. Duff Gordon.’

After some delay, following Sarah’s activities, John Austin received £3000 for his services in Malta. In the end Austin had the satisfaction of seeing the recommendations accepted almost in their entirety, and Malta benefits to this day from the wise reforms introduced as a result. ‘No commission ever did its work more carefully, and its reports to the Colonial Office are remarkable papers, dealing with great ability and thoroughness with some of the most important questions of political economy and jurisprudence.’¹

On May 16, 1840, Lucie and Alexander were able to marry in Kensington Old Church. ‘I remember them,’ wrote Henry Reeve, ‘a pair of the most singular and majestic beauty.’

They took a house, No. 8 Queen Square, Westminster, beside the charming statue of Queen Anne, in the same street where Lucie had been brought up as a child. Bentham and James Mill had died, and John Stuart Mill had moved elsewhere after his marriage with Mrs. Taylor.

¹ Dictionary of National Biography.

Chapter XII

READING AND WRITING

BEFORE settling down in London, Lucie and Alexander went for a honeymoon in Germany, returning to Queen Square in the summer. They lived a fairly quiet life at first, both from inclination and for financial reasons. They sometimes went to dinner with Lord Lansdowne, who admired Lucie for her 'sense and beauty'; Tennyson used to come to read his poems, and on one occasion said: "I never loved a dear gazelle, but some damned brute, that's you, Gordon, had married her first"; her cousin, Henry Reeve, who was a friend of Charles Greville and subsequently edited his diary, used to bring them the gossip of the town; Sydney Smith, Macaulay and Charles Austin came with the bons mots of Holland House, and Tom Moore told them stories of Gore House, presided over by Lady Blessington; Kinglake, one of Lucie's most faithful admirers, was a frequent visitor, as were also Eliot Warburton, Thackeray and Tom Taylor, later editor of *Punch*.

Lucie spent much of her day reading and translating, and had begun to earn money, like her mother. Some of the German and French translations she published jointly with Alexander.

Her first book was a translation of Niebuhr's *Stories of the Gods and Heroes of Greece*, which was published under her mother's name. It is a short, child's book giving the stories which Niebuhr used to tell his small son, whose playfellow Lucie had been thirteen years before in Germany. In the

Preface Lucie, at the age of nineteen, shows that she had very definite views, and a clear vigorous style. In defending her reasons for maintaining the Greek as opposed to the Latin names, she wrote: 'The Romans corrupted and disfigured the myths of the Gods they borrowed; and there is no calculating the extent to which poetry and art have suffered by the adoption of names, and with those names associations, engrafted upon the Greek mythology by a people so inferior in imagination and aesthetical and philosophical culture. The sooner these associations are broken the better. It has been suggested that such innovation is out of place in a child's book. I venture to think the contrary; though, indeed, it is much in accordance with common practice to teach the child what the man must unlearn.'

Like her mother, Lucie was rather a blue-stocking, but her interests were very much wider and less theoretical. Neither of them cared to read the popular novels turned out by the Minerva Press by the hundred, such as Mrs. Meeke's 'simple narratives founded on events within the bounds of probability,' nor did they read those 'gorgeous inanities,' like *The Keep-sake*, which were left on the table to impress visitors and contained the latest poem by Lady Blessington or Caroline Norton, who was described as the female Byron of the time.

Lucie had not the same urge for reform as Sarah, and one cannot imagine her almost weeping over Cousin's *Report on State Education in Prussia*. Her friends were literary and artistic, rather than political. She enjoyed the Brontë novels, whereas Sarah described them as 'the most minute and painful dissections of the least agreeable and beautiful parts of our nature.' Mrs. Gaskell's *Ruth* Sarah considered 'was one of the many proofs of the desire women have to friser questionable topics, and to poser insoluble moral problems. George Sand has turned their heads in that

direction. I think a few *broad* scenes or hearty jokes à la Fielding were very harmless in comparison. They *confounded* nothing.' With one comment of her mother's, however, Lucie was in agreement, and that was that some of the new novels were a kind of martyrology, 'which makes you almost doubt whether any torments the heroine would have earned by being naughty could exceed those incurred by her virtue.'

A novel, according to Sarah, should amuse, and instruction should be left to serious books and pamphlets on education, legal and political reform; the two things should not, she considered, be confused. 'I have the sinful pretension to be amused,' she said, 'whereas all our novelists want to reform us, and to shew us what a hideous place this world is: ma foi je ne le sais que trop without their help. . . . There is abundance of talent, but writing a pretty, graceful, touching yet pleasing story is the last thing our writers nowadays think of. Their novels are party pamphlets on political or social questions, like *Sybil* or *Alton Locke* or *Mary Barton* or *Uncle Tom*.'

Lucie, however, welcomed the social satire in the novels of Dickens, Peacock, Trollope, Disraeli and Mrs. Gaskell. She realised that they did much more to break down barriers against reform than all the closely reasoned pamphlets, beloved of Sarah, which were read only by a select few.

Lucie was a better democrat than Sarah, who wanted England to be ruled by an intelligent oligarchy, and had little faith in the capacities of the people; not, at least, until they had been reformed and educated by a benevolent government. Towards the end of her life she went as far as to write: 'I am persuaded our mob is the most atrocious in the world.'

Lucie used often to be found in the evening, sitting in front of a warm fire with her feet up in front of her reading a

memoir or a book of travel. Sitting comfortably in Queen Square she liked to read of true adventure, and when a friend came from the East, like Kinglake, Warburton or Thackeray, she wanted to hear his experiences.

Whenever Lucie read a book, she had her eye on the possibility of translation. 'As to *Eothen*,' she wrote, 'I don't believe it has been translated at all; nor would it be easy to translate—a lively, brilliant and rather insolent style is very hard to put into German above all. Why does no one translate Dana's *Two Years before the Mast*? It is equal to *Robinson Crusoe*, though written by an American, and I hear that it is perfectly true, every word of it; or Madame de Calderon de la Barca's *Life in Mexico*? She is a Scotch woman, married to a Spaniard, a descendant of Calderon's and Ambassador to Mexico; or Drummond Hay's *Wild Tribes and Savage Beasts in Morocco*? The most amusing book this year (1846) is Ford's *Handbook to Spain*—one of the "Red Murrays." It is written in a style between Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* and any work by the immortal Sancho Panza, had he ever written a book; so quaint, so lively and such knowledge of the country.'

'I am hard at work at a tedious daily-bread sort of translation which is gradually destroying what little intelligence my other tasks have left me,' she wrote to her old friend Alice Spring Rice, now married to Henry Taylor. 'I wish you would think of me very often and write to me sometimes, for I often think that I love you best of all my friends, as I am sure that you are the pleasantest, and always wished that you lived in London or I at Mortlake.'

Lucie's translations were nearly all of books describing actual experiences or historical events; they were rarely of fiction. A little time before Kinglake went to Morocco to see what he could of the French African War and, if possible,

to join Abdel Kader, Lucie translated *The French in Algiers* for Murray's Colonial and Home Library. The *Northern Whig*, reviewing the book, stated: 'The events are described in a pleasing easy style of epistolary narrative. The glimpses which they afford of the barbarities of the French African War fully confirm the worst opinions which we had formed on the subject.'

One of Lucie's translations has particularly high merit; it is that of Wilhelm Meinhold's *Maria Schweidler die Bernsteinhexe*, which was published by John Murray in 1844, under the title of *Mary Schweidler: The Amber Witch*. It went through three editions rapidly in the same year, and Lucie's excellent translation was used again in the 1927 edition of the World's Classics series. 'It is of its kind a master-piece,' writes Mr. J. W. Mackail in the Preface, 'and the translator was one of the most remarkable women of the time.'

Like her mother, Lucie took her literary work very seriously. Before starting on the translation of Meinhold's book, described by him as 'the most interesting trial for witchcraft ever known,' she read all she could find on seventeenth-century witchcraft, and 'in the result she achieved,' continues the Preface, 'a rarity, a translation equal, and in some respects, superior to the original.'

In *The Amber Witch* the atmosphere of superstition, terror and faith in God is well worked up. Meinhold, who was appointed Pastor of Coserow in North Germany in 1821, the year that Lucie was born, wrote this chronicle-romance of witchcraft in the seventeenth century with such vividness of detail that it was considered to be based upon a contemporary chronicle of the Thirty Years' War. This is what Lucie and most of the German and English critics took it to be, and it was what Meinhold had intended people to think. He gave an elaborate and convincing explanation in his Preface as to

'THE AMBER WITCH'

how the old document of the story had been found in his church. He stated that he had given the public the original version, only inserting passages of his own here and there where pages in the old manuscript were missing; but that he would refrain from pointing out the particular passages which he had supplied: 'For modern criticism, which has now attained to a degree of acuteness never before equalled, such a confession would be entirely superfluous, as critics will easily distinguish the passages where Pastor Schweidler speaks from those written by Pastor Meinhold.'

This was an ironical thrust at the disciples of Strauss and his school, who had asserted that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were a collection of legends, as they could show by their historical research and by 'internal evidence.' Meinhold's story, which he had written himself, was a trap into which they unsuspectingly fell. When they had accepted his story as genuine he attacked them for arguing that they could give so positive a decision with regard to one of the most ancient writings in the world when they could not detect the contemporary story-teller in the chronicler of two centuries ago.

Lucie also translated an extensive German book of 13,000 closely printed pages, describing the most interesting of the criminal cases which had come within the experience of Anselm Ritter von Feuerbach, a well-known judge and legislator in Bavaria. Lucie made an able abridgment of the work, which dealt with 'The Antonini Family, or the Twofold Murder'; 'Francis Riembauer, or the Tartuffe of Real Life'; 'The Kleinschrot Family, or the Parricide of the Black Mill,' and a number of other exciting cases.

As usual she went into the question thoroughly, reading through many numbers of the *Law Magazine* and the various Liberal Quarterlies which were concerned at that time with

legal reform. Terrible injustices were still being committed in the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1810 John Taylor's friend, Sir Samuel Romilly, had brought forward a Bill for the abolition of capital punishment for shoplifting to the value of five shillings and upwards, but it was not passed. Lord Ellenborough, then Lord Chief Justice, said: "I am convinced with the rest of the Judges that public expediency requires that there should be no remission of the terror. Such would be the repeal of this statute that I am certain that depredation to an unlimited extent would be committed."

And so the tyranny continued because the upper classes were afraid of the masses. In 1833 Nicholas White, aged nine, was sentenced to death for stealing children's paints from a broken shop window. It was only half-way through the century that prisoners accused of felony were allowed to have counsel. It had been argued that such an innovation would lead to a deplorable element of wrangling.

The fact that the first Commission on Criminal Law had not been able to systematise matters had been a grave disappointment to John Austin, who was made ill by the thought of the many injustices. Lucie, too, used to be put into a rage when she heard of some new persecution of the law, but on paper her arguments were always clear and unemotional. 'The reader who may be inclined altogether to condemn this German prolixity and deliberation of the Bavarian system of Justice,' wrote Lucie in the Preface to her translation of Feuerbach, 'should remember that in the year 1827 no fewer than six persons, who had been convicted of capital crimes at the Old Bailey, and left for execution, were proved to be innocent, and saved by the zeal and activity of the Sheriff.'

In reviewing the book the *Law Magazine* stated: 'Lady Gordon possesses in a high degree the rare faculty of translation

TENNYSON'S 'PRINCESS'

to which she has a hereditary right. She has skilfully pruned the luxuriant details of some of the cases. . . . The present collection of criminal cases form, as far as we are aware, the most interesting specimen existing in our language.'

The books that Lucie translated were always on the serious side, and her contemporaries considered this society young woman in her early twenties as very much of a high-brow. This was the impression made on Tennyson, and he said that he was thinking of her when he wrote *The Princess*. He probably had others in mind, too, but there are clear points of resemblance between the proud, erudite Princess and Lucie.

In taking so independent a character for his heroine Tennyson was prompted to express a few ideas which almost amounted to a revolt from Victorian ideas of domestic and marital respectability. There still remained many passages which must have made Lucie wince, such as the famous one :

Man with the head and woman with the heart ;
Man to command and woman to obey ;
All else confusion.

The story, which was also used by Gilbert and Sullivan in *Princess Ida*, must have seemed to Lucie ridiculous enough. Though Lucie was compared by Caroline Norton to Mrs. Somerville for erudition, she would never have wanted to reform women in the Tennysonian University, and she would certainly not have wished to exclude all men, for she much preferred their society to that of women.

But, like the 'Princess,' she was a classical scholar, imperious and beautiful, and there is a similarity between Tennyson's account of his heroine and Kinglake's account of Lucie.

There at a board by tome and paper sat
With two tame leopards couch'd beside her throne,
All beauty compassed in a female form,
The Princess ; liker to the inhabitants

READING AND WRITING

Of some fair planet close upon the sun
Than our man's earth; such eyes were in her head,
And so much grace and power, breathing down
From over her arched brows, with every turn
Lived thro' her to the tips of her long hands,
And to her feet.

'The classical form of her features,' said Kinglake describing Lucie, 'the noble poise of her head and neck, her stately height, her uncoloured yet pure complexion, caused some of the beholders to call her beauty statuesque, and others to call it majestic, some pronouncing it even to be imperious. But she was so intellectual, so keen, so autocratic, sometimes even so impassioned in speech, that nobody, feeling her powers, could well go on feebly comparing her to a mere Queen or Empress.'

Chapter XIII

JANET, HASSAN AND CAROLINE NORTON

AFTER a year and a half of married life Lucie gave birth to a daughter, Janet, on February 24, 1842. 'A first act of this kind,' wrote Sydney Smith to Sarah, 'Malthus himself was always willing to look over, but I hope they won't go on creating. I suspect that Janet will turn out a very sensible, agreeable person, but I am not sure of it.'

Sydney Smith probably felt that Janet would be brought up too much among older people, as Lucie herself had been, but whereas Lucie had taken refuge in books, Janet never had the same interest in them; nor did she have the same awe of her father as Lucie had had of hers. Alexander's theory of education was that children should be 'utterly spoilt.'

At the age of three Janet became less lonely, when a Nubian boy of twelve, Hassan el Bakkeet, joined the household. Lucie's quick sympathy was proverbial among her friends, and it was said that all the stray dogs and unbefriended human beings used to attach themselves to her person; so it was with Hassan.

When returning one night alone from a party, she found the boy shivering outside her house. "He had come," he said, "to die on the doorstep of the beautiful pale lady." He had been employed in the house of an Italian refugee, who was befriended by Sarah Austin. The Italian had turned him out into the street because he was going blind. Lucie took him in and had his eyes cured. The oculist who treated him was

so pleased with his good looks and quick ways that he offered to employ him, giving him £12 a year and a fine scarlet dress. Lucie advised Hassan to accept it, but he fell on his knees and asked to be whipped rather than to be sent away, exclaiming: "Five pounds with you are far sweeter than twelve pounds with him."

Lucie adopted him and he was a devoted servant. Originally he had been sold as a slave in Egypt and brought up by missionaries, who taught him to speak in a stilted English, which was sometimes very entertaining. On an evening that Prince Louis Napoleon came in unexpectedly to dinner he told Lucie gravely: "Please, my Lady, I ran out and bought twopennyworth of sprats for the Prince, for the honour of the house." When Lucie gave birth to a son Hassan announced triumphantly to all callers: "We've got a boy." The son died a few months later and Hassan was heart-broken.

Some of Lucie's friends were shocked that Hassan should act as companion to Janet and be allowed such freedom in an English household. Mr. Hilliard, the American author, was particularly horrified, and asked Lucie how she could possibly let a negro touch her child. For answer she kissed Janet and then Hassan. Mr. Hilliard went away disgusted.

Lucie had no patience with such distinctions. She came to be devoted to Hassan and nursed him through many illnesses brought on by the damp of England. On one occasion he was so ill that the doctor ordered leeches to be applied. Lucie told the maid what to do, but she drew back with a toss of her head, saying: "Lawks, my lady, I wouldn't touch either of them." Janet, writing of the event later in life, said: "I can see now the look of pitying scorn with which my mother turned from the girl, which softened with deep affection as she bent over Hatty, and with her white hands placed the

LUCIE'S DEFENCE OF CAROLINE

leeches on his black chest.' He died some years later of congestion of the lungs.

Hassan, or 'Hatty,' as Janet called him, was a great favourite with Kinglake, reminding him of the attractive urchins he used to see in the streets of Cairo. He describes how Lucie had given shelter to a girl whom no one would have as a servant because she had had an illegitimate child. Before she came to the house Lucie called the servants together and warned them that anyone would be dismissed who was unkind to the girl on account of what had happened. 'Poor Hassan,' wrote Kinglake, 'small, black as jet, but possessing an idea of the dignity of his sex, conceived it his duty to become the spokesman of the household, and accordingly, advancing a little in front of the neat-aproned, tall, wholesome maid-servants, he promised in his and their name a full and careful obedience to his mistress' order; then wringing his hands and raising them above his head he added: "What a lesson to us all, milady."'

On her fifth birthday Janet had a party to which Lucie invited Thackeray, Caroline Norton, Lord Lansdowne, Tom Taylor and Richard Doyle. Thackeray gave her an oyster, saying that it was like cabinet pudding, but much to his surprise she liked it and insisted upon having some more of his.

Caroline Norton was often in the Duff Gordons' house; she described Alexander as her 'semi-hub' and had become Lucie's closest friend. Lucie was indignant at the way that Society had treated her after the Melbourne trial. She and Alexander used to refuse all invitations to big receptions to which Caroline was not also invited. The Duff Gordons were popular, and this, combined with Mrs. Norton's wit, gaiety and beauty helped to gain her an entrance to houses which had long ostracised her.

Separated from her children and banned from society, Mrs. Norton's life showed how women could be made to suffer in the days when it was impossible to obtain a divorce without an Act of Parliament. 'God knows,' she said, 'that if the Court judged the conduct of women by the same laws as they do men and pronounced as indulgent opinions, we should be happily protected.' She considered that she had learnt the laws of England with regard to women piecemeal by suffering under them, and she tried to redress the wrongs by turning to her pen, 'as a soldier turns to his sword.' It was partly due to her propaganda that a Bill to improve the position of mothers with regard to the custody of their children passed through the Commons, but it was thrown out in the Lords. One noble peer argued that all women separated from their husbands must be guilty of unchastity and therefore not fit to look after their children.

The friendship of Lucie and Caroline is the subject of Meredith's novel, *Diana of the Crossways*; although the latter bears a close resemblance to the heroine there is little that is reminiscent of Lucie in Lady Dunsborough. The novel unfortunately helped to spread a story which began to be talked of in London when Lucie first got to know Caroline Norton.

England and Ireland were passing through the terrible period of the 'hungry forties.' The potato crop failed in Ireland, and the Corn Laws in England kept up the price to the benefit of the landlords and the starvation of the poor. The Corn Laws were 'the Ark of the Tory Covenant,' and the question of their maintenance or repeal divided the whole of England. It was as burning a question as had been that of political reform, and again the aristocrats were fighting to maintain their privileges against a whole people, many of whom were dying as a result.

‘DIANA OF THE CROSSWAYS’

Peel, the Prime Minister, supported by Alexander’s cousin, Lord Aberdeen, was for repeal, but the majority of the Tory Cabinet were strongly against it. At last their hand was forced by the violence of the feeling throughout the country. On December 4, 1845, the whole of London was ‘electrified’ by an article in *The Times* announcing definitely that the Cabinet had decided on total repeal. All London was asking who had given the sensational news.

Caroline Norton was known to have many friends among politicians and on *The Times*; she was also known to be indiscreet, and suspicion fastened on her, which resulted in further unpopularity. Lucie knew that the information had been given by Aberdeen himself to Delane, who had written the article, but however she might defend Caroline the story died hard. Twenty years later, when Meredith made Caroline the heroine of *Diana of the Crossways*, the supposed indiscretion over the Corn Laws was one of the main incidents in the book. Lucie would never have allowed Meredith thus to injure her friend, but she was already dead when he wrote the novel. He was eventually forced by Caroline’s relations to insert a notice which appears in all the later editions of the work, stating: ‘A lady of high distinction for wit and beauty, the daughter of an illustrious Irish House, came under the shadow of a calumny. It has latterly been examined and exposed as baseless. The story of *Diana of the Crossways* is to be read as fiction.’

The Corn Laws were repealed and tension was suddenly relieved. Peel had accomplished his task, and in doing it had split the Tory party. Sarah Austin, in sending him her translation of the third volume of Ranke’s *Reformation*, expressed her admiration for his conduct over the Corn Laws. He replied: ‘The cordial approbation of hearts and intellects like yours is a reward which no evasion of

difficulties or dexterous management of party could ever have secured.'

Lucie saw much of Caroline, especially during the long weeks when Alexander was recovering from cholera, which he caught in London. Lucie and he had gone to a party at Charles Dickens's house, and while Lucie was acting in a charade, Alexander had slipped away unnoticed, feeling unwell. A policeman found him holding on to the railings outside his Queen Square house, too weak to move, and at first thought that he was drunk. Lucie arrived soon afterwards and stayed up all night in her red dressing-gown, with her long hair coiled round her head. After many anxious days of nursing he recovered sufficiently to be moved to Lord Lansdowne's house at Richmond, which had been lent to them.

When Alexander was well enough to be left to the care of Hassan, Lucie began going out with Caroline, dining often with her and Lord Melbourne.

Melbourne's downright manner and brilliant conversation, great knowledge and contempt for all hypocrisy, appealed to Lucie. 'A sensualist and a sybarite,' Greville described him, 'without much refinement or delicacy, a keen observer of the follies and vices of mankind, taking the world as he found it, and content to extract as much pleasure and diversion as he could from it, he at one time would edify and astonish his hearers with the most exalted sentiments and at another would terrify and shock them by indications of the lowest morality and worldly feelings, and by thoughts and feelings fraught with the most cold-hearted mockings and sarcasm. His mind seems all his life long, and on almost every subject, to have been vigorous and stirring, but unsettled and unsatisfied.'

When Lucie knew him the loss of office was a sad blow,

MELBOURNE OUT OF HUMOUR

because it deprived him of his companionship with the Queen, and it was said that he could never speak of her 'without tears coming into his eyes.' But even though he was getting old he could still talk with the same power and still had 'an innate taste for what was great and good, either in action or in sentiment'; at other times he would sit for hours in silence, seeming 'to bear upon his face a perpetual consciousness of his glory obscured.' With Lucie and Caroline he was, however, generally gay and happy. The one thing he hated was to be bored, as is shown by the comment he made on John Austin's book on Jurisprudence. He always expressed his feelings in a very downright manner.

Lucie very much wanted to see Charles Dickens's production of Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*. She knew how much Dickens had set his heart on its being a success. He was not only taking the chief part of Bobadil, but with Forster he had worked day and night as producer, carpenter, dress-designer, property man and prompter. All London society were buying tickets for the production in St. James's Theatre. A short time before the big night there was an unfortunate contretemps with Thackeray. He had been hurt because his offer to sing between the acts was turned down, and he heard that Forster had referred to him as 'false as hell.' Dickens was upset. He felt that there was already enough talk about the rivalry between himself and Thackeray as the greatest novelists of the day, and he decided that there must be a reconciliation dinner at which Thackeray and Forster should make it up. He asked Lucie as a mutual friend who was likely to help smooth matters over, and all went off successfully.

Melbourne invited Lucie and Caroline to share his box for the performance. Everything began very auspiciously, and the theatre was full of a brilliant social gathering. Lucie

noticed, however, that Melbourne was exceedingly restless all through the first act. At last he could bear it no longer, and during the interval he announced in a stentorian voice which could be heard all over the theatre: "I knew this play would be dull, but that it should be so damnably dull as this, I did not suppose."

But no harm was done. Dickens and his friends felt that it was a great success, although Greville noted that the audience was 'cold as ice,' and he himself decided to leave after the third act. 'A play 200 years old,' he said, 'a comedy of character only, without plot or story, or interest of any sort or kind, can hardly go down.'

Chapter XIV

SOCIAL LIFE

LUCIE'S tastes in friends, as well as in books, were different to her mother's. "Mrs. Austin's friends were many of them tiresome," said Kinglake. Sarah suffered, as Mrs. Grote remarked, from being too poor, and from having to find patrons for her husband. She could not relax from her struggle to earn an income, and she continued 'her brave life fight' to the end. This meant that from necessity, if it were not also from inclination, she cultivated her friends among the influential and famous. The Austins knew everyone on the Continent worth knowing, 'especially all the crowned heads, for whom Mrs. Austin seemed to have a special attraction.'

Wherever she went she had her 'salon'; just as the eminent collected in the Austins' house at Queen Square, so it was at Bonn and at Paris, where they eventually settled after Lucie's marriage. 'You seem to have too much talent in your drawing-room,' wrote Sydney Smith after Sarah had sent him a long list of the French people who came to visit her; 'I would prefer more of a mixture.'

Lucie was in a different position. She and Alexander were sufficiently well off not to have to worry too much about income. They could choose their friends without any thought of making their careers, and they liked a mixture in their drawing-room. Lucie agreed with Greville that 'dinners of all fools have as good a chance of being agreeable as dinners of all clever people; at least the former are gay, and the latter

are frequently heavy.' There was with Lucie, said Meredith, 'no pose as mistress of a salon . . . ; she was their comrade, one of the pack. This can be the case only when a governing lady is at all points their equal, more than a player of trump cards.'

But there was another reason why Sarah's friends were tiresome, and that was because they were over-serious. James Mill died satisfied that he had left the world a better place than he had found it; Auguste Comte, referring to his own death with his great work unaccomplished, exclaimed: "Quelle perte irréparable"; Gladstone was notoriously serious and Guizot was pompous. It was natural that Sarah should herself become more and more humourless as she corresponded with such people.

She came to lose much of her gaiety also, and Kinglake remarked that 'a joke of any kind was to her a detestable interruption of serious reasoning and statements.' After the death of Sydney Smith, who had by his irrepressible good-humour helped to keep her cheerful and prevented her from becoming over-serious, she became almost as gloomy about the world's condition as Carlyle. She would not accept Jeffrey's cure for despondency,—to look at life as but a poor play. It was to her a very serious business, and she expected much both from herself and from her friends. She was entirely of George Cornwall Lewis's opinion when he said to her: "Life would be very tolerable if it were not for its amusements."

Lucie, on the other hand, preferred the irresponsibility of people like Caroline Norton, and Melbourne, who used to blow feathers or crack unseemly jokes when deputations visited him as Prime Minister.

There was a bohemianism about parties at the Duff Gordons which was enjoyed by their friends but was considered peculiar

by acquaintances like Henry and Jane Brookfield. The latter were surprised to find aristocrats such as Lord Lansdowne, Lady Charlotte Lindsay and Lord Montegle mixed up with playwrights, journalists and actors. The Brookfields were rather careful of their social position, and their comments on the Duff Gordons show that Lucie was distrusted a little by the respectable, both for her independent views and for the company that she and Alexander kept.

Brookfield was Curate at St. Luke's and, with his beautiful wife Jane, was much in society. When there came an invitation from Kinglake to a whitebait party at Greenwich to meet the Duff Gordons, Caroline Norton and Sidney Herbert, Brookfield made careful enquiries of 'the most competent decorumists' as to whether or not they ought to go. It was not the presence of the Duff Gordons which worried the Brookfields so much as that of Caroline Norton. There were still some who would not meet her, and they decided not to go to Kinglake's party.

Lucie almost certainly did not know the reason for their refusal, otherwise she would not have seen as much of the Brookfields as she did. The Duff Gordons came into contact with them through Thackeray, who had a platonic friendship with Mrs. Brookfield and breakfasted with husband and wife every Saturday. The relationship was rather similar to the early friendship between John Stuart Mill and Mrs. Taylor, though the Reverend Brookfield was liable to show more jealousy than Mrs. Taylor's husband. But Thackeray protested that his affections were entirely innocent. He told Brookfield that his wife appealed to him in the same way as a beautiful landscape, or the harmonies of colours. Jane Brookfield, an invalid, was happy to be 'a sort of artistic delight.'

When the Brookfields lost a great deal of money during

the railway crisis of 1847, the Duff Gordons were anxious to do what they could to help. They arranged a dinner party for them to meet Lord Lansdowne, who was in a position to give Brookfield an Inspectorship of Schools. Jane Brookfield said that she had intended to dislike Lucie; she probably distrusted her views and, as an invalid, a little resented Lucie's determined and rather managing manner.

Of the dinner itself Brookfield was rather critical, both of what he ate and of the Duff Gordons' manners. He described them as 'peculiarly far from "fine"'; and was a little surprised that Lady Duff Gordon had dressed the salad herself in the kitchen; 'the difference with which *he* would mention such a thing as simple matter of fact—and *she*, with just the least tinge of bravado, would strike an acute observer!' Alexander, he said, seemed quite unconscious that certain things were considered vulgar, while she 'would seem rather as if she gloried in the commonness.'

Indeed the Duff Gordons were very unconscious of any distinctions of what was vulgar in the Brookfield sense, and Lucie, who enjoyed shocking people, was probably tempted to shock the society clergyman and his wife. But the dinner at any rate achieved its object, for the next year Lord Lansdowne appointed Brookfield an Inspector of Schools.

The Brookfields continued to be in financial straits until the appointment was made; and Lucie suggested that they should take part of her house as lodgers. The Duff Gordons rushed in one evening, says Brookfield, and announced the idea 'with their usual unembarrassed good-nature.' He was at first attracted by the project, as it would have relieved them of a lot of bother and, as he told his wife, 'the Duff Gordons are people I always had rather a weakness for.' But Jane considered it exceedingly imprudent, and in a letter to her husband said that she could cordially like Lady Duff Gordon

for a mere acquaintance and felt admiration for all her good qualities, but considered that they might get involved in some curious company if they lived in the same house. She pointed out that they knew very little of the Duff Gordons in their private life or what their religious views were; she called up visions of cosy little Sunday dinners with Caroline Norton, Thackeray and others, 'and I would not vouch for your or my virtuous sense of congruities restraining us joining in such délassements, as long as there was no intrinsic wrong in them.'

Brookfield rather wanted to accept the Duff Gordons' offer. He used to enjoy going to their informal parties on Sunday evening, and after one of these, with Thackeray, Kinglake and Tom Taylor, he told his wife that Lady Duff Gordon looked "very handsome," and "said nothing queer." But Jane Brookfield's view prevailed, and it is doubtful whether it would have been a successful ménage.

Lucie used to appear at parties, sometimes beautifully dressed and at others in the most shabby and inappropriate clothes. But all she did was with a grand manner, which made people think that she must be wealthy and 'well-connected.'

Alexis, a famous clairvoyant, found Lucie's manner misleading one evening at Lansdowne House. He was reading people's thoughts and describing the type of house that they lived in from the lines in their hands. When he came to Lucie he said:

"Madame, you are thinking of Julius Caesar."

"No," she said, "try again."

"Of Alexander?"

"No, Monsieur, I was thinking of my faithful black servant, Hassan."

He then described her house as something like Lansdowne House, with huge rooms and splendid pictures.

Lucie laughed and said he was quite wrong, that her house was small and rather bourgeois.

Alexis was annoyed and said that she had not sufficient faith.

Lucie was an eloquent talker and held her own with men who were renowned for their conversational powers in an age when discussion would often continue animatedly from breakfast-time to late afternoon, or afternoon to late evening. Macaulay, Charles Austin, Sydney Smith and Carlyle would come to the Duff Gordons'; or they would meet at the Misses Berry's house, at Monckton Milnes' or at Samuel Rogers' famous Sunday breakfasts in his house in St. James's Place, where the talk would last sometimes till luncheon-time. Janet, who was a great favourite with the old poet, used to come to dessert. He told her that she must always get up to see the sun rise, and look at the sunset before going to bed; then perhaps some day she might write poetry. "Prose you will certainly write well," he added, "it's in your blood."

Seeing the sun rise and set never seemed to be a great inspiration to Rogers. 'When he is delivered of a couplet, with infinite labour and pain,' wrote Sydney Smith, 'he takes to his bed, has straw laid down, the knocker tied up, expects his friends to call and make enquiries, and the answer at the door invariably is: "Mr. Rogers and his little couplet are as well as can be expected."'

He was a better host than poet, however, and his social breakfasts used to be a great success. He had a feeble voice, but used to attract attention by the bitter and caustic things he said. Carlyle described him as an 'elegant, politely malignant old lady.' He liked to dominate the conversation, and was 'provoked to death' when the humour of Sydney Smith or the voluminous talk of Macaulay engrossed the company.

MACAULAY'S TALK

When Macaulay came to the Duff Gordons' house Janet was rash enough to make a habit of climbing on to his knees and saying "Now talk," after which neither Lucie, Alexander nor anyone else could get a word in. He was 'short, fat and ungraceful, with a round, thick, unmeaning face and with rather a lisp.' He and Charles Austin once talked continuously at Bowood from breakfast-time until well into the afternoon, while the guests sat in absorbed attention.

But there was an occasion when Macaulay found difficulty in talking. Sir George Lewis had invited him to breakfast to meet Leopold Ranke, the author of *The Popes of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, which Sarah Austin had translated and Macaulay had reviewed. Greville, Sir Edmund Head and the Duff Gordons were also invited, and witnessed an amusing scene. Ranke could not speak English, and his French was fluent but unintelligible. Macaulay could not speak German, and his French was no more intelligible than Ranke's. 'It was comical,' said Greville, 'to hear the torrent of knowledge trying to force its way through the impediment of a limited knowledge of the French language. But the struggle was of short duration. Macaulay began in French, but very soon could bear the restraint no longer, and broke into English, pouring forth his stores to the utterly unconscious and uncomprehending professor.'

In order to review Ranke's book Macaulay had had to ask Sarah Austin for the proofs of her translation. In the beginning of the review he paid Sarah a nice compliment: 'It is with the greatest pleasure that we now see this book take its place among the English classics. Of the translation we need only say that it is such as might be expected from the skill, the taste and the scrupulous integrity of the accomplished lady who, as an interpreter between the mind of Germany and the mind of Britain, has already deserved so well of both countries.'

One afternoon Carlyle and Lucie were having a discussion on German literature. She warmed to the subject and eloquently talked Carlyle down. He got angry and burst out in his Scotch accent, "You're just a windbag, Lucie; you're just a windbag." Janet had been listening, and furious that her mother should be 'called names by so uncouth a man,' she pertly interrupted, saying, "My papa says men should be civil to women."

Carlyle took it very well, and remarked: "Lucykin, that child of yours has an eye for an inference."

Lucie inherited her powers of talking from her father. When he had once started on a discussion it was almost impossible to stop him. Janet was sent one day with a message to him from Lucie. He was in his study talking animatedly to Dr. Whewell, the Master of Trinity. Janet listened for a long time, standing first on one leg and then on the other; finally, her patience exhausted, she exclaimed: "But, grandpapa, grandpapa, I can't get in a word," and turning to Dr. Whewell she said, "Do stop him." After that she was never allowed into the study again.

Chapter XV

GUIZOT FLEES FROM FRANCE

'I THINK that Mr. Austin is the *Opprobrium Medicorum*. Nothing and Nobody seems to do him any good,' wrote Sydney Smith to Sarah. He was full of complaint that 'an amiable and enlightened' woman was kept away from England looking for cheap lodgings and a husband's health on the Continent.

Sarah, now in her fifties, had abandoned all flirtations, unless one can count letters from the aged Sydney Smith. 'If I am removed (as is the common fate of canons) by an indigestion,' he wrote, 'retain some good-natured recollections of an Ecclesiastic who knows your value, likes your society and would have been very much in love with you—if common sense and all Laws human and Divine had not guarded him from so formidable an accident. God bless you.'

Sydney Smith was getting very old, but he kept his amazing cheerfulness to the end. 'What annoys me is the proximity of death, for I am nearly 72,' he wrote to Mrs. Austin, 'I am afraid of the very disagreeable methods in which we leave the world, the long death of palsy, the degraded spectacle of aged idiotism. As for the pleasures of the world, it is, I think, a very middling, ordinary sort of place, and if one could be sure of dying in a fit of laughter or in some ecstasy, I should not much care for what I lost. Pray be my tomb-stone and say a good word for me when I am dead. I shall think of my

beautiful monument when I am going, but I wish I had seen it before I do.'

Sarah herself began to feel old and to be depressed about the state of the world. 'I am far from sharing my dear husband's disgust with mankind, odious as many of them are,' she wrote to Mrs. Grote, 'but I have had enough. I remain, however, true to that intense sympathy with the obscure and suffering classes from which I have never in any moment varied. If I do not deceive myself, that is evident even in the slightest trifle I write, and gives indeed their only value to such things.

'I am persuaded the difficulty of governing will go on to increase, both in extent and in intensity. How can it be otherwise? Traditional authority has gone, and Reason, which should replace it, alas! alas! How feeble is it still! Can you explain the sort of epidemic of Nationality which now reigns? The Irish have almost ceased to talk of religion. The quarrel is Celtic and Saxon as it seems.'

In one of her letters to Guizot, then Prime Minister of France, she wrote from Germany: 'All the most perverse views on the relations of nations are put together here as a sort of religion, and are called patriotism. The beautiful cosmopolitanism which so distinguished Germany from the national bullies of France and England is decried as mean and abject.'

Her articles in the *Athenaeum* at this time are full of the same complaint. 'Conversant chiefly with the great authors of Germany to whom she owes all her noblest fame, I had long revered them as the most humanising of writers, not blinded by antipathy or intoxicated with national vanity or embittered by national jealousy. Their works, thank God, remain for the immortal honour of Germany, for the benefit and comfort of the world: But where is the spirit fled that inspired them?

. . . I know how utterly vain it is for any foreigner to express this opinion; indeed, with what suspicion and resentment it is received. We have been trampled on and duped long enough, they reply, our weak cosmopolitanism was convenient to England and France, and therefore was admired. We want to be great and powerful as you are. As if there were but one kind of greatness and power!

While in Germany, Sarah's thoughts turned once more to Puckler Muskau. She had continued writing to him until a little time after Lucie's marriage, but after that the correspondence had gradually come to an end. Then suddenly she heard that she was to meet him at a party in a German friend's house. They both arrived, curious to know what the other looked like, but there was no question of a revival of affection. There is unfortunately no indication as to what Sarah thought of the Prince, or he of Sarah.

The Austins settled in Paris in the 'forties, and many well-known people came to Sarah's 'salon.' Heinrich Heine, whom she had not seen since the days of Boulogne, was among her visitors. Heine told his publisher, Herr Laube, that he would take him one day to Madame Austin, whose 'salon,' he said, was quite famous. Guizot himself was sometimes there, "and you have no idea how proud he is. When he goes up to Heaven he will start by complimenting the Almighty on having created him so well." Heine said that he met shiploads of English people there on the way from India, "all as thin as paper," except for the British Ambassador, Lord Normanby, who was enormous.

Guizot, with his falsetto voice and pompous manner, was not much liked either in France or in England, where he had been French Ambassador. On his first visit to Windsor he had been placed next to the Queen and thought that he should sit there on all future occasions, so that when the lord-in-

waiting came up to him the next day to show him his new place he drew himself up, and said: "Milord, ma place est auprès de la Reine." Queen Victoria wisely let him remain. Guizot had little luck at Windsor. On his way to bed he lost his way in the long corridors and walked into a bedroom where a short, plump young lady was getting undressed. He retired hastily. At breakfast next morning the Queen told him that he had walked into her bedroom, and was amused at his embarrassment.

Sarah was one of the few who was really devoted to him, in spite of what her friends thought. 'Guizot,' wrote Sydney Smith to her, 'seems to be a very able man and a great minister, but he was very rude to me when he was in England, for which I would (if I had been a layman) have endeavoured to cut his throat, but being an ecclesiastic I have endeavoured to lay up for him something tolerably severe in another state of existence—perhaps cleaning shoes for Thiers a thousand years and at the same time closely wedded to that composition of bones and insolence, Madame de Lieven.'

There was a certain amount of rivalry for Guizot's affection between Sarah and Princess de Lieven, wife of the Russian Ambassador, who had previously been in London and had been recalled to Russia. Guizot used to visit her three times a day, and was very attached both to her and Sarah.

The Austins were settling down in Paris very happily. Sarah had her many friends, and John Austin was flattered by being elected by the French Institute as a corresponding member of the Moral and Political Class.

In February, 1848, few suspected that another French king was to lose his throne. Princess de Lieven described Louis Philippe's position as a 'powerful, peaceful and apparently impregnable monarchy.' The King had been seventeen years on the throne and there seemed no reason why he should not

THE KING ABDICATES

remain there. But there was a growing demand for political reform, to which the King and Guizot refused to give way, and it was not long before rioting broke out.

'My dear Lucie,' wrote John Austin on February 27, 'your mother and myself are quite well and not at all alarmed by this new revolution. I meant to escort your mother to Havre or Boulogne, and having seen her safe on board the Packet, to return to Paris and settle our affairs. But as both the railroads to the coast have been broken up, and strangers are prevented by the population round Paris from leaving the city, we cannot start for England yet. It is impossible to say when the communications will be opened; but at present the English here are treated well and have no definite cause for terror.'

By the middle of March the King had abdicated, and he and Guizot fled to England. Louis Philippe had dismissed Guizot at a critical moment, and owing to the delay in forming a new Government, and the King's aversion to using force against the people, the mobs were able to take control, shouting 'Death to Guizot!' Southern and Mrs. Austin in letters to *The Times* stated that it was only owing to a series of inconceivable blunders and the most deplorable weakness that the King, who was not so unpopular as Guizot, was persuaded to abdicate. The troops were everywhere paralysed by lack of orders, and little boys carried off the cannon from their midst. 'Between blunders, bad advice and delay,' wrote Greville, 'the insurrection sprang at once into gigantic proportions and the world has seen with amazement a king who was considered so astute and courageous, with sons full of spirit and intelligence, sink without striking a blow for their kingdom, perishing without a struggle, and consequently falling dishonoured and unregretted.'

The King travelled to England in various disguises; Princess

GUIZOT FLEES FROM FRANCE

de Lieven, who feared for herself as a friend of Guizot, left with an English painter, Mr. Roberts, posing as his wife, with gold and jewels secreted under her dress, and the proud Guizot fled disguised as someone's servant. The Austins managed to get to England without very much trouble.

Chapter XVI

THE CLIMAX OF 1848

ON a blustery evening in March 1848 the Duff Gordons' house in Queen Square was in great commotion. Lucie was giving orders, Hassan was running importantly to and fro, Janet was strutting about in her best frock, and Alexander kept on looking up the street.

At last a carriage was heard to draw up outside their door, and out tumbled an exhausted Guizot with his two daughters, having just landed from France. Guizot's friendship with Sarah had brought him to find refuge at the Duff Gordons.

Janet, who had been eagerly awaiting his arrival, was most disappointed, and said that she did not think that it had been worth putting on her best dress; she had expected to see him covered with gold embroidery and splashed with blood.

The Duff Gordons, who had been leading a very peaceful life, found themselves involved in the turmoil of the revolutionary year 1848. The uprising in France had disturbed the whole Continent, and it looked as if it would have serious repercussions in England. A new impetus was given to the Chartist movement, struggling for Labour rights. The writings and speeches of men like Francis Place, Robert Owen and Thomas Paine were stirring the working classes of England, and they were organising to force the Government to abandon the *laissez-faire* attitude which had been preached since the days of Adam Smith and was causing such misery to thousands employed in the factories and coal-mines.

'We seem to have got into another stage of existence,'

wrote Greville; 'our world is almost suddenly altered; we deal with new questions, men seem to be animated with fresh objects; . . . society is stirred from its lowest depths.'

Lucie's attitude to the Labour movement was different to that of her parents; she was very much more sympathetic to the movement than Austin, who was afraid of it, or than Sarah, who was patronising. 'I can assure you that my fear of socialism (or communism) is anything but fanciful,' wrote John Austin to Lucie; 'the socialist tendencies in England, though less flagrant' (than in France) 'are sufficiently manifest. . . . Look at the language held by Lord Ashley and other of our ignorant humanitarians; language calculated to persuade the workmen that their privations and severe labour are caused by the selfishness of their masters.' Austin had moved almost right across the political stage from Radicalism to Toryism.

Lucie did not concern herself much with political theory. She did what she could to give practical help, but, unlike Sarah, she had no idea of fulfilling any kind of mission in life. She had no desire to reform anyone. When her friend, William Bridges Adams, told Lucie that the men in his workshops at Bow wanted books, she started a library for them and used to go there with friends like Tom Taylor to sing songs and discuss politics.

Sarah also visited the library and wrote to Dr. Whewell, Master of Trinity, with regard to a letter of thanks from the men for books she had sent. 'Now, dear Dr. Whewell,' she said, 'you will not laugh at me when I say that this letter caused my eyes to fill with tears. So much gratitude for so small a thing, and after all not due to me—such a yearning for the sympathy and approbation of their "betters"—such a sense of the value of instruction! How is it that those who have the power do not draw near to these brave hearts and

PATRONAGE

excellent heads, and win them as they might: What a true dignity and politeness is there in their manner of addressing me! Would it be too much to ask you, dear Dr. Whewell, to send them a book—one of your own, I mean—and to descend from the intellectual heights in which you dwell to give a word of encouragement to these our less favoured brothers? Think of the effect of a word of approbation from the Master of Trinity! A sign that the moral culture they aspire after will be a bond of union between them and the highest philosopher!

‘I looked through it (their library) and there is not an objectionable book. I found Locke and Reid, Shakespeare and Milton, Walter Scott and almost all our best classics. Is not this cheering? When we meet in London again you must go and see the poor fellows at their *vulcanic* work.’

If Sarah had known something of the Labour movement at the time she would not have said that she was convinced that the remedy for the sufferings of the poor could not come from the people themselves. She did not realise how much the working classes were doing for themselves and how much they disliked patronage. ‘Have I read the little book wot you left?’ said Charles Dickens’s bricklayer to Mrs. Pardiggle, who went round delivering religious tracts; ‘No I ain’t read the little book wot you left. There ain’t nobody here who knows how to read it; and if there was it wouldn’t be suitable to me. It’s a book fit for a babby, and I’m not a babby.’

The labouring classes were organising on their own, and though the Chartist demonstrations were in many ways a failure, they served a purpose in forcing the upper classes to consider the conditions of the poor. Carlyle and John Stuart Mill were defending their cause, which outraged Sarah and John Austin. ‘I don’t wonder at any perverseness in so insane a coxcomb as Carlyle,’ said John Austin.

THE CLIMAX OF 1848

A storm was brewing. Governments on the Continent were watching to see whether England was to be reft by revolution as other countries had been in this memorable year. The climax was to be April 10, when Feargus O'Connor had called a monster Chartist meeting on Kennington Common, and it seemed that there was to be a final trial of strength between labourers and their employers. All the bitterness which had been accumulating for so many years and had first shown itself clearly in the Peterloo massacre might find an outlet in street fighting and bloodshed such as had been seen in France in 1830 and 1848.

By April 6 the Government had not yet decided whether the Chartists were to be stopped from entering London or not; the Duke of Wellington, who was in charge of the defences, was in his element. Everywhere there was bustle, 'either very sublime or very ridiculous.' There were 200,000 men enrolled as special constables in London, and grouped under different commanders in various districts. Greville sent all his sporting guns to his office, and fortifications were made by a barricade of huge Council registers in the rooms on the ground floor.

As the day approached, Londoners became more and more nervous, and hundreds left for the safety of the country. There was then no good means of checking the truth of rumours through repeated editions of evening newspapers, or by telephone, and there were constant alarms about the approach of victorious Chartists.

While many, like Lucie, were sympathetic to Labour demands, they were not prepared to allow the Government of the country to be intimidated. Alexander enrolled as a constable, and on the eve of the big meeting Lucie asked her workmen friends from Bow to come and spend the night at her house to be ready against any emergency. Forty of

THE 'GORDON VOLUNTEERS'

them came to defend 'Our Lady,' and a stray policeman who was rather 'wonder-struck.' They had a big supper of beef and beer, and were entertained by songs and speeches by Tom Taylor and Lucie; there were toasts, such as 'Success to the roof we are under,' and to 'Liberty, Brotherhood and Order.' One disturbance broke out quite near after supper, but it stopped as soon as the 'Gordon Volunteers,' as they called themselves, appeared round the corner. 'I think one Birmingham smith,' wrote Lucie, 'a handsome fellow, six feet high, whose vehement disinterestedness would neither allow him to eat, drink or sleep in the house, would have scattered them.' All the neighbours, she said, were very relieved by their presence, 'though not willing to fraternise.'

In the meantime Alexander was patrolling the streets with Prince Louis Napoleon, who had also enrolled as a special constable, and when they returned to the house late in the evening they found a very cheerful party. Lucie stated that she could not have wished for 'forty better gentlemen' than her guests that evening. She bivouacked them in her own and various houses round for the night.

On April 10 there was a very different scene in London to that in Paris in February. The police were all mobilised, and all the members of society who wanted order to be maintained were ready organised. But nothing happened; at about midday crowds began streaming along Whitehall, and it was known that everything was over. About 20,000 Chartists had assembled on Kennington Common, and when the police had informed Feargus O'Connor that no procession into London would be allowed, he decided to advise them all to disperse. Thus ended the Chartist march on London.

Kinglake was in Paris at the time, and had an opportunity of seeing the events in England from the French angle. He

wrote subsequently to Janet: 'That 10th of April, 1848, for which your dear father and mother were so well prepared . . . was really a great day for England, and even for Europe. . . . The interest, of course, being hugely augmented by the fact that the great Duke of Wellington commanded in the battle and splendidly won it. The part taken in the business by your mother and father was noble and wise, and furnished a beautiful example of what ought to be the fraternisation between "gentle and simple" in times of national danger.'

He wanted Janet to make this event the principal one in her memoir of Lucie. 'Your drama would open with the flight of kings and falling thrones, and then pass on to the wonderful 10th of April, which you, as a small child, may be said to have seen "making ready" at the supper party in Queen's Square. The story is a grand one, as I think, and glorious to England at a time when the Continent (except Russia) was shaking with terror. The French on the 9th thought it was all over with England, and one of their newspapers said: "La Reine s'est sauvée avec son Coburg dans l'Isle de Wichtch!"'

The presence of Louis Napoleon in the Duff Gordons' house that evening added a further dramatic touch. Two years before, in an attempt to return to France, he had been ignominiously captured at Boulogne and sentenced to life imprisonment by Guizot's Government. Now Guizot himself was a fugitive, and Louis Napoleon was in a few years to become Emperor.

No one in London society took him very seriously at this time, or believed him when he boasted that he would follow in his uncle's footsteps, and there were many jokes about the tame eagle that he was said to keep. He liked the easy-going life led by the Duff Gordons, and used often to drop in to see them. Lucie herself was more like Napoleon Buonaparte

LUCIE'S RESEMBLANCE TO NAPOLEON

than the nephew. On a holiday in France with Alexander and the Austins she had been introduced by Sarah to Prince Pierre Buonaparte, who exclaimed: "Mais, Madame, vous êtes des notres. Vous êtes une Buonaparte." He then led her to a looking-glass and added: "On dit que je ressemble au grand empereur, mais regardez, Madame, votre figure, c'est son image."

This year, 1848, was a climax in Lucie's life. She was twenty-seven years old and had lived a little over half her life; already her health was beginning to fail. From now on, though she rallied, consumption gradually took hold of her, and she was driven first from London and then from England.

Chapter XVII

THE 'GORDON ARMS'

AFTER Lucie gave birth to a son, Maurice, in 1849, it was decided that for the sake of her health the family would have to leave London and settle in the country.

She spent the summer with Janet and her baby at the Austins' cottage at Weybridge, until a house was found. There she began a friendship with George Meredith, who, at the age of twenty-one, had just married Thomas Love Peacock's daughter, and lived with his father-in-law near the Austins.

Meredith liked amazonian qualities in women, as is shown by the heroines of his novels, and these qualities he found in Lucie and Janet. The latter was now seven years old, vigorous, athletic and a good rider. She used to go for long walks with Meredith, whom she called 'her Poet.' He had so far only published one work, a book of poems, which had cost him sixty pounds.

When Lucie and Alexander moved to a new house that they had found at Esher in 1851, they lost touch with Meredith for a number of years. Lucie was very ill all the winter and only saw friends who came to Esher to visit them. 'The first time she returned to Weybridge after her departure,' wrote Sarah, 'the whole village, where she is much beloved, was struck by the alterations in her looks. For nearly a fortnight she has been labouring under a fearful attack of bronchitis, incessant cough and high fever, and all the most terrible symptoms.'

'I am now nearly well again, but had a very narrow escape



*uff Gordon 'coat-of-arms' designed by Richard Doyle,
showing Lucie's cigars and the 'Gordon Arms' beer*

for my life,' wrote Lucie to C. J. Bayley, who had lived with the Duff Gordons while he had been leader writer on *The Times*; he was now Secretary to the Government of Mauritius. 'We have left Queen Square and moved all our goods and ourselves to a very nice, pretty old-fashioned house on the very top of a high hill close to Claremont, which indeed joins our garden and field, and where bachelor beds can be given to our friends. I only wish you were installed in one of them, dear lodger, for if a constant longing to see you and have your company again constitutes being very much in love, as you seem to think, I also must "own the soft impeachment."' "

The house that the Duff Gordons took had once been an inn, with a cottage next door, which had been connected by two large rooms, forming a dining-room downstairs and a drawing-room above. A garden sloped up to Claremont Park, where Louis Philippe had died and where lived the Duchess of Orleans and her two sons. From the front windows there was a view of the river Mole, of Wolsey's tower in the foreground and of Windsor in the distance.

It was near enough to London for the Duff Gordons to be able to keep in touch with their friends. Little Holland House, where Watts lived, was not far off, and Sir Henry Taylor and Macaulay lived near.

The Duff Gordons' house soon came to be well known for its hospitality and was nicknamed the 'Gordon Arms.' Many pints of beer used to be drunk under the shady beech trees in the summer, while Lucie talked hard with Macaulay or Charles Austin. Thackeray used to drop in to meals, announcing his arrival with a rhyme, such as :

A plain leg of mutton, my Lucie,
 I pray thee have ready at three;
 Have it smoky and tender and juicy
 And what better meat can there be :

THE 'GORDON ARMS'

And when it has feasted the master,
'Twill amply suffice for the maid :
Meanwhile I will smoke my canaster,
And tipple my ale in the shade.

An amusing poem was written in doggerel Latin, with illustrations by Dicky Doyle, who was then working for *Punch*. Above was a design with Lucie and Alexander mounted on either side of a coat-of-arms consisting of pen, ink and paper; above was a barrel of 'Gordon Arms' beer, Lucie's cigars and Alexander's pipe.

Lucie riding on her mare was a familiar sight to the villagers round Esher, and she caused a good deal of comment by smoking a cigar on horseback, as she found that it eased her cough. 'When she saw no harm in an act, opinion had no greater effect on her than summer flies to one with a fan,' wrote George Meredith in his flowery style. 'The country people, sorely tried by the spectacle at first, remembered the gentle deeds and homely chat of an eccentric lady, and pardoned her who was often to be seen discoursing familiarly with the tramps on the road, incapable of denying her house door to the lost dog, attached by some instincts to her heels.'

The family used to go about the country riding together; Lucie on Celia, given her by Kinglake, Alexander on a big mare and Janet on a pony called 'Eothen.' Lucie was devoted to Celia and wrote: 'My dearest Eothen, alas! alas! the severest calamity has befallen me. Alexander took out the little mare the other day, galloped her furiously and has broken her down in one foreleg. He was much too heavy to ride her fast which he wouldn't believe. . . . I can't console myself at all about dear little Celia, she had become such a perfect friend and companion to me in so many long lonely rides that I hate to have her blemished. I never felt so wrath against Alexander in my life.'

ALTERED LOOKS

Lucie describes her life at Esher in a number of long and affectionate letters to C. J. Bayley.

‘A great addition to my personal comfort here is the surgeon of the place, a young fellow of twenty-six, full of intelligence, tolerably accomplished and very gentlemanly, who is not only my surgeon, but also my friend and companion; having been treated like a servant by all the rich snobs here, you may imagine how well pleased he is with people fit to talk to and ready to look upon him as a gentleman and make a friend of him. . . .

‘Your place as lodger is now filled by Azimullah Khan.’ (An emissary of Nana Sahib, who gave Lucie a lovely necklace.) ‘He calls me his European Mother as the civillest thing he can say! When do you think you will come back and resume your duties as a lodger? I have pretty maids, and Janet will be old enough to flirt with by the time you return. . . .

‘I fear you would think me very much altered since my illness; I have lost much of my hair, all my complexion and all my flesh and look thin and old and my hair is growing grey. This I consider hard on a woman just over her thirtieth birthday.’

This was the year of the Great Exhibition, 1851, and many French and German friends who came to see it visited the Duff Gordons at Esher.

Hopes of a wonderful age of peace and prosperity received a severe shock by the news of Louis Napoleon’s Coup d’État in France in December 1852; “By God, sir; he is a scoundrel,” said Austin, banging his fist on the table in the course of a discussion. There was also the growing power of Russia in the Near East, which eventually led to the Crimean War.

These events, combined with her failing health, were depressing to Lucie, who was also mourning the loss of

THE 'GORDON ARMS'

Eliot Warburton, drowned at sea in the beginning of 1852. He had been sent by the Atlantic and Pacific Junction Company to arrange a friendly understanding with the Indian tribes on the Isthmus of Darien. Fire broke out on the West Indian mail steamer *Amazon*, and the last passenger recognised on deck was Eliot Warburton. Before the ship went down he had helped a woman passenger into a boat, and had given her a portrait of Lucie which he had in his pocket, asking her to send it to the Duff Gordons. It was the picture of Lucie drawn by a school friend. The woman forgot Lucie's married name, and Alexander only received it some time after Lucie's death.

With the outbreak of the Crimean War, Lucie was for many months deprived of her best friend, Kinglake, who visited the front and was eventually commissioned by Lord Raglan to write the history of the war.

The conduct of the war was arousing a tremendous controversy in England, and Aberdeen's Government was in a difficult position. It was the first time that war correspondents were allowed with the forces, and no proper military control of censorship had as yet been organised. The newspapers were full of theories as to how the war should be conducted, and of criticism of the military commanders. The views of the Duff Gordons and Austins were very much influenced by Kinglake, who championed the bitterly attacked Lord Raglan, offered up to the 'Moloch of the Press.'

'Flesh and blood cannot endure the incessant baiting,' wrote Sarah. 'The next despotism the world will have to undergo is that of the Press. This might be foreseen as soon as we get a reading populace. When the people have read enough to become clear-sighted and reasonable, the despotism will fall of itself. But when will that be? Two centuries hence? . . . Till the war broke out, the English *people* could

not be said to love or hate the Russians. They never thought about them. Why should they? And now they are fighting with acharnement, while the Germans, who never spoke of them without execration, remain at peace.'

Sarah as usual was busy writing—*Germany from 1760 to 1814; or Sketches of German Life*. 'God knows,' she said, 'Prussia does not shine brightly at the present moment. I must say, however, that I think we English are merciless about the difficulties of other people. We have elbow-room (if I may use the word), the poor Germans have a thousand hindrances.'

Lucie did little translating now. She was by nature rather indolent, an inheritance from her father, and illness took away her energy. Her last book had been a translation of Leon de Wailly's *Stella and Vanessa*, published in 1850, which had helped the sale of this life of Swift both in England and France, where it had hardly been noticed previously. She sat for some of the figures in Watts's allegorical pictures, nursed Janet through scarlet fever, read copiously with her feet on the settee and a cigar in her mouth, and went to an occasional party.

Chapter XVIII

LUCIE VISITS THE DYING HEINE

FOR a short time Lucie's health improved sufficiently to enable her to pay a visit to Paris, where her mother's many friends, like Victor Cousin and Alfred de Vigny, gave her a warm welcome.

Napoleon remembered the hospitality he had received from the Duff Gordons in Queen Square and put his carriage at Lucie's disposal, but she declined it. Several of her friends, such as Barthélmy St. Hilaire, had been imprisoned by the Emperor, and the Duff Gordons were also on friendly terms with the Orleans family, who lived near them at Esher.

One old acquaintance Lucie was particularly anxious to see, and that was Heinrich Heine, whom she had not met since the Boulogne days. He was by then half paralysed, lying on his mattress grave in a garret, insufficiently looked after by Mathilde, to whom he was married. The paralysis had spread to his face and he was sometimes scarcely able to talk.

'I had not seen Heine,' Lucie wrote, 'since I was a child at Boulogne till I went to Paris, when I heard he was very poor and dying. I sent my name, and a message that if he chanced to remember the little girl to whom he told fairy-tales years ago at Boulogne, I should like to see him. He sent for me directly and remembered every little incident and all the people who were in the same inn.' He also remembered the ballad she had sung him about the Lady Alice and the parson drinking the gruel.

'I, for my part, could hardly speak to him, so shocked was

I by his appearance. He lay on a pile of mattresses, his body wasted so that it seemed no bigger than a child under the sheet that covered him, the eyes closed, and the face altogether like the most painful and wasted *Ecce Homo* ever painted by some old German painter. His voice was very weak, and I was astonished by the animation with which he talked; evidently his mind had wholly survived his body. He raised his powerless eye-lids with his thin white fingers, and exclaimed, "God! little Lucie has grown big, and has a husband, that is funny."

'He then earnestly asked if I was happy and contented, and begged me to bring my husband to see him. He said again he hoped I was happy now, as I had always been such a merry child.

'I answered that I was no longer as merry as the little Lucie had been, but very happy and contented, and he said, "That is well; it does one good to see a woman who does not carry about a broken heart, to be mended by all sorts of men, like the women here, who do not see that a total want of heart is their real failing."

'I took my husband to see him, and we bid him good-bye. He said that he hoped to see me again; ill as he was, he should not die yet.'

During Lucie's absence Heine had been painfully moved to the flat in the rue Matignon where he could look out over the Champs Elysées. On a visit to Paris three years later Lucie sent him word again that she was there, and received a note in German from him, painfully scribbled in pencil. It read: 'Highly Honoured, Great-British Goddess Lucie,—I sent back word by the servant, that with the exception of last Wednesday, I was ready to receive your godship on any day and at any hour. But I have waited till to-day in vain for such a heavenly apparition. Do not delay any longer! Come to-

day, come to-morrow, come often. You live so near me, the poor shadow in the Elysian fields! Do not let me wait too long. I send you with this the four first volumes of the French translations of my unhappy works. Meanwhile, I remain of your godship, the most humble and attached adorer, Heinrich Heine.

‘N.B.—The parson drank the gruel water.’

Lucie went immediately, and climbed upstairs to a small room, where she found him still on the pile of mattresses on which she had left him three years before: ‘More ill he could not look, for he looked dead already, and wasted to a shadow. When I kissed him, his beard felt like swan’s down or baby’s hair, so weak had it grown, and his face seemed to me to have gained a certain beauty from pain and suffering.’

“‘I have now made peace with the whole world,” said Heine, “and at last also with God, who sends thee to me as a beautiful angel of death: I shall certainly soon die.”

“‘Poor Poet, do you still retain such splendid illusions, that you transform a travelling Englishwoman into Azrael: That used not to be the case, for you always disliked us.”

“‘Yes, I do not know what possessed me to dislike the English, and be so spiteful towards them; but it was really only petulance; I never hated them, indeed, I never knew them. I was only once in England, but knew no one, and found London very dreary, and the people in the streets odious. But England has revenged herself well; she has sent me most excellent friends—thymself, and Milnes, that good Milnes, and others.”

‘I saw him two or three times a week during a two months’ stay in Paris, and found him always full of lively conversation and interest in everything, and of his old undisguised vanity, pleased to receive bad translations of his works, and anxious beyond measure to be well translated into English. He offered

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me the copyright of all his works as a gift, and said he would give me *carte blanche* to cut out all I thought necessary on my own account, or that of the English public, and made out lists of how I had better arrange them, which he gave me.¹ He sent me all his books, and was boyishly eager that I should set to work and read him some in English, especially a prose translation of his songs, which he pressed me to undertake with the greatest vehemence, against my opinion of its practicability.

‘He talked a great deal about politics in the same tone as in his later writings—a tone of vigorous protest and disgust of mob-tyranny, past, present, and future; told me a vast number of stories about people of all parts, which I should not choose to repeat; and expressed the greatest wish that it were possible to get well enough to come over and visit me, and effect a reconciliation with England. On the whole, I never saw a man bear such horrible pain and misery in so perfectly unaffected a manner. He complained of his sufferings, and was pleased to see tears in my eyes, and then at once set to work to make me laugh heartily, which pleased him just as much. He neither paraded his anguish nor tried to conceal it, or to put on any stoical airs. I thought him far less sarcastic, more hearty, more indulgent, and altogether pleasanter than ever. After a few weeks he begged me not to tell him when I was going, for that he could not bear to say an eternal farewell or to hear it, and repeated that I had come as a “beautiful, kind angel of death,” to bring him greetings from youth and from Germany, and to dispel all the “bad French thoughts.” When he spoke German to me he called me “Du,” and used the familiar expressions and terms of language which Germans use to a child; in French I was “Madame,” and “Vous.”

¹ Some of Lucie’s translations were published in *Murray’s Magazine* in June 1891.

LUCIE VISITS THE DYING HEINE

'It was evident that I recalled some happy time of his life to his memory, and that it was a relief to him to talk German, and to consider me still as a child. He said that what he liked so much was that I laughed so heartily, which the French could not do. I defended, *la vieille gaieté française*, but he said: "Oui, c'est vrai, cela existait autrefois, mais avouez, ma chère, que c'était une gaieté un peu bête."

'He had so little feeling for what I liked best in the French character that I could see he must have lived only with those of that nation who "sit in the scorner's seat"; whereas, while he laughed at Germany, it was with *des larmes dans la voix*. He also talked a good deal about his religious feelings; much displeased at the reports that he had turned Catholic. What he said about his own belief, hope and trust, would not be understood in England, nor ought I, I think, to betray the deeper feelings of a dying man. The impression he made on me was so deep, that I had great difficulty to restrain my tears till I had left the room the last few times I saw him, and shall never forget the sad, pale face and eager manner of poor Heine.'

Chapter XIX

DEATH OF AUSTIN

THE last eleven years that Sarah spent with her husband at Weybridge before his death in 1859, at the age of seventy, were among the happiest in her life. He had ceased to fret at his own impotence, and had sunk into a pleasant state of contentment which made him for the first time a really agreeable husband. 'In this blessed frame of mind,' wrote Sarah, 'all his youthful and passionate love for me seemed to return, mingled with a confidence and intimacy which only a life passed together can produce.'

Sarah did not at first attempt to turn his newly gained health to account. She considered that the peace of this domesticity in the evening of their lives was 'too precious to be risked for the reputation to which he was so indifferent, or for the advantages of a world to which he owed so little.'

After a life of wandering from house to house in England, and from inn to inn abroad, she settled down once more to her garden, knowing now that when she planted the flower-seeds, laid down the strawberries for the spring, and pruned the fruit trees, she might expect to see the fruit of her labours.

'I send you the event of the day—my first snowdrops,' she wrote to Hayward in January 1856, at the age of sixty-three. 'If you knew the delight with which I saw the cluster of pure white heads glittering just above the earth in the morning sun, you would form some sort of estimate of the life I lead, and would despair of seeing me again in any *circle*, unless perhaps one traced by fairy footsteps on the grass.'

'It is well for me, dear old friend, that when in the world and drinking largely of its intoxications, I did not lose the love of nature, which now stands me in the stead of all I have lost. I might make a struggle to partake of some social pleasures, but believe me, it would not answer. What would be done with a woman who must go to bed at ten o'clock!'

But the troubles of the world did not pass her by unmoved; she was still working on behalf of national education, and had been granted £100 a year on the Civil List. She urged Mr. Gladstone, who had just become Prime Minister, to give England a scheme of burgher schools, for which a small payment should be made. Her ideas had been considerably altered both for better and worse, for she had been, with her husband, 'too near witnesses of terrific political convulsions, not to have modified many opinions and questioned many axioms.'

'Poor France! Poor Germany!' she wrote to Gladstone. 'What is the result of their so excellent seeming systems? An ounce of education demanded is worth a pound imposed. This, you will observe, is a voluntary recantation on the part of the zealous translator of Cousin. I cannot say it costs me much, for it involves the recognition of the unspeakable superiority of England.'

Though she was enjoying the tranquillity of her domestic life, the disappointment at her husband's lack of resiliency was still present, and she found relief in unburdening herself to her friends. She referred to the 'despair' of contemplating day by day and year by year her husband's resolute neglect or suppression of the talents committed to his care, especially as he was one 'to whom the ten talents were given.'

His book on jurisprudence had been out of print for many years, and both Murray II and Murray III had applied to him many times for a new edition. He was himself eager to bring one out, but he realised so well its imperfections that he wished

to introduce radical alterations, yet lacked the energy to put his desires into effect. The manuscript was scarred with alterations he had made.

Flattering requests for a new edition came from all quarters, 'but the only effect of a fresh solicitation,' said Sarah, 'is to make him look as if somebody had hit him a blow.'

She was all the more miserable, realising that his failure was as much due to lack of spirit as lack of health. He excused himself to her by saying that there was a time when nobody worked harder, and that had he met with justice he would have accomplished great things. 'It is true,' wrote Sarah to Guizot, 'that he was shamefully treated, but you and I know that there is another way of avenging oneself on the injustice of men. . . . He is to me sometimes as a god, sometimes as a sick and wayward child—an immense, powerful and beautiful machine, without the balance-wheel, which should keep it going constantly, evenly and justly.'

He had accomplished much, she felt, and risen to fame, but she was sad that he was likely to leave the world 'without having done for the great cause of Law and Order, of Reason and Justice, what he might have done.' To have enabled him to do that she would have been proud and happy to have shared a garret and a crust with him, 'but God knows our ambitions and checks them.'

At last her desire to prod him into activity overcame her desire for tranquillity, and she asked her friends, such as Guizot, Cousin, Whewell and Grote, to join her in persuading him to write. Guizot's reproaches finally started the machine working again for the first time for twenty years. Lest he should fall ill with the unwonted excitement or catch a chill, she nursed and watched him 'as a mother does her new-born babe, with such anxious tenderness.'

Finally, in 1859, John Murray published in pamphlet form

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his *Plea for the Constitution*, in which Austin deprecated any further extension of the franchise. It was a well-reasoned Tory thesis, in spite of the weakness of his case.

A month before the pamphlet was published he fell seriously ill, and for seven weeks Sarah nursed him until his death, bearing unflinchingly 'all the daggers which entered her heart.'

Sarah was quite crushed by his death and sought in vain for consolation. She felt utterly alone, and found no comfort in Lucie or her grandchildren, for 'children, dear as they are, belong necessarily to another generation and another order of ideas and feeling.' Alone by her fireside at Nutfield Cottage, she started up every now and again from her reveries, seeking for what she would never find again. She spent much of her time going through old letters, destroying the majority, 'by way of loosing the connection with this world.' Her life was with the dead, which she found on the whole superior to the living. She went through her husband's letters to her, 'forty-five years of love-letters, the last as tender and passionate as the first'; they all showed that he had had a presentiment of misfortune and unhappiness, and that he had looked always to her as his prop and comforter.

Sarah took some comfort in the many letters of condolence, which showed that her husband had been appreciated at any rate by the discerning few. Guizot wrote that John Austin 'was one of the most distinguished men, one of the rarest intellects and one of the noblest hearts, I ever knew. Let this be a consolation to you and at the same time a regret. It is better to have lost much, very much; the recollection of a great good, enjoyed only in passing, is always a treasure.' Lord Brougham referred to 'the most able and learned cultivator of the science (jurisprudence) in our day.'

John Austin had left a mass of papers, notes for his lectures and projects for treatises, much of it in confusion and difficult

to decipher. The subject of law and its sanction with the fine distinctions between *jus civile*, *jus gentium* and *jus naturale* is a difficult enough study in a well-expressed and clearly printed book; but considering the prolixity of John Austin's style of writing and the scrappiness of many of the notes, their collection and editing was a task that only a gifted individual with a deep affection for the person concerned could ever have accomplished.

Sarah consulted her friends, and all said that unless she edited the work it would never be done. Amid tears and illness therefore she started on this tremendous task, and almost died when it was only half completed. Sir William Markby, a lawyer friend, called one Sunday and found her surrounded by legal tomes and with scraps of her husband's notes spread out on the table before her. He was amazed at her industry, and told her that she need not flatter herself that anyone would ever guess a hundredth-part of her difficulties or her labour.

Her edition of his works was published in 1861, and every day it rose in fame and authority to a degree which she had never hoped to live to witness and which 'he would never have believed.' Austin's *Jurisprudence* became an examination book at both Oxford and Cambridge, and the young lawyers, who had not known of it until Sarah's second edition, used it as a standard work.

On this work rests his reputation, and the Austinian theory of law is studied to this day. John Mill wrote of his works: 'No one thoroughly versed in these volumes need ever again miss his way amidst the obscurity and confusion of legal language.' Sir Henry Maine, although he was opposed to many of Austin's conclusions, paid high tribute to him in his *Early History of Institutions*, and Professor F. J. C. Hearnshaw, after describing the value of Austin's work in defining the meaning of the three great terms, Law, Sovereignty and State, points out

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that a study of Austin is still valuable for the problems of to-day.

The description that Sarah gives of her husband in her preface to the second edition of his *Jurisprudence* is excellent. It combines an expression of her devotion and an honest and sympathetic exposition of his serious shortcomings. 'I have read your preface; it is admirable,' wrote Auguste Barbier; 'impossible to describe better the eminent man England has lost. In a few striking, simple and eloquent words you have depicted him physically and morally with a master hand. "He was never sanguine. He was intolerant of any imperfection. He was always under control of a severe love of truth. He lived and died a poor man!" How true is all this, but how sad are those last words in spite of their grandeur.'



et Duff Gordon (later Janet Ross), by Henry Phillips.

Chapter XX

GEORGE MEREDITH AND 'EVAN HARRINGTON'

LUCIE had spent long nights by her dying father, 'as white as marble, her face set and stern, and her large eyes fixed on his face'; the chill of the damp cottage did her permanent harm, and consumption began to take an increasing hold.

But for the next three years the 'Gordon Arms' continued to be a meeting-place for her many friends. Henry Layard wrote that Lord Clanricarde was delighted with Garibaldi, whom he met in Italy, 'and declares that a dinner with the General reminded him of a day at the "Gordon Arms"—such was the simplicity and amiability of that charming family (the Garibaldis may be proud of the comparison).'

'In England in her day, while health was still with her,' wrote Meredith, 'there was one house where men and women conversed, when that house perforce was closed a light had gone out in our country.'

The Duff Gordons had lost touch with Meredith for some years, as he had gone to live in London after the tragic separation from his wife. He took his son, Arthur, with him, and it was only when his wife was on the point of dying at Weybridge that he sent Arthur to her. Meredith was overwhelmed with grief at her death and was inspired to write two masterpieces, the poem *Modern Love*, and the novel *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*.

While he was finishing the latter, in lodgings in Esher, to which he had moved from London, Janet met him again. She was riding to the station to meet her father, who

came down from London each day by train, when a small boy fell down in the road just in front of the horse. She jumped off, picked him up and went with him to the cottage where he lived. A man came out, kissed the child and then looked hard at Janet: "Aren't you Lady Duff Gordon's daughter?" he asked, and then embracing her he said: "Oh my Janet! don't you know me? I'm your poet."

He came to dinner the same evening with the Duff Gordons. Lucie was then recovering from the birth of a daughter, Urania.

He had not known that they were living so close, and at once decided to move with Arthur to a cottage near them. Janet and he eventually found an attractive little house standing by itself on Copsham Common near the fir woods behind Claremont Park. He was then thirty, extremely handsome, with curly brown hair, grey eyes, beard, moustache and a fine head, which Rossetti used as a model for his head of Christ in one of his paintings. Janet was sixteen, a hard rider to hounds, and extremely good-looking. A close friendship grew up between the two.

Meredith and Janet used often to take long walks together; he would recite his poetry and tell her plots for his novels. It has been said that Meredith fell in love with Janet, and there may be some truth in it, judging by his letters to her, and by the plot of his self-revealing novel *Evan Harrington*, or *He would be a Gentleman* as it was called when first published serially in *Once a Week*. Janet described it as 'her novel' since she was the heroine, Rose Jocelyn, and her mother and father were Sir Frank and Lady Jocelyn. There was no secrecy about these characters; Janet would interrupt Meredith as he wrote and say: "No, I would not have said that," or, "I would not have done that."

It was not, however, realised at the time that the other

principal characters were Meredith's own relations and that the hero was a composite character of himself and his father. In *Evan Harrington* he gives a very different picture of the Duff Gordons from that given by the Brookfields. To Meredith they were aristocrats. Lucie, by marrying Sir Alexander Duff Gordon, had stepped into a social world which Meredith a little envied. While he had a tailor for a father and a notorious grandfather, 'the old Mel,' Lucie had a miller grandfather on one side of the family, and a yarn-maker on the other.

So much of *Evan Harrington* clearly interprets Meredith's own feelings about social barriers and his own social aspirations that much of what Meredith described in the realm of fiction, like the eventual marriage of Rose and Evan, he may well have wished to have seen happen in the realm of fact. He was always self-conscious about his upbringing. He remained secretive about his origin until quite late in life, and there gradually grew up a legend that he was an illegitimate son of George IV. His tailor grandfather, the 'Old Mel' of *Evan Harrington*, had been a boon companion of the gentry of the time. For two generations the Meredith family had lived among aristocrats while remaining tradesmen, and young George Meredith had early realised the invidiousness of such a situation, which preyed upon his sensitive nature. At school he fought shy of the other tradesmen's sons and refused to play marbles with them, earning the nickname of 'Gentleman George.'

Therefore the problem of what was a gentleman, much discussed at that time, when the middle classes were forcing their way so rapidly into the inner tabernacles of the aristocracy, was an especial problem to the ambitious young author. Why Meredith concealed his origin from all his friends and from the public, yet discussed it so outspokenly

in this novel, has been an interesting problem for many critics. Meredith himself disliked hypocrisy and was always attacking the smug snobbery of provincial England.

It is probable that he began by concealing his origin owing to the intense snobbery which existed at that time with regard to trade, and that he became more and more ashamed of his own hypocrisy as the years went by, so that it became all the more difficult for him to talk openly about his birth. At the same time he felt the need to externalise his feelings.

He admired Lucie especially for her directness and lack of deceit, which is brought out clearly in the novel. It was not Lady Jocelyn who objected to the engagement of her daughter to Evan, the tradesman's son, but all the various relations, who were thrown into a turmoil of consternation. She would forgive anything but lying, said Rose to Evan. 'She will be our friend; she will never forsake us, Evan, if we do not deceive her. Oh Evan! it never is of any use. But deceive her, and she cannot forgive you. It is not in her nature. . . . You know she is called a philosopher; nobody knows how deep-hearted she is though. My mother is as true as steel.'

Then there is the announcement of the engagement: 'Following Evan, Rose went to her father and gave him a good hour's excitement, after which the worthy gentleman hurried for consolation to Lady Jocelyn, whom he found reading a book of French memoirs, in her usual attitude, with her feet stretched out and her head thrown back, as in a distant survey of the lively people screening her from a troubled world. . . .

'For her ladyship, thinking "I shall get the blame of all this," rather sided insensibly with the offenders against those who condemned them jointly; and seeing that Rose had been scrupulously honest, and was straightforward in a very

delicate matter, this lady was so constituted that she could not but applaud her daughter in her heart. A worldly woman would have acted, if she had not thought, differently; but her ladyship was not a worldly woman.'

Lucie indeed still held much the same ideas about aristocrats and the privileges of birth as she had set forth to Mrs. Grote in her letters from school. In her championship of her friend Caroline Norton, the young surgeon of Esher, and little Hassan, she was continually showing that her sympathies were with the oppressed. Meredith appreciated this, and his close friendship with Lucie and Janet almost certainly brought home to him the anomaly of his own reticence about his origin.

Lucie was more unconventional than is suggested by her character as Lady Jocelyn, though there were those at Esher who made the mistake of accusing her of snobbery. Sir Francis Burnand, who was staying with Meredith and Maurice Fitzgerald at the *Evan Harrington* period, wrote: 'Our near neighbours were the Duff Gordons, at whose house George was a persona grata. As Maurice did not affect society, and as I was "a person of no importance," neither of us, though formally introduced, was included in the invitations sent to George Meredith, then a rising star, by Sir Alexander and Lady Duff Gordon.'

More accurate is Meredith's own account of the way Lucie entertained: 'The hospitable house at Esher gave its welcome not merely to men and women of distinction; the humble undistinguished were made joyous guests there, whether commonplace or counting among the hopeful. Their hostess knew how to shelter the sensitively silent at table, if they were unable to take encouragement and join the flow. . . .

'She had the laugh that rocks the frame, but it was usually with a triumphant smile that she greeted things good to the

ear; and her own manner of telling was concise, on the lines of the running subject, to carry it along, not to produce an effect—which is like the horrid gap in the air after a blast of powder.

'Quotation came when it sprang to the lips and was native. She was shrewd and cogent, invariably calm in argument, sitting over it, not making it a duel, as the argumentative are prone to do; and a strong point against her received the honours due to a noble enemy.'

Owing to Lucie's rapidly failing health the house at Esher was not to be a meeting-ground much longer, and the villagers, too, were soon to miss her. Almost the last time they saw her was making a speech to the Surrey Volunteers.

It was soon after the Volunteer movement had been formed in England to meet the danger of a possible invasion of England by Napoleon III; Tennyson wrote his jingo poem 'Riflemen Form!' to encourage the movement.

The speech that Lucie made on that occasion, when English people were working themselves up into a fever of patriotic fervour, was very calm and sensible as compared with Tennyson's poem.

Standing on a dais on the village green she said:

'Captain Fletcher, Officers and men of the 6th Surrey Rifle Volunteers, the ladies of Esher and the neighbourhood have desired me to present to your corps a silver bugle, subscribed for by them.

'We earnestly hope that it may never sound but for your training in those martial exercises by which you are qualifying yourselves to act as our defenders. . . .

"Defence not Defiance" is your watchword; but should an enemy ever stand on these shores and so Defence become Defiance, may this, our bugle, be the first to sound the "Advance" and the last to sound the "Retreat."'

A LIGHT GOES OUT

Lucie was beginning to feel very lonely. What depressed her most was that the doctors would not allow her to talk more than a short time every day, and in order to prevent her doing so her friends had to stay away. Maurice was now at Eton and Alexander was often away, touring England and Ireland, as he had been appointed Inspector of Inland Revenue. Janet, at the age of eighteen, had left for Alexandria having married Henry Ross, twenty years older than herself, and partner in the firm of Briggs and Company, Bankers. Her reasons for accepting him as a husband are typical: 'I took Mr. Ross out with the Duc d'Aumale's harriers, and was much impressed by his admirable riding, his pleasant conversation and his kindly ways. The result was that I promised to marry him, to the dismay of my many friends!'

The winter of 1861 left Lucie so ill that the doctors insisted that she must go abroad. She thought of going to Egypt to be near Janet, but was told that the climate of Alexandria was too damp for her, and that to find health she must go up the Nile in a boat, which she thought was too expensive.

She hoped for a radical cure and decided to take a long sea voyage to the Cape.

Thus closed Lucie's life in England. There were no more parties at the 'Gordon Arms'—'a light had gone out!'

PART II
SOUTH AFRICA

Chapter XXI

JOURNEY TO THE CAPE

LUCIE left England with Sally, her maid, and a goat to give milk, aboard the *St. Lawrence*, a new and fast sailing-ship. They took two months to reach Capetown.

The world is now seen through Lucie's eyes in the many hundreds of letters that she wrote home, and it is an amusing world, because it was intensely interesting to her. There is no literary affectation in her letters; she wrote as she talked; 'unless I gallop ahead as hard as I can and don't stop to think, I can say nothing,' she said.

In all she writes the imperious but sympathetic Lucie shows through. She takes a pride in being in control of situations and in being self-reliant. She is amazed that during a collision at sea it is only herself and Sally who remain calm while the other women go into hysterics. Lucie is sympathetic towards almost all human weaknesses, except cowardice, bullying and lack of consideration for others.

She had the Napoleonic features, the flashing eyes and the proud manner, which led others to defer to her judgment, and she got her own way by civility and sympathy. As a result she could do much as she wished on the ship, using the captain's cabin, or having special meals brought to her while she was ill. At the same time she was careful to observe ship's discipline.

The weather was stormy and Lucie spent many days in very damp clothes, for her cabin was 'watertight as to big splashes, but damp and dribbling,' and the forecabin was

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under water with every lurch. She found that she liked such miseries and enjoyed the thrill of a stormy voyage: 'It can't be described; the sound, the sense of being hurled along utterly regardless of "side uppermost," the beauty of the whole scene, and the occasional crack and bear-away of the sails and spars; the officer trying to "sing out" quite in vain, and the boatswain's whistle quite inaudible. I got lashed near the wheel for as long as I could bear it every day, and was enchanted. . . . The intensely blue waves, crowned with fantastic crests of bright emeralds, and with spray blowing about like wild dishevelled hair, came after us to swallow us up at a mouthful, but took us up on their backs and hurried us along as if our ship were a cork. . . .

'The mortal perils of eating, drinking, moving, sitting, lying; standing, can't be done, even by the sailors, without holding on. The night of the gale my cot twice touched the beams of the deck above me. I asked the captain if I had dreamed it, but he said it was quite possible: he had never seen a ship so completely on her beam-ends come up all right, masts and yards sound. . . . The rolling and pitching of a ship of this size, with such tall masts, is quite unlike the little niggling sort of work on a steamer; it is the difference between grinding along a road in a four-wheeler, and riding well to hounds in a close country on a good jumper.'

Lucie, the invalid, was one of the few passengers who enjoyed the rough seas. Her table was strapped to the washstand, and she wrote letters while holding on with both legs and one arm, while she was tipped first on her back and then on her nose. She smoked a pipe or a cigar, and was one of the few who turned up to meals during the rough weather.

Unfortunately she had a cabin on the lower deck and the scuttle was not supposed to be open except in a dead calm,

with the result that the heat was stifling. Lucie had it open more often than she should have done and was twice flooded out, so that she had to dress standing on her trunks.

She had periods of illness, when she was forced to keep to her cabin. Then she was waited on devotedly by Avery, the cuddy boy, whom she had won over by her civility and by the present of an old pipe.

Lucie found entertainment in her companions, whose humours, she told Alexander, would have made him very angry. 'The naïf display of selfishness and absurdity on many hands is wonderful. Mr. and Mrs. Polson have fought the captain on every point. They want meals in their cabin at separate hours, fresh water *ad libitum*, candles and cooking lamps, *le diable à quatre*, and she is now prostrate with fits of hysterics (temper) such as I would not have believed in. She found some relief in slapping her black boy and her German maid, but still suffers severely. He (Polson) modestly asked me to use my "extraordinary influence" with the captain to have the uprights which support the main deck (where I sleep) *sawn in two* because they creak tremendously!! I could not keep my countenance at such a ridiculous idea.'

It was not long before Mrs. Polson had an excuse for a real fit of hysterics. In the middle of a hot August night a ship collided with the *St. Lawrence* and went on into the night without stopping. There was a crash of rigging, the sailors rushed up and down on deck, the captain shouted orders at the top of his voice, the soldiers stood at attention on deck and the women screamed. The ship had threatened once to crash into the *St. Lawrence* amidships, which would have probably sent her to the bottom, but the damage was little though the noise and confusion were great.

Lucie remained quietly in her cot waiting 'for the row or the ship to go down,' and Sally remained cool. 'The other

women,' said Lucie, 'rushed about like maniacs, and a diabolical scene ensued. Mrs. Polson rushed at me and implored me to get up and support her. I declined, and she clung to the officers and everyone within reach, shrieking and *hystericking*. Upstairs it was just as bad, and I found myself next day looked upon as an infidel by all the women, because I had been cool and declined to get up and yell. . . . Sally was as cool as an icicle, offered me my pea-jacket, etc., which I declined, as it could be of no use to me to go off in a boat, supposing there were time, and I preferred going down comfortably in my cot. Finding she was no use to me she took a yelling maid in custody and likewise got thought a brute for telling her to hold her tongue. I had no conception that women could behave so ill—such bare, abject cowardice.'

After that even the first lieutenant, who looked upon the passengers as 'odious cargo,' was nice to Lucie. He was overheard reporting to the captain: "There was Leddy Gordon right among 'em all, and never sung out, nor asked a question a' the time—that's beautiful."

Lucie's relations with the Polsons became a little strained, though she liked the daughter, an attractive girl of twenty-three, who was having an affair with a Mr. Adams, much to the annoyance of her parents.

Lucie thought much of her family but was glad that she had not brought her little daughter, Urania, with her, as she had contemplated doing, for the sea voyage would have been too difficult. 'There was a mid. about half Maurice's size, a very tiny ten-year-old, who was my delight. He was so completely "the officer and the gentleman." My maternal entrails turned like old Alvarez, when that baby ran out to the *very end* of the cross-jack yard to reef in the gale; the other new-comers all declined. . . . He was polite

THE ADVENTURE OF TRAVELLING

to the ladies and slightly distant to passenger boys bigger than himself, whom he ordered off dangerous places; "children, come out of that; you'll be overboard."

Besides the passengers there were seventy soldiers, who were commanded by young artillery officers, and there were five courts-martial and two floggings during the eight weeks of the voyage.

To Lucie, who had always read about other people's travels, it was a wonderful adventure to be herself the traveller. She felt she was experiencing something of one of her favourite books, Dana's *Two Years before the Mast*. Then she found to her delight that Captain J. Toynbee, who commanded the *St. Lawrence*, had been with Dana in California and he assured her that every word of the book was true.

Considering the discomfort of such travel and the amount of water that came into the cabins, Lucie remained surprisingly well and cheerful. She caught a bad cold by 'sleeping with a damp man,' as it was described. She arranged that a young officer of eighteen called Bellairs should be brought into her cabin. He had the cabin opposite hers, and after one of the gales she went in to find that there was two feet of water on the floor and eight inches in his bed. He had fever and his batman was in despair. She told the latter to put him into Sally's bunk in her cabin.

"Sure and I'd be proud to carry him into your bed at any time," declared the old soldier.

Sally was the chief person to suffer, as she had to sleep in a chair and dress in the young officer's cabin. After a few days Lucie was able to cure him, and in gratitude he gave her a poodle puppy, which had been born on board.

They anchored in Capetown on September 17, after a stormy voyage of nearly two months. Mr. Jamieson, the Port Captain, came on board with a letter of welcome to

Lucie from Sir Benjamin Walker, who sent his gig and a boat for Sally and the luggage.

She was taken to a boarding-house in Roeland Street, where Mr. Jamieson and his wife were living. Lucie, who was tired, dizzy and land-sick, lay down and went to sleep. 'After an hour or so I awoke, hearing a little gazouillement, like chimney swallows. On opening my eyes I beheld four demons, sons of the obedient jinn, each bearing an article of furniture, and holding converse over me in the language of Nephelococcygia. Why has no one ever mentioned the curious little soft voices of the coolies? You can't hear them with the naked ear three feet off. The most hideous demon (whose complexion had not only the colour but the precise metallic lustre of an ill black-leaded stove) at last chirruped a wish for orders, which I gave. I asked the pert, active, civil cockney housemaid what I ought to pay them, as being a stranger they might overcharge me. Her scorn was sublime:

"Them nasty blacks never ask more than their regular charge."

'The black-lead demon asked "two shillings each horse in waggon and a dollar each coolie man." He then glided with fiendish noiselessness about the room, arranging the furniture to his own taste, and finally said: "Poor Missis sick"; then more chirruping among themselves, accompanied by "God bless poor Missis! Soon well now." The wrath of the cockney housemaid became majestic:

"There, ma'am, you see how saucy they have grown: a nasty black, heathen Mohammedan a-blessing of a white Christian."

Chapter XXII

CAPETOWN

WHEN Lucie had recovered sufficiently to look out on the world from her lodgings she was delighted with the beauty of Table Bay and the fantastic jagged outline of the Hottentot Mountains in the distance. The leaves were on the trees in September in the beauty of an English spring and she was brought freshly gathered oranges.

She found the town itself picturesque with the flat roofs to be seen in the south of Europe, and with the old Dutch buildings, which she thought 'handsome and peculiar,' a little reminiscent of the houses in Norwich which she had known as a child. It was a different Capetown from that existing to-day with its modern streets and red-brick Houses of Parliament. Many of the old houses were being allowed to fall into decay, and there were no proper roads. When the 'south-easter' blew, the town disappeared in a cloud of dust, stones rattled against the windows, and omnibuses were blown over on the Rondebosch road.

She was coughing badly owing to the exceptionally bad weather. 'But when it is fine it is quite celestial, so clear, so dry, so light. Then comes a cloud over Table Mountain, like sugar on a wedding cake, which tumbles down in splendid waterfalls, and vanishes unaccountably half-way, and then you run indoors and shut doors and windows, for it portends the "Cape Doctor" (south-east wind), and keeps away cholera, fever of every sort, and all malignant or infectious diseases. Never was so healthy a place: but the remedy is

CAPETOWN

of the heroic nature and very disagreeable. . . . Yesterday the blessed sun shone out and the weather was lovely at once. The mountain threw off his cloak of cloud and all was bright and warm. I got up and sat on the verandah over the stoep (a kind of terrace in front of every house here). They brought me a tortoise as big as half a crown and as lively as a cricket to look at, and a chameleon, like a fairy dragon. To-day I went a lovely drive with Captain and Mrs. Jamieson, who have a beautiful open carriage, the only one in Capetown I believe. We went to Rondebosch and Wynberg—lovely country, rather like Herefordshire, red earth and oak trees. . . . You pass neat villas, with pretty gardens and stoeps, gay with flowers, and at the doors several neat Malay girls are lounging. Then you see a group of children at play, some as black as coal, some brown and very pretty. A little black girl, about Urania's size, has tied what little petticoat she has carefully in a tight coil round her waist, and displays the most darling little round legs and a behind which it would be a real pleasure to slap, it is so shiny and round, and she runs and stands so strongly and gracefully.

'The voice and smile of the negroes here are bewitching, though they are hideous; and neither Sally nor I have yet heard a black child cry, or seen one naughty or quarrelsome. You would want to lay out a fortune in woolly babies. Yesterday I had a dreadful heart-ache after Rainey (Urania), on her little birthday, and even these lovely ranges of distant mountains, coloured like opals in the sunset, did not delight me.'

Lucie found it lonely at first at Capetown, 'a dreary place for strangers, as people have no idea of hospitality.' Her experience is not that of other travellers of the time. If it had been Sarah visiting the Cape she would almost certainly have collected a small clique of distinguished people to tea at

the boarding-house, but Lucie had either no inclination or insufficient energy to make the effort. There is one person, however, whom Lucie would almost certainly have gone to see if she had known he was in Capetown, and that was George Meredith's father, who had a tailor's shop in St. George's Street. It was only the previous year that he had read *Evan Harrington*, when it appeared serially in *Once a Week*.

Soon after arriving in Capetown Lucie acted a Lady Jocelyn part in championing Miss Polson, the daughter of the couple she had disliked on board the *St. Lawrence*. Mr. Adams and Miss Polson had decided to get married, but the parents would not consider it. When she told them that she was in love with him and determined to marry, they set upon her and beat her. The first person that the young couple appealed to was Lucie, and a plan was arranged: 'Mr. Adams is going to run away with Miss Polson to-night and marry her to-morrow morning. Her parents have nearly killed her with beating and cruelty.' The Polsons were, however, on the watch and the plan failed.

Finally her parents, in a fit of rage, turned her out of doors and told her to go to Mr. Adams. She came to Lucie not knowing what else to do. 'I could not refuse to take her in under the circumstances, and she stayed a week, and we tried all we could to get her parents to let her go to the Dean who kindly offered to take her; but as they would do nothing but curse and threaten to lock her up if they caught her, Mr. Adams married her three days ago. My story sounds crazy, but you may imagine that I saw enough on board ship to give me a worse opinion of Mr. and Mrs. P. than ever I had of anyone, to do such a thing at all. Only Balzac could imagine such a family.'

Chapter XXIII

DUTCH, ENGLISH AND MALAYS

SOUTH AFRICA was going through a period of transition. Relations between employer and employed were still unsettled, although nearly thirty years had passed since the emancipation of slaves. The great Boer Trek northwards in 1836 had disturbed the natural development of the Colony and left Capetown and the surrounding country thinly populated. An economic depression had set in, from which South Africa only recovered on the discovery of diamonds some time after Lucie's visit.

'The Dutch round Capetown are sulky and dispirited,' wrote Lucie; 'they regret the slave days, and can't bear to pay wages; they have sold all their fine houses in town to merchants, etc., and let their handsome country places go to pieces and the land lie fallow, rather than hire the men they used to own. They hate the Malays who were their slaves, and whose "insolent prosperity" annoys them, and they don't like the vulgar, bustling English.

'The English complain that the Dutch won't die, and that they are the curse of the Colony (a statement for which they can never give a reason). But they, too, curse the emancipation, long to flog the niggers, and hate the Malays, who work hard and don't drink, and are the only masons and tailors, etc. Few of the English will do anything but lounge, while they abuse the Dutch as lazy, and the Malays as thieves, and feel their fingers itch to be at the blacks.

'The Africanders (Dutch and negro mixed in various pro-

PICTURESQUE DRESSES

portions) are more or less lazy, dirty and dressy, and the beautiful girls wear pork-pie hats, and look very winning and rather fierce. . . . The great mania of the poor blacks about Capetown is a grand toilet table of muslin over pink, all set out with little "objets" such as they are, then a handsome bed with at least eight pillows.' She found the same passion to own a 'duchesse' among the negresses and 'Hottentots' up-country: 'I shall never see those toilets again without thinking of Hottentots—what a baroque association of ideas!'

While Lucie saw hardly anything of her British compatriots, she saw much of the Malays, and was full of praise of their good looks and manners. Originally brought to South Africa as slaves from the East Indies by the Dutch East India Company, many of them had been leading personalities in their own country and had been banished to the Cape for political reasons. The Malays were then more of a racial entity than they are now. They wore a big, picturesque straw hat with a pointed crown, called a *tondang*, and walked about in clogs. The women wore well-starched skirts over many petticoats, and full white sleeves rather like those in which Lucie used to keep her pet snake when she was a girl. Their black hair, dressed high and fastened with gold ornamental pins, shone with cocoanut oil; a black curl was pressed to each cheek, and a coloured shawl thrown over the shoulders. Soon after Lucie's Cape visit Muslim missionaries came from Turkey and were shocked to see how boldly the attractive Malay girls displayed their faces, and insisted that the *yashmak* and black draperies should be introduced; the *tondang* gradually gave place to the *fez*, and the *kaparangs* to elastic-sided boots or patent-leather shoes.¹

Lucie made great friends with an old Malay, Abdul Jamaalee,

¹ Dorothea Fairbridge in her edition of Lady Duff Gordon's *Letters from the Cape*, Oxford University Press, 1927.

and his wife Betty, who had been slaves to Dutch owners. They now kept a fruit-shop with 'Betsy Fruiterer' painted on the back of an old tin tray which hung by the door of the house. 'Abdul first bought himself and then his wife, whose "Missis" generously "lumped in" Betsy's bedridden old mother. He is a fine handsome old man, and has confided to me that £5000 would not buy what he was worth now. I have also read the letters written by his son, Abdul Rachman, now a student at Cairo, who has been away five years, four years passed at Mecca. The young theologian writes to his "Hoog eerbare Moedar" (Highly honoured Mother) a fond request for money and promises to return soon. I am invited to the feast wherewith he will be welcomed. Old Abdul thinks it will divert my mind, and prove to me that Allah will take me safe home to my children, about whom he and his wife ask many questions. Moreover he compelled me to drink herb tea, compounded by a Malay doctor, for my cough.

declined at first, and the poor old man looked hurt and gravely assured me that it was not true that Malays always poisoned Christians, and drank some himself. Thereupon I was forced, of course, to drink up the rest, and it certainly did me good, and I have drunk it since with good effect; it is intensely bitter and rather sticky. The white servants and the Dutch landlady where I lodge shake their heads ominously, and hope it won't poison me a year hence. "Them nasty Malays can make it work months after you take it." They also possess the evil eye and a talent for love potions. As the men are very handsome and neat, I incline to believe that part of it!

Lucie found that the best way of making friends with the Malays was to accept their hospitality, for they were very sensitive about the widespread superstition that they poisoned Christians. 'I went on the last evening of Ramadan to the

mosque in Capetown, having heard there was a grand "function," but there were only little boys lying about on the floor, some on their stomachs, some on their backs, higgledy-piggledy (if it be not profane to apply the phrase to young Islam), all shouting their prayers à tue-tête. Priests, men, women and English crowded in and out in the exterior division. The English behaved à l'anglaise—pushed each other, laughed, sneered and made beasts of themselves. I asked a handsome, stately priest, in a red turban, to explain the affair to me, and in a few minutes found myself supplied by one Mollah with a chair, and by another with a cup of tea,—and was, in short, in the midst of a Malay soirée. They spoke English very little, but made up for it by their usual good breeding and intelligence. . . .

'The faithful poured in, all neatly dressed in their loose drab trousers, blue jackets, and red handkerchiefs on their heads; they left their wooden clogs in company with my shoes, and proceeded, as it appeared, to strip. Off went jackets, waistcoats, and trousers, with the dexterity of a pantomime transformation; the red handkerchief was replaced by a white skull-cap, and a long, large, white shirt and full white drawers flowed around them. How it had all been stuffed into the trim jacket and trousers, one could not conceive. Gay sashes and scarves were pulled out of a little bundle in a clean silk handkerchief, and a towel served as prayer carpet. In a moment the whole scene was as oriental as if the hansom cab I had come in existed no more. Women suckled their children, and boys played among the clogs and shoes all the time, and I sat on the floor in a remote corner. The chanting was very fine, and the whole ceremony very decorous and solemn. It lasted an hour; and then the little heaps of garments were put on, and the congregation dispersed.'

'I am going to see the school which the priest keeps at his

house, and to "honour his house by my presence." The delight they show at any friendly interest taken in them is wonderful. Of course I am supposed to be poisoned. A clergyman's widow here gravely asserts that her husband went mad *three years* after drinking a cup of coffee handed to him by a Malay!—and in consequence of drinking it! It is exactly like the mediaeval feeling about the Jews. I saw that it was quite a demonstration that I drank up the tea unhesitatingly. Considering that the Malays drank it themselves, my courage deserves less admiration. But it was a quaint sensation to sit in a mosque, behaving as if at an evening party, in a little circle of poor Muslim priests.'

Already Lucie was beginning to acquire that interest in the manners and way of thinking of Orientals, especially Muslims, which made her such close friends with the people in Luxor during her exile in Egypt. She often wandered into the mosques or to some Muslim ceremony or other. 'I sat in the full broil for an hour or more in the hot dust of the Malay burial-ground. They buried the head butcher of the Mohammedans, and a most strange, poetical scene it was. The burial-ground is on the side of Lion Mountain—on the Lion's rump—and overlooks the whole Bay, part of the town, and the most superb mountain panorama beyond. I never saw a view within miles of it for beauty and grandeur. Far down below a fussy English steamer came puffing and popping into the deep blue bay, and the hansom cabs went tearing down to the landing-place; while round me sat a crowd of grave, brown men, chanting "Allah il Allah" to the monotonous but musical air, and with such perfect voices. The chant seemed to swell, and then fade, like the wind in the trees. I went in after the procession, which consisted of a bier covered with three common Paisley shawls of gay colours; no one looked at me, and when they got near the grave I kept at a distance

MUSLIM BURIAL

and sat down when they did. But a man came up and said, "You are welcome." So I went close and saw the whole ceremony. They took the corpse, wrapped in a sheet, out of a bier, and lifted it into the grave, where two men received it; then a sheet was held over the grave till they had placed the dead man, and then flowers and earth were thrown in by all present, the grave was filled in, watered out of a brass kettle, and decked with flowers.

'A white-complexioned man spoke to me in excellent English (which few of them speak) and was very communicative and civil. He told me the dead man was his brother-in-law, and that he was himself the barber. I hoped I had not taken a liberty.

"Oh no, poor Malays were proud when noble English persons showed such respect to their religion. The young Prince" (the Duke of Edinburgh) "had done so, too, and Allah would not forget to protect him. He also did not laugh at their prayers, praise be to God."

'I had already heard that Prince Alfred is quite the darling of the Malays. He insisted on accepting their festival which Capetown people had snubbed.'

Chapter XXIV

VISIT UP-COUNTRY

‘To those who think voyages and travels tiresome, my delight in the new birds, beasts and people must seem very stupid,’ wrote Lucie. ‘I can’t help it if it does, and am not ashamed to confess that I feel the old sort of enchanted wonder with which I used to read Cook’s voyages, and the like, as a child. It is very coarse and unintellectual of me; but I would rather see this now, at my age, than Italy; the fresh, new beautiful nature is a second youth—or childhood—*si vous voulez*. . . . No one *can* conceive what it is, after two years of prison and utter languor, to stand on the top of a mountain pass, and enjoy physical existence for a few hours at a time. I felt it was quite selfish to enjoy anything so much when you were all so anxious about me at home.’

Lucie felt better. She had left off blood-spitting, but she still coughed very badly and she found Capetown very cold in spite of the advancing summer. ‘I am puzzled what to think of the climate here for invalids. I think it has certainly done me good. Many of the people here declare that it is death to weak lungs, and send their *poitrinaires* to Madeira or the South of France. They also swear that the climate is enervating, but their looks, and above all the blousy cheeks and hearty play of the English children, disprove that; and those who come here consumptive get well in spite of the doctors, who won’t allow it possible.’

At the end of the year 1861 she went to stay with Admiral and Lady Walker at Simon’s Bay. From there she started

northwards for Caledon, a little dreading 'the up-country dirt and savagery.'

For three days she travelled with Sally in a light cart with two wheels and four horses, driven by a Malay called Choslullah. 'We had three good little half-Arab bays and one brute of a grey as off-wheeler, who fell down continually, but a Malay driver works miracles and no harm came of it. The cart is small, with a permanent tilt at the top, and movable curtains of waterproof all round; harness of raw leather, very prettily put together by Malay workmen. We sat behind and our brown coachman, with his mushroom hat, in front, with my bath and box, and a miniature of himself about seven years old—a nephew—so small and handy that he would be worth his weight in jewels as a tiger. At Earste River we slept in a pretty old Dutch house, kept by an Englishwoman, and called the 'Fox and Hound,' "to sound like home, my lady." Very nice and comfortable it was. I started next day at ten and never shall I forget that day's journey. The beauty of the country exceeds all description. Ranges of mountains beyond belief fantastic in shape, and between them a rolling country, desolate and wild, and covered with gorgeous flowers among the scrub. . . . We climbed the Hottentot Mountains by Sir Lowry's pass, a long curve round two hill-sides—and what a view! Simon's Bay opening out far below, and range upon range of crags on one side with a fertile plain, in which lies Hottentot's Holland at one's feet; it is indescribable. The road is just wide enough for one waggon, *i.e.* very narrow. Where the smooth rock came through, Choslullah gave a little grunt, and the three bays went off like hippogriffs, dragging the grey with them. By this time my confidence in his driving was boundless, or I should have expected to find myself in atoms at the bottom of the precipice. At the top of the pass we turned a sharp

VISIT UP-COUNTRY

corner into a scene like the crater of a volcano, only reaching for miles all round, and we descended a very little and drove along great rolling waves of country, with the mountain tops all crags and ruins to our left. I can't tell you how I longed for you in my journey. You would have been so delighted with the country, and the queer turn-out—the wild little horses, and the polite and delicately-clean Muslim driver. His description of his suffering from "louses," when he slept in a Dutch farm, were pathetic, and ever since he sleeps in his cart with his little boy; and they bathe in the nearest river, and eat their lawful food and drink their water out of doors. They declined beer and meat which had been unlawfully killed. In Capetown *all* meat is killed by Malays, and has the proper prayer spoken over it, and they will eat no other. I was offered a fowl at a farm, but Choslullah thought it "too much money for Missis," and only accepted some eggs. He was gratified at my recognising the propriety of his saying "Bismillah" over any animal killed for food. Some drink beer, and drink a good deal, but Choslullah thought it "very wrong for Malay people, and not good for Christian people, to be drunk beasties; a little wine or beer good for Christians, but not too plenty much."

'I gave him ten shillings for himself at which he was enchanted, and begged me to write to his master for him when I wanted to leave Caledon, and to be sure to say, "mind send same coachman."'

Chapter XXV

THE PEOPLE OF CALEDON

'I WISH you were here to see the curious ways and new aspect of everything,' Lucie wrote to Alexander from Caledon. 'This village, which is very like Rochefort, but hardly so large, is the chef lieu of a district the size of one-third of England. A civil commander resides here, a sort of préfet; and there is an embryo market-place, with a bell hanging in a brick arch. When a waggon arrives with goods, it draws up there, they ring the bell, everybody goes to see what is for sale, and the goods are sold by auction. My host bought potatoes and brandy the other day, and is looking out for ostrich feathers for me, out of men's hats. . . . I like this inn-life, because I see all the "neighbourhood"—farmers and traders—whom I like far better than the *gentility* of Capetown.

'The Post-master, Herr Klein, and his old Pylades, Herr Ley, are great cronies of mine—stout old grey-beards, toddling down the hill together. I sometimes go and sit on their stoep with the two old bachelors, and they take it as a great compliment; and Herr Klein gave me my letters all decked with flowers, and wished "Vrolyke tydings, Mevrouw," most heartily. He has also made his tributary mail-cart Hottentots bring the beautiful everlasting flowers from various higher mountain ranges, which will make pretty wreaths for Janet. When I went to his house to thank him, I found a handsome Malay, with a basket of klipkans, a shell-fish much esteemed here, which old Klein told me were sent him by a Malay

who was born in his father's house, a slave, and had been *his boy* and playfellow. Now, the slave is far richer than the old young master, and no waggon comes without a little gift—oranges, fish, etc.—for “Wilhelm.” When he goes to Capetown the old Malay seats him in a grand chair and sits on a little wooden stool at his feet; Klein begs him, as Huisherr, to sit properly; but, “No, Wilhelm, I cannot forget.”

“Good boy!” said old Klein; “Good people the Malays.”

‘It is a relief after the horrors one has heard of Dutch cruelty, to see such an idyllic situation. I have heard other instances of the same fidelity from Malays, but they were utterly unappreciated, and only told to prove the excellence of slavery, and “how well the rascals must have been off.”’

‘Klein, who told me several instances of the kindness and gratitude of former slaves, poured out to me the misery he had undergone from the “ingratitude” of a certain Rosina, a slave girl of his. She was in her youth handsome, clever, the best horse-breaker, bullock-trainer and driver, and hardest worker in the district. She had two children by Klein, then a young fellow; six by another white man, and a few more by “two husbands of her own,” but she was of a rebellious spirit, and took to drink. After the emancipation she used to go in front of Klein’s windows and read the Statute in a loud voice on every anniversary of the day; and, as if that did not *rile* him enough, she pertinaciously (whenever she was a little drunk) kissed him by main force whenever she met him in the street, exclaiming: “Aha! When I young pretty slave-girl you kissed me; now, I damn ugly, drunk, dirty old devil and free woman, I kiss you!” Frightful retributive justice! I struggled hard to keep my countenance, but the fat old fellow’s good-humoured rueful face was too much for me. His tormentor is dead, but he retains a painful impression of her “ingratitude.”’

‘Nearly all the people in Caledon are Dutch. The coloured population is a sad spectacle, so drunken, hideous and sullen-looking. Harvest is now going on, and the so-called Hottentots are earning 2s. 6d. a day, with rations and wine; but all the money goes in the canteen in drink, and the poor wretches—men and women—are drunk all day, and look wasted and degraded. The children are pretty and a few of the half-breed girls do very well, unless a white man admires them; and then they think it quite an honour to have a whitey-brown child, which happens at about fifteen, by which age they look full twenty.

‘There are no so-called “morals” among the coloured people, and how or why should there be? It is an honour to have a child by a white man, and it is a degradation to him to marry a dark girl. An old Dutchman boasted here one day of having had sixteen children born on his farm of his own begetting in one day. A pious, stiff old Dutchwoman who came here for the Sacrament the other day, which takes place twice a year, had one girl with her big with child by her son (who also came to the Sacrament) and two in the straw at home by the other son—this caused her exactly as much emotion as I feel when my cat kittens. No one takes any notice either to blame or to nurse the poor things; they scramble through it as pussy does. . . . The English are almost as contemptuous (as the Dutch), but there is one great difference. My host always calls a black, “a d—d nigger”; but if that nigger is wronged or oppressed he fights for him, or bails him out of the tronk, and an English jury gives a just verdict; while a Dutch one simply finds for the Dutchman, against anyone else, and *always* against a dark man. I believe this to be true from what I have seen and heard; and certainly the coloured people have a wonderful preference for the English.

'I quite miss the pleasant black and brown faces of Capetown. I suppose the benefits of the emancipation were felt there sooner than in the country, and the Malay population there furnishes a strong element of sobriety and respectability, which sets an example to the other coloured people. There is one Malay here, but he is obliged to be a Christian at Caledon, though Choslullah told me with a grin that he was a very good Malay when he went to Capetown. He didn't seem to be shocked at this double religion, staunch Mohammedan as he was himself.

'An old "Bastaard" woman, married to the Malay tailor here, explained to me my popularity with the coloured people, as set forth by "dat Malay boy," my driver. He told them that he was sure I was a "very great Missis," because of my "plenty good behaviour"; that I spoke to him just as to a white gentleman, and did not "laugh and talk nonsense talk," and was especially surprised at my stopping on the road at Rathfelders, to give a bit of cotton for a frock to a pretty brown child and addressing her grandfather (a respectable old Canadian black sailor) as "Mr. Dawson," and speaking politely to him. "Never say, 'Here you black fellow!' dat Missis."

'The English, when they mean to be good-natured, are generally offensively familiar, and talk nonsense talk, *i.e.* imitate the Dutch English of the Malays and blacks; and they feel it the greatest compliment to be treated au sérieux, and spoken to in good English. Choslullah's theory was that I must be related to the Queen in consequence of my not "knowing bad behaviour!" The Malays, who are intelligent and proud, of course, feel the annoyance of vulgar familiarity more than the blacks, who are rather awestruck by civility though they like it and admire it.

'We have a new "boy" (all coloured servants are "boys"—

a remnant of slavery) and he is the type of the nigger slave. A thief, a liar, a glutton, a drunkard—but you can't resent it; he has a naïf, half-foolish, half-knavish buffoonery, a total want of self-respect, which disarms you. . . . He is the product of slavery: he pretends to be a simpleton in order to do less work and eat and drink and sleep more than a reasonable human being, and he knows his buffoonery will get him out of scrapes. Withal, thoroughly good-natured and obliging, and perfectly honest, except where food and drink are concerned, which he pilfers like a monkey. He worships Sally and won't allow her to carry anything or to dirty her hands, if he is in the way to do it. Someone suggested to him to kiss her, but he declined with terror, and said that he would be hanged by my orders if he did. He is a hideous little negro, with a monstrous shaped head, every colour of the rainbow on his clothes, and a power of making faces which would enchant a schoolboy. The height of his ambition would be to go to England with me.

'I made friends here the other day with a lively little dried-up old Irishman, who came out at seven years old a pauper boy. He has made a fortune by "going on Toch" (Tausch, barter), thus—he charters two waggons, twelve oxen each, and two Hottentots to each waggon, leader and driver. These he fills with cotton, hardware, etc., an ambulatory village "shop"—and goes about fifteen miles a day, on and on, into the far interior, swapping calico, loose trousers, and cotton gown pieces against oxen and sheep. When all is gone he swaps his waggons against more oxen and a horse, and he and his four "totties" drive home the spoil; and he has doubled and trebled his venture. En route home every day they kill a sheep and eat it all.

"What," say I, "the whole?"

"Every bit; I always take one leg and the liver for myself,

and the totties roast the rest, and melt all the fat and entrails down in an iron pot, and eat it with a wooden spoon."

'Je n'en revenais pas. "What! the whole leg and liver at one meal?"

"Every bit, aye, and you'd do the same, Ma'am, if you were there."

'No bread, no salt, no nothing. The old fellow was quite poetic and heroic in describing the joys and perils of Toch. I said I should like to go too; and he bewailed having settled a year ago in a store at Swellendam:

"Else I'd ha' fitted up a waggon all nice and snug for you, and shown you what going on Toch was like. Nothing like it for the health, Ma'am, and beautiful shooting."

'My friend had £700 in gold in a carpet bag without a lock, lying about on the stoep.

"All right, nobody steals money or such like here. I'm going to pay bills in Capetown."

At the beginning of the year 1862 Lucie wrote home from Caledon: 'We have had tremendous festivities here, a ball on New Year's Eve, and another on the 1st of January,—and the shooting for Prince Alfred's Rifle yesterday. What figures were there of negroes and coloured people! I longed for a photographer. Some coloured lads were exquisitely graceful and kept doing beautiful tableaux vivants, after Murillo's beggar boys. A poor little, very old Bosjesman (Hottentot) crept up, and was jeered and bullied. I scolded the lad who abused him for being rude to an old man, whereupon the poor little old creature constituted himself my adorer for the day, squatted on the ground close by (for which he would have been kicked but for me), took off his ragged hat, and sat staring and nodding his queer little grey woolly head at me, and jabbering some little soliloquy very sotto voce. There was something shocking in the timidity

with which he took the plate of food I gave him, and in the way he ate it with the *wrong* side of his little yellow hand, like a monkey. A black, who had helped to fetch the hamper, suggested to me to give him wine instead of meat and bread, and make him drunk *for fun* (the blacks and Hottentots copy the white man's manners *to them*, when they get hold of a Bosjesman to practise upon): but upon this a handsome West Indian black, who had been cooking the pies and things, flared up, and told him that he was a "nasty black rascal, and a Dutchman to boot," to insult a lady and an old man at once. If you could see the difference between one negro and another, you would be quite convinced that education (*i.e.* circumstance) makes the race. It was hardly conceivable that the hideous, dirty, bandy-legged, ragged creature, who looked down on the Bosjesman, was of the same blood as the well-made, smart, handsome fellow with his fine eyes, jaunty red cap and snow-white shirt and trousers, answering to the name of "Bill" and as alert as the best German Kellner; nothing but the colour was alike. Then came a Dutchman, and asked for sixpennorth of "brot and kas" and haggled for beer; and Englishmen who bought chickens and champagne without asking the price. One rich old Boer got three lunches, and then trekked without paying at all. Then came a "Hottentot," stupidly drunk, with a fiddle, and was beaten by a little red-haired Scotchman, and his fiddle smashed. The "Hottentot" hit at his aggressor, who then declared he *had been* a policeman, and insisted on taking him into custody and to "tronk" (prison) on his own authority, but was in turn sent flying by a gigantic Irishman, who "wouldn't see the poor baste abused." The Irishman was a farmer; and I never saw such a Hercules—like the late Lord Jocelyn, only much bigger and stronger—and beaming with fun and good nature. . . .

'I hear that the Scotchman who attacked poor Aria, the crazy "Hottentot," is a "revival lecturer," and was "simply exhorting him to break his fiddle and come to Christ" (the phrase is a clergyman's I beg to observe); and the Saints are indignant that, after executing the pious purpose as far as the fiddle went, he was prevented by the chief constable from dragging him to the tronk. Whatever else may vary, the "godly" are everywhere the same. The "revival" mania has broken out rather badly in some places; the infection was brought from St. Helena I am told. At Capetown, old Abdul Jamaalee told me that English Christians were getting more like Malays, and had begun to hold Khalifas at Simon's Bay. These are festivals in which Mohammedan enthusiasts and also cheats, I presume, run knives into their flesh, go into convulsions, etc., to the sound of music, like the Arabs described by Houdin. Of course the poor blacks go quite demented (those who think themselves Christians at least), and some clergymen have taken it up and I fear will do a great deal of mischief.'

Lucie saw a fair amount of Bill, 'the handsome West Indian black,' for he married her pretty washerwoman Rosalind, 'and was thought rather assuming because he was asked in Church and lawfully married; and she wore a handsome lilac silk gown and a white wreath and veil, and very well she looked in them. She had a child of two years old, which did not at all disconcert Bill; but he continues to be dignified, and won't let her go and wash clothes in the river, because the hot sun makes her ill, and it is not fit work for women. . . . Few of the coloured people are ever married but they don't separate oftener than *really* married folks. . . .

'I regret to say that Bill's wife has broken his head with a bottle, at the end of the honeymoon. I fear that the innovation of being *married in Church* has not had a good effect.

THE 'LAST' HOTTENTOT

'All who come here make love to Sally; not by describing their tender feelings, but by enumerating the oxen, sheep, horses, land, money, etc., of which they are possessed, and whereof by the law of this colony she would become half-owner on marriage. There is a fine handsome Van Steen, who is very persevering; but Sally does not seem to fancy becoming Mevrouw at all. The demand for English girls as wives is wonderful here. The nasty, cross little ugly Scotch maid has had three offers already, in one fortnight!'

Soon after the New Year festivities Lucie went by Cape cart, 'rattled up like dice in a box,' to Genadendal, twenty-four miles away. The mission station there was founded in 1737 by the Moravian missionary, George Schmidt. Lucie and Sally sat in the shade of the oak trees planted by Schmidt himself before he was driven out of the country by edict of the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church when he started to baptize his Hottentot converts.

'A lovely spot it is,' she wrote, 'a large village nestled in a deep valley, surrounded by high mountains on three sides, and a lower range in front. . . . First I must tell you what struck me most. I asked one of the Herrnhut brethren whether there were any real Hottentots, and he said: "Yes, one." And next morning, as I sat waiting early prayers under the big oak trees in the square, he came up, followed by a tiny old man hobbling along with a long stick to support him.

"Here is the *last* Hottentot; he is a hundred and seven years old and lives all alone."

'I looked on the little wizened, yellow face and was shocked that he should be dragged up like a wild beast to be stared at. A feeling of pity which was like remorse fell upon me, and my eyes failed as I rose and stood before him, so tall and like a tyrant and oppressor, while he uncovered his poor little old snow-white head, and peered up in my face. I

led him to the seat, and helped him to sit down and said in Dutch :

“Father, I hope you are not tired ; you are old.” He saw and heard as well as ever, and spoke in *good* Dutch in a firm voice :

“Yes, I am above a hundred years old, and alone—quite alone.”

‘I sat beside him, and he put his head on one side, and looked curiously up at me with his faded, but still piercing little wild eyes. Perhaps he had a perception of what I felt—yet I hardly think so ; perhaps he thought I was in trouble, for he crept close up to me, and put one tiny brown paw into my hand and stroked me with the other, and asked (like most coloured people) if I had children. I said : “Yes, at home in England” ; and he patted my hand again and said : “God Bless them !” It was a relief to feel that he was pleased, for I should have felt like a murderer if my curiosity had added a moment’s pain to so tragic a fate.

‘This may sound like sentimentalism ; but you cannot conceive the effect of looking on the last of a race once the owners of all this land, and now utterly gone. His look was not quite human, physically speaking ;—a good head ; small wild-beast eyes, piercing and restless ; cheek-bones strangely high and prominent, nose *quite* flat, mouth rather wide ; thin shapeless lips, and an indescribably small, long, pointed chin, with just a very little soft, white wool ; his head covered with quite close extremely short white wool, which ended round the poll in little sort of ringlets. Hands and feet like an English child of seven or eight, and person about the size of a child of eleven. He had all his teeth, and though shrunk to nothing, was very little wrinkled in the face, and not at all in the hands, which were dark brown while his face was yellow. His manner and way of speaking were like those

COLOURED CONGREGATION

of an old peasant in England, only his voice was clearer and stronger and his perceptions not blunted by age. He had travelled with one of the missionaries in 1790, or thereabouts, and remained with them ever since.

‘I went into the Church—a large clean, rather handsome building, consecrated in 1800—and heard a very good sort of Litany, mixed with such singing as only black voices can produce. The organ was beautifully played by a Bastard lad, exactly like Arthur Prinsep, only a shade or two darker and with silkier hair. The Herrenhutens use very fine chants, like old Catholic ones, and the perfect ear and heavenly voices of a large congregation, about 600, all coloured people, made music more beautiful than any chorus singing I ever heard.

‘In a quarter of an hour a much larger congregation than the first assembled, the girls all with net-handkerchiefs tied round their heads so as to look exactly like the ancient Greek head-dress with a double fillet—the very prettiest and neatest coiffure I ever saw. The gowns were made like those of English girls of the same class, but far smarter, cleaner and gayer in colour; pink and green and yellow and bright blue; and several were all in white, with white gloves.

‘The Hottentots, as they are called—that is, those of mixed Dutch and Hottentot origin (correctly “Bastaards”)—have a sort of blackguard elegance in their gait and figure which is peculiar to them. A mixture of negro or Mozambique blood (black blood) alters it altogether. The girls have the elegance without the blackguard look. All are slender, most are tall; all graceful, all have good hands and feet; some few are handsome in the face and many very interesting-looking. The complexion is a pale olive-yellow, and the hair more or less woolly; face flat, and cheek-bones high, eyes small and bright. These are by far the most intelligent—equal, indeed, to whites. A mixture of black blood often gives real beauty,

but takes off from the "air," and generally from the talent; but then the blacks are so pleasant, and the Hottentots are taciturn and reserved. The old women of this breed are the grandest hags I ever saw; they are clean and well dressed, and tie up their old faces in white handkerchiefs like corpses, and have faces like Andrea del Sarto's old women; they are splendid. Also, they are addicted to tubbing more than others. The maid-of-all-work who lounges about your breakfast table in rags and dishevelled hair has been in the river before you were awake, or, if that was too far off, in a tub. They are also far cleaner in their huts than any but the *very best* English poor.

'All Genadendal is wonderfully fruitful, being well watered, but it is not healthy for whites; I imagine, too hot and damp. There are three or four thousand coloured people there, under the control of the missionaries, who allow no canteens at all. The people may have what they please at home, but no public drinking place is allowed, and we had to take our own wine and beer for the three days. . . . It is not popular in the neighbourhood: "You see it makes the d—d niggers cheeky" to have homes of their own.

'This morning I walked on the veld, and met a young black shepherd leading his sheep and goats, and playing on a guitar composed of an old tin mug covered with a bit of sheepskin and a handle of rough wood, with pegs, and three strings of sheepgut. I asked him to sing and he flung himself at my feet in an attitude that would send Watts crazy with delight, and crooned queer little mournful ditties. I gave him sixpence, and told him not to get drunk. He said:

"Oh no; I will buy bread to make my belly stiff—I almost never have my belly stiff."

'He likewise informed me he had just been in the prison and on my asking why, replied:

“ Oh, for fighting and telling lies.”

“ Die liebe Unschuld !”

The higher altitude up-country had improved Lucie's health considerably. 'I feel really better now,' she wrote in February 1862. 'A clergyman told me that he came here some years ago with one lung gone and the other diseased, and that he went through six months of the process of coughing and spitting exactly as I do, only worse, and at the end of it was quite well. The red mark on my cheek has nearly vanished. I cough much less and have no more pain. . . . This climate is evidently a styptic of great power. I shall write a few lines to the *Lancet* about Caledon and its hot baths. The baths do not concern me as they are chalybeate; but they seem very effectual in many cases. Yet English people never come here. They stay at Capetown, which must be a furnace now, or at Wynberg, which is damp and chill (comparatively), at most they go to Stellenbosch. I mean visitors not settlers; they are everywhere. I look the colour of a Hottentot.'

Lucie said that she believed that the constant eating of grapes had done her a great deal of good. She found them so excellent that she was surprised that they did not succeed in making better wine. When she saw how primitive was the system, the grapes trodden under foot by a Hottentot, she wrote home to procure for them an exact account of the Spanish process. 'They literally know nothing about wine-making here, and with such matchless grapes I am sure it ought to be good. Altogether outworn methods prevail at the Cape to an incredible degree.'

Although the grapes and the climate were doing Lucie so much good, she had to begin to think of returning home, for her money was running short. She also had a longing to see her family. 'To-day my letter is come; and it does not tranquillise my anxious heart,' wrote Sarah in her cottage at

Weybridge. 'She is not worse, the blood spitting has not returned, but she writes in a depressed tone, and seems to feel her absence and privations very painfully. Her longing for home is almost an illness. God help us through this miserable time! . . . Her letters are most interesting, full of acute observation, and original, courageous reflections on all around her. I hope she will print at least some part of them. They will have great value for all people who want to find a *really* perfect climate—heat combined with the greatest freshness and salubrity—"the climate of Paradise" as she says.

'Far different, I fear, is that of Egypt, judging from poor Janet's pale face. She says the summer is quite intolerable. As, however, I am in the way (I believe) to be a great-grandmother, I am less dissatisfied with her looks than I would otherwise be. I begin to feel that it is time for me to leave a world where three generations are pressing on behind me; but God's will be done in this and in all things.'

When it was first suggested to Lucie that she should publish some of her letters she wrote: 'My dear Alick, you must have fallen into second childhood to think of *printing* such rambling, hasty scrawls as I write; . . . only I fancy *you* will be amused by some of my impressions.' But when she had thought about it a little more and realised how short they were of money, she wrote to Alexander to suggest that after all he might consult Meredith about publishing, 'so as to turn an honest penny.'

Meredith was in favour of publishing the 'Cape Diary.' 'It is immensely amusing,' he wrote to Janet, 'and shews her fine manly nature admirably. O what a gallant soul she is! And how very much I love her!'

Chapter XXVI

THE RETURN HOME

ALTHOUGH Lucie wrote cheerfully and took an intense interest in all the new life round her, she had all the time a yearning to get home, and in March 1862 she prepared to leave Caledon.

Choslullah tried to come to fetch 'his Missis,' but he was unable to get away from Capetown. A smaller and blacker Malay arrived, whom Choslullah had threatened to curse heavily if he failed to take great care of Lucie.

She took leave of old Klein and the various friends she had made, white, brown, black and yellow, and started on her journey with Sally and Sabaal, the new driver, in the same kind of light Malay cart with four horses. 'Oh, such a journey! Such a country! Pearly mountains and deep-blue sky, and an impassable pass to walk down, and baboons, and secretary-birds, and tortoises! I couldn't sleep for it all last night, tired as I was with the unutterably bad road, or track rather. . . . It is of no use to describe this scenery: it is always mountains, and always beautiful opal mountains; quite without the gloom of European mountain scenery. The atmosphere must make the charm. . . . You don't know what that utter clearness means—the distinctness is quite awful. Capetown is always slightly hazy; very pretty and warm, but it takes off from the grandeur. It is the difference between a pretty Pompadour beauty and a Greek statue. Those pale, opal mountains, as distinct in every detail as the map on your table, are so cheerful and serene: no melodramatic effects of clouds and gloom. I suppose it is not really so beautiful as it

seemed to me, for other people say it is bare and desolate, and certainly it is; but it seemed to me anything but dreary. . . . I hear that an English traveller went the same journey and found all barren from Dan to Beersheba. I'm sorry for him.

'In the morning of Sunday, early, I walked along the road with Sabaal, and saw a picture I shall never forget. A little Malabar girl had just been bathing in the Sloom, and had put her scanty shift on her lovely, little, wet brown body; she stood in the water with the drops glittering on her brown skin and black satin hair, the perfection of youthful loveliness—a naiad of ten years old. When the shape and features are perfect, as hers were, the coffee-brown shows it better than our colour, on account of its perfect *evenness*—like the dead white of marble. I shall never forget her as she stood playing with the leaves of the gum tree which hung over her, and gazing with her glorious eyes so placidly.'

At Villiersdorp they found that the little drinking-shop would not hold travellers, so she and Sally went to the house of the storekeeper, where they were given a good dinner and comfortable beds. In the morning Lucie made an attempt to pay, 'but the kind people would not hear of it, and bid me good-bye like old friends.'

It was different when she arrived at Worcester. 'Our inn is a very nice, handsome, old Dutch house; but we have got back to "civilization," and the horrid attempts at "style" which belong to Capetown. The landlord and landlady are too genteel to appear at all, and the Hottentots, who are disguised according to their sexes in pantry jacket and flounced petticoat, don't understand a word of English or *real* Dutch. At Genadendal they understood Dutch and spoke it tolerably; but here, as in most places, it is three-parts Hottentot; and then they affect to understand English, and bring everything wrong and are sulky.'

RAMADAN IN CAPETOWN

Lucie was pleased to get back to Capetown and went to see her old Malay friends, who were in the misery of the Ramadan fast. 'Betsy and pretty Nassirah are very thin and miserable,' she wrote to Alexander, 'and the pious old Abdul is sitting on a little barrel waiting for "gun-fire"—*i.e.* sunset, to fall on the supper which Betsy was setting out. He was silent, and the corners of his mouth were drawn down just like yours at an evening party.'

They were also sad because they had heard nothing for some months from their son, Abdul Rachman, studying at El Azhar University. Lucie wrote to Ross in Egypt to try to find out what had happened to him. She also sent a letter for Abdul Rachman written by his fiancée, 'the prettiest Malay girl in Capetown.'

After Lucie had paid Sabaal for his services and given him a small tip, he appeared early next morning 'with a present of bananas and his little girl dressed from head to foot in brand-new clothes, bought out of my money, with her wool screwed up extremely tight in little knots on her black little head (evidently her mother is the blackest of Caffres or Mozambiques). The child looked like a Caffre, and her father considers her quite a pearl. I had her in and admired the little thing loud enough for him to hear outside, as I lay in bed. You see, I, too, was to have my share in the pleasure of the new clothes. This readiness to believe that one will sympathise with them is very pleasing in the Malays.'

A message soon came from Choslullah: 'Might he see the Missis once more? He should pray all the time she was on the sea.'

'Some pious Christians here would expect such horrors to sink the ship. I can't think why Mohammedans are always gentlemen. The Malay coolies have a grave courtesy which contrasts most strikingly with both European vulgarity and

negro jollity. It is very curious, for they only speak Dutch, and know nothing of oriental manners.'

Lucie had decided to have a photograph taken of Choslullah and the Malay cart, but when he heard of this he implored Lucie to have the picture put off for a few days so that he might be better dressed, and was very unhappy 'at the notion of being immortalised in an old jacket; such a handsome fellow may be allowed a little vanity.'

Then the day of the photograph came, but it had to be postponed once more: 'First, the owner had sent away the cart, and when Choslullah came dressed in all his best clothes, with a lovely blue handkerchief setting off his beautiful orange-tawny face, he had to rush off to try to borrow another cart. As ill luck would have it, he met a "serious young man," with no front teeth, and a hideous wen on his eyebrow, who informed the priest of Choslullah's impious purpose, and came with him to see that he did *not* sit for his portrait. I believe it was half envy; for my handsome driver was as pleased, and then as disappointed, as a young lady about her first ball, and obviously had no religious scruples of his own on the subject.'

Next day, however, Choslullah, who was determined to have the photograph taken, gave his pious friend the slip, and all went off successfully, except that in the photograph one hardly sees Choslullah or his beautiful clothes.

'I have got a picture for you of my "cart and four," with sedate Choslullah and dear little Mohammed,' she wrote to Alexander. 'The former wants to go with me, "anywhere," as he placidly said, "to be the Missis' servant." What a sensation his thatch-like hat and handsome orange-tawny face would make at Esher! Such a stalwart henchman would be very creditable. I shall grieve to think I shall never see my Malay friends again; they are the only people here who are really interesting.

CHURCH DESPOTISM

The priest is a bit of a proselytiser, and amused me much with an account of how he had converted English girls from their evil courses and made them good Mussulwomen. I never heard a naïf and sincere account of conversions *from* Christianity before, and I must own it was much milder than the Exeter Hall style. . . .

‘The Colony is torn with dissensions as to Sunday trains. Some of the Dutch clergy are even more absurd than our own on that point. A certain Van der Lingen, at Stellenbosch, calls Europe “one vast Sodom,” and so forth. There is altogether a nice kettle of religious hatred brewing here. The English Bishop of Capetown appoints all the English clergy, and is absolute monarch of all he surveys; and he and his clergy are carrying matters with a high hand. The Bishop’s Chaplain told Mrs. Jamieson that she could not hope for salvation in the Dutch Church, since her clergy were not ordained by any Bishop, and therefore they could only administer the sacrament “*unto damnation.*” All the physicians in a body, English as well as Dutch, have withdrawn from the Dispensary, because it was used as a means of pressure to draw the coloured people from the Dutch to the English Church. . . . The colonial bishops are despots in their own churches, and there is no escape from their tyranny but by dissent. The Admiral and his family (the Walkers) have been anathematised for going to a fancy bazaar given by the Wesleyans for their Chapel.’

Lucie spent much of her time studying time-tables and talking with other travellers about ships to England and about other places in the world where they had visited. She realised that, although she was much better, she would have to flee from England again the following winter. She thought of going to join Janet in Egypt, ‘which seems like next door. . . . You can’t think how soon one learns to “annihilate space,” if

THE RETURN HOME

not time, in one's thoughts, by daily reading advertisements for every port in India, America, Australia, etc., and conversing with people who have just come from the "ends of the earth." But there were residents who had hardly ever moved out of Capetown. 'A lady born here, with £7000 a year, has never been farther than Stellenbosch, about twenty miles. I am asked how I lived and what I ate during my little excursion, as if I had been to Lake Ngami. If only I had known how easy it all is, I would have gone by sea to East London and seen the Knysna and George district and the primaeval African forest, the yellow wood, and other giant trees. However, "For what I have received," etc.

'I sat yesterday for an hour in the stall of a poor German basket-maker who had been long in Caffre-land. His wife, a Berliner, was very intelligent, and her account was most entertaining, as showing the different view natural to Germans.'

"I had never been out of the city of Berlin and *knew nothing*," she told Lucie.

'Thence her fear, on landing at Algoa Bay and seeing swarms of naked black men, that she had come to a country where no clothes were to be had; and what should she do when hers were worn out? They had a grant of land at Fort Peddie, and she dug while her husband made baskets of cane, and carried them hundreds of miles for sale; sleeping and eating in Caffre huts.

"Yes," he said, "those are dear, good people, and quite well behaved, though they go naked as God made them. . . . Yes, honoured lady, it is shocking how people in this country treat the black people, they call quite an old man 'Boy,' and speak so scornfully, yet the blacks are quite decent, I assure you."

'When I looked at the poor, little, wizened, sickly-looking Berliner, and fancied him a guest in a Caffre hut, it

seemed an odd picture. But he spoke as coolly of his long, lonely journeys as possible, and seemed to think black friends quite as good as white ones.

'I need not say that the Germans are generally liked by the coloured people. Choslullah was astonished and pleased at my talking German; he evidently had a preference for Germans, and put up, whenever he could, at German inns and "publics."

After a long period of waiting Lucie decided to sail on the *Camperdown*, which was due to leave for England in May. She was tempted to bring home an assortment of animals and babies which had become attached to her, especially a devoted little monkey and a Hottentot baby which had been deserted by its parents, but eventually she decided to be content with a few tortoises for Maurice. Nassirah brought a pair of Malay shoes and clogs as a parting present, and old Abdul, 'who is getting very infirm, toddled up and cracked his old fingers over my head, and invoked the protection of Allah with all form; Betsy sent twelve dozen oranges and lemons, and Choslullah said a sad farewell.

'I am crazy to get home now; after the period was over for which I had made up my mind, home-sickness began. . . . I am very well and have every prospect of a pleasant voyage. We are sure to be well found, as the Attorney-General is on board, and is a very great man, "inspiring terror and respect here."

From on board the *Camperdown* she wrote: 'At two o'clock the Attorney-General came on board, escorted by bands of music and all the volunteers of Capetown, *quorum pars maxima fuit*; i.e. Colonel. It was quite what the Yankees call an "ovation." The ship was all decked with flags, and altogether there was le diable à quatre. The consequence was that three signals went adrift in the scuffle; and when a

Frenchman signalled us, we had to pass for brutaux Anglais, because we could not reply.'

Lucie, although she was a newcomer on board, was as usual quite ready for the situation: 'I found means to supply the deficiency by the lining of that very ancient anonymous cloak, which did the red, while a bandanna handkerchief of the captain's furnished the yellow, to the sail-maker's immense amusement. On him I bestowed the blue outside of the cloak for a pair of dungaree trousers.

'The little goat was as rejoiced to be afloat again as her mistress, and is a regular pet on board, with the run of the quarter-deck. She still gives milk—a perfect Amalthea. The butcher, who has the care of her, cockers her up with dainties, and she begs biscuits of the cook. I pay nothing for her fare. Maurice's tortoises are in my cabin, and seem very happy.'

In the late summer of 1862 Lucie arrived in England, where there was a great welcome for her from her family and many friends. She was especially enchanted to see her small daughter Urania, of whom she had thought constantly while on her travels; Maurice was much grown; Alexander was, as ever, handsome, calm and amiable, and overjoyed to see Lucie; Janet was a little white, nearing the time of her confinement; and Sarah was old and failing in health.

Lucie only had the short summer in England. The doctors told her that she must go to Eaux Bonnes, in the south of France, and then Egypt or a similar hot country for the winter. She asked them sadly if that kind of life was to continue indefinitely, for she had hoped that perhaps she might once more be able to live a normal life at home with Alexander and the children. They replied that if she followed their orders there was every hope that her health might be re-established in two years.

And so by the end of the summer she was forced to leave

HOUSE DISMANTLED

England, family and friends once more. She went even before Janet had her baby, which was a sad disappointment to her. The day after she left, Ross developed typhoid fever, and Janet, within a few days of her confinement, nursed her husband day and night. 'I have but one consolation,' said Sarah, 'Janet is all I could wish. This young woman, apparently so giddy, seemingly caring for no one, only thinking of her own amusement, shows a devotion and a courage which astonishes everyone. Never a word of complaint, never an allusion to her own condition.'

This time the house at Esher was dismantled, and Alexander arranged that Urania should live with friends; Maurice was at school, and he himself was generally on tour for the Inland Revenue. 'Of all that happy group,' wrote Sarah, 'none are left save the poor old grandmother.'

In the meantime Lucie had arrived at Eaux Bonnes, where she nearly died of the damp. She said afterwards: "I hear the drip, drip, drip of Eaux Bonnes when I am chilly and oppressed in my sleep."

But Egypt was to open up a new life to Lucie. It was a realisation of much that she had read and dreamed about—the *Arabian Nights*, *Eothen*, Herodotus and the Bible.

PART III

EGYPT

Chapter XXVII

THE LAND OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

LUCIE and Sally arrived in Egypt in October 1862, in the time of the Viceroy Said Pasha.

As a result of the more orderly regime introduced by Mohammed Ali and his successors, tourists had by the 'sixties begun to go to Egypt in large numbers. Foreigners no longer had to dismount at the appearance of a Sheikh or a Government official and place the right hand on the heart as a token of respect.

The English were already in evidence, drinking whisky in Shepherds' Bar, setting up ginning factories and cursing the building of the Suez Canal, which they considered would be bad for British trade if it should ever be successful.

Lucie's reactions to Cairo and the English were very different to those of her friends who had visited Egypt a few years previously. Eliot Warburton, for instance, had disliked: 'the filthy, intricate lanes and alleys' of the capital, and Thackeray had been exasperated by the persistence of dragomen and little boys. She did not entirely share the latter's pleasure at seeing 'England in Egypt . . . with their pluck, manliness, enterprise, bitter ale and Harvey sauce,' disliking their loud ways and intolerance. To her cousin Harriet Martineau's book on Egypt she objected that, 'the people are not real people, only part of the scenery to her, as to most Europeans. . . . She evidently had the feeling of most English people here that the differences of manners are a sort of impassable gulf, the truth being that their feelings and passions are just like our own.

'It is curious that all the old books of travel that I have read mention the natives of strange countries in a far more natural tone and with far more attempt to discriminate than modern ones; *e.g.* Niebuhr's travels here and in Arabia, Cook's voyages and many others. Have we grown so *very* civilised since a hundred years that outlandish people seem like mere puppets and not real human beings to us? . . . Modern travellers show strange ignorance in talking of foreign natives in the lump as they nearly all do.'

Lucie's sympathy for individuals and the fact that she realised that in the East it was essential to spend time over courtesy conversations and to know the correct forms of greeting and of address, won her friendship and knowledge which is denied to the average traveller. She spent the first few months in Egypt unlearning much of what she had heard about the East.

Unlike Warburton she was enchanted by the narrow lanes, and the dirt she considered was dust rather than foulness. 'I suppose I shall be thought utterly paradoxical when I deny the much talked of dirt. Compared to the French, the Arabs, I maintain, are clean. The narrow, dingy, damp, age-blackened, dust-cruled, unpaved streets of Cairo are sweet as roses compared to the "centre of civilisation"—Paris. The utter destitution is terrible to see, though of course in this climate it matters less; the poor souls are as clean as Nile mud and water will make their bodies, and they have not a second shirt, or any bed but dry mud.

'The more I see of the back-slums of Cairo, the more in love I am with it. The oldest European towns are tame and regular in comparison, and the people are so pleasant. They give hospitality with their faces.'

When she described Cairo as the real Arabian Nights, it was no romantic flourish of the pen. 'If anyone tries to make

you believe any bosh about civilisation in Egypt, laugh at it. The real life and the real people are exactly as described in the most veracious of all books, the *Thousand and One Nights*.'

She understood the paradoxical way of thinking, which is often infuriating to the British visitor. On her first visit to the Cairo bazaars she appreciated that it was the buyer and not the seller who must name a price. It did not surprise her when the owner of the boat which she wanted to hire to go up the Nile insisted on charging double the tariff, because times were bad and the new railway was beginning to enter into serious competition!

Lucie spent many hours in the bazaars talking and bargaining. She did not agree with Lady Herbert, widow of her friend Sidney Herbert, that shopping in Cairo was 'one of the most wearisome and trying occupations which it is possible to conceive, especially to people in a hurry, as most English travellers generally are.'

Lucie describes how she enjoyed buying a carpet from an Arab carrying a bundle on his shoulder through the bazaars. The man as usual first asked a high price, and spread it in the street to the great inconvenience of everyone, in front of a coffee-shop. She looked at it superciliously:

"Three hundred piastres, O uncle."

He cried out in despair, appealing to the men sitting round outside the coffee-shop:

"O Muslims, hear that and look at this excellent carpet. Three hundred piastres! By the faith, it is worth two thousand!"

But the Arabs took Lucie's side and one said:

"I wonder that an old man as thou art should tell us that this lady, who is a traveller and a person of experience, values it at three hundred—thinkest thou that we will give thee more?"

Then another suggested that Lucie should give half the original price, which settled the matter.

The purchase of pots and pans took Lucie and Omar an hour. 'The shopkeeper compares notes with me about numerals, and is as much amused as I. He treats me to coffee and a pipe from a neighbouring shop while Omar eloquently depreciates the goods and offers half the value. A water-seller offers a brass cup of water; and I drink, and give the huge sum of twopence, and he distributes the contents of his skin to the crowd (there always is a crowd) in my honour. Finally a boy is called to carry the batterie de cuisine, while Omar brandishes a gigantic kettle which he has picked up a little bruised for four shillings. The boy has a donkey which I mount astride a l'Arabe, while the boy carries all the copper things on his head. We are rather a grand procession, and quite enjoy the fury of the dragomen and other leeches who hang on the English, at such independent proceedings, and Omar gets reviled for spoiling the trade by being cook, dragoman and all in one.'

She delighted in seeing scenes from the Bible being acted in the streets and fields. 'Yesterday I saw a camel go through the eye of a needle—*i.e.* the low arched door of an enclosure; he must kneel and bow his head to creep through—and thus the rich man must humble himself. See how a false translation spoils a good metaphor, and turns a familiar simile into a ferociously communist sentiment.'

All the life around her was intensely interesting to Lucie. She loved to watch the cat-like walk of the Arab women with 'the breasts like pomegranates of their poetry,' and she was constantly reminded of the *Arabian Nights*. 'Opposite lives a Christian dyer who must be a seventh brother of the admirable barber. The same impertinence, loquacity, and love of meddling in everybody's business. I long to see him thrashed,

though he is a constant comedy. My delightful servant Omar Abu el Helawy (the father of sweets)—his family are pastry-cooks—is the type of all the amiable jeunes premiers of the stories. I am privately of opinion that he is Bedr-ed-Deen Hassan, the more that he can make cream tarts and there is no pepper in them. Cream tarts are not very good, but lamb stuffed with pistachio nuts fulfils all one's dreams of excellence. The Arabs next door and the Levantines opposite are quiet enough, but how *do* they eat all the cucumbers they buy of the man who cries them every morning as: "fruit gathered by sweet girls in the garden with the early dew"?'

Lucie liked the social equality which was to be found in Cairo, where, 'as in the *Thousand and One Nights*, great Beys sit with grocers, and carpenters have no hesitation in offering hospitality to naas omra (noble people). This is what makes Arab society quite unintelligible and impossible to most Europeans. . . . As there is no education and no reason why the donkey boy who runs behind me may not become a great man, and as all Moslems are ipso facto equal, money and rank are looked on as mere accidents, and my savoir faire was highly thought of because I sat down with Fellaheen and treated everyone as they treat each other. In Alexandria all that is changed. The European ideas and customs have extinguished the Arab altogether and those who remain are not improved by the contact. Only the Beduin preserve their haughty nonchalance.'

When Lucie first arrived in Egypt she knew no Arabic and Janet and Ross were away. But she had good friends in Hekeikian Bey, to whom Nassau Senior had given her a letter of introduction, and in Mr. Thayer, the American Consul-General, while Omar, the servant whom Thayer found for her, acted as servant and interpreter.

Hekeikian was an Armenian Catholic whose father had been

in the service of Mohammed Ali as translator. As a reward for his services the Pasha had had the son, aged ten, sent to England to study at the beginning of the nineteenth century. After twelve years in England, learning about engineering and cotton machinery, he returned to Egypt in 1830, having forgotten his native language, so that he was in need of an interpreter to converse with his patron. He was appointed to superintend the newly built cotton mills, organise the Polytechnic School in Cairo, and supervise the fortifications of Alexandria, which were to be used a little less than fifty years later in the defence of Egypt against the British fleet and invading army.

When Lucie met him he had retired from the Government service under Said Pasha with the rank of Colonel. He still spoke excellent English and dressed in European clothes. His knowledge of languages and wide learning made him an excellent guide, and Lucie spent many afternoons with him in Cairo.

She found the Touloun Mosque 'exquisite—noble, simple, and what ornament there is, is the most delicate lace-work and embossing in stone and wood. This Arab architecture is even more lovely than our Gothic.

'The days of the beauty of Cairo are numbered. The mosques are falling to decay, the exquisite lattice windows rotting away and replaced by European glass and jalousies. Only the people and the Government remain unchanged.

'I went out to the tombs yesterday. Fancy that Omar witnessed the destruction of some sixty-eight or so of the most exquisite buildings—the tombs and mosques of the Arab Khaleefehs, which Said Pasha used to divert himself with bombarding for practice for his artillery. Omar was then in the Boy Corps of Camel Artillery, now disbanded. Thus the Pasha added the piquancy of sacrilege to barbarity.'

Chapter XXVIII

OMAR 'THE SWEET'

LUCIE's servant Omar, 'the Sweet' (el Helawy), remained with her all the time that she was in Egypt and was her faithful and devoted friend until her death six years later, acting as interpreter, cook, manager, nurse, personal servant and friend. He was a delightful character, and Lucie's letters are full of praise of his sweet nature and honest ways.

'If I should die in these regions,' she wrote to Tom Taylor, 'I bequeath the reputation of my Omar el Helawy of Alexandria to my friends, and hope that they will never fail to recommend him and befriend him as far as possible, in consideration of his excellent and disinterested service to me, and of his general integrity and kindness. His whole behaviour to me has been truly filial. . . . When I know, as I now do thoroughly, all Omar's complete integrity—without any sort of mention of it; his self-denial of going ragged and shabby to save his money for his wife and child (a *very* great trial to a good-looking young Arab) and the equally unostentatious love he has shown to me and the delicacy and the real nobleness of feeling which come out so obvious in the midst of sayings which, to our ideas, seem very shabby and time-serving very often—I wonder if there be any as good in the civilised West.'

Omar was typical of Lower Egypt, with bad hands and feet, ill-made but graceful in movement. His face was the colour of old ivory, and he had 'eyes like a cow,' full lips,

full chin and short nose, moustache 'like a woman's eyebrow' and curly brown hair.

When it was a question of first engaging him Omar thought that Lucie must be very rich, like other English visitors to Egypt, and demanded ten and twenty pounds a month, on the plea that his child was such an expense. After a little questioning Lucie discovered that the child was still unborn, 'inside not yet come out,' as Omar expressed it.

'The English have raised a mirage of false wants and extravagance, which the servants of the country of course, some from interest, and others from mere ignorance, do their best to keep up. As soon as I had succeeded in persuading Omar that I was not as rich as a Pasha and had no wish to be thought so, he immediately turned over a new leaf as to what must be had, and said :

““Oh, if I could have thought that an English lady would have eaten and lived and done the least like Arab people, I might have hired a house at Keneh for you and we might have gone up in a clean passenger boat, but I thought no English could bear it.””

She found Omar 'with his soft but anxious eyes and supple figure' a strong contrast to Choslullah. 'The Malay's sturdy figure and beaming smile spoke independence as plain as possible, while these young men, Omar and Shaheen (Janet's servant), are more servile than is pleasant to me in look and gesture.' The tyrannies of Mohammed Ali, taking the Fellaheen from their homes to work, mostly unpaid, in his cotton mills or to fight against the Sultan, in Syria, and the later imposition of the *corvée* to dig the Suez Canal, had cowed the people, already accustomed to many centuries of Mameluke fighting and repeated invasions.

But in spite of the despotism of successive Pashas, which reached a climax with the accession of Ismail the year that



Omar 'the Sweet,' Lucie's faithful servant in Egypt

STANDARDS OF RESPECTABILITY

Lucie came to Egypt, she was often surprised, especially in Upper Egypt, at the independence of character they showed when they felt that their own standards of morality had been broken.

Omar was devoted to Lucie and would not accept any other employment, whatever the difference in wages, while Lucie intended to stay in Egypt. "The bread I eat with you is sweet," he said. His elder brother, Hajji Ali, a grand dragoon in silk robes who had been with the Prince of Wales, was very contemptuous that Omar accepted the small wage of £3 a month from Lucie, when he might have been working for double the amount for Lady Herbert of Lea or other rich visitors to Egypt.

Omar, however, liked Lucie and did not like his brother, to whom he would not even speak. Omar explained his reason was that his brother had had a wife, "an old wife, been with him long time, very good wife." She had had three children, who all died, and Hajji Ali decided he would divorce her and marry a younger woman, so that he might have children.

"No, don't do that," said Omar; "keep her in your house as head of your home, and take one of your two black slave girls for your hareem."

But Hajji Ali married a young Turkish wife, and Omar took his old sister-in-law to live with him and his young wife and cut his brother dead. 'See how characteristic!' said Lucie; 'the urging his brother to take the young slave girl "as his hareem," like a respectable man, that would have been all right, but what he did was "not good." I'll trouble you (as Mrs. Grote used to say) to settle these questions to everyone's satisfaction. I own Omar seemed to me to take a view against which I had nothing to say.'

Lucie dined one day at Omar's house, though he himself

OMAR 'THE SWEET'

refused to eat at the same table. 'It was an interesting family circle. A very respectable elder brother, a confectioner, whose elder wife was a black woman, a really remarkable person, who speaks Italian perfectly, and gave me a great deal of information and asked such intelligent questions. She ruled the house but had no children, so he had married a fair, gentle-looking Arab woman who had six children, and all lived in perfect harmony. Omar's wife is a tall, handsome girl of his own age, with very good manners. She had been outside the door of the close little court which constituted the house *once* since her marriage. I now begin to understand all about the "wesen" with the women. There is a good deal of chivalry in some respects, and in the respectable lower and middle classes the result is not so bad. I suspect that among the rich few are very happy.'

Lucie, Omar and Sally went everywhere together sight-seeing, or buying things in the bazaars or visiting the outskirts of Cairo on a donkey led by a stalwart boy, Hassan. "Oh, if our master were here, how pleased he would be," said Omar. Lucie was amused to find that it was considered a terrible faux pas for her to refer to her 'husband'; when she did Omar blushed and said it was improper to refer to him in any other way than 'lord' or 'master.' 'On the other hand they mention all that belongs to the production of children with perfect satisfaction and pleasure.'

She was intrigued to find an entirely new point of view expressed by Omar and her Arab friends on questions of women and general morality. 'How astonished Europeans would be to hear Omar's opinion of their conduct to women. He mentioned some Englishman who had divorced his wife and made her frailty public. You should have seen him spit on the floor in abhorrence. Here it is quite blackguard not to forfeit money and take all the blame for divorce.'

THE ENGLISH HUSBAND

““What,” said Omar, “once to sleep in the bed with her and after show her face black before the people like Europeans? Never.””

As a small boy he had travelled with an English couple, and the man used to visit the dancing girls in the towns. He swore Omar to secrecy. The latter, said Lucie, answered back that he was not so accursed as to reveal secrets, ‘but wished that he were big enough to do for the lady what her husband neglected, and got a good thrashing for his impudence.’

Omar used often to take Sally sightseeing, and they would compare notes about their respective countries. He told Lucie that he was surprised that she had not procured Sally a husband, ‘as is one’s duty towards a female servant.’ Some years later Omar took it upon himself to fill the need.

Chapter XXIX

MUSLIM ATTITUDE TO WOMEN

LUCIE found that Muslim views on women and morality, which might have seemed shocking from the distance of Victorian England, were on close acquaintance often very sensible. 'There are a good many things about hareem here which I am barbarian enough to think extremely good and rational.'

She was amused at a conversation which was overheard between an old Turk and an Englishman who was twitting him about Mohammedan licence with regard to women.

"Pray, how many women," asked the Turk, "have *you*, who are quite young, 'seen' (the term used in the East) in your whole life?"

The Englishman could not count.

"Well, young man, I am old, and was married at twelve, and I have 'seen' in all my life seven women—four are dead and three are comfortable and happy in my house—where are all yours?"

'The English,' said Lucie, 'would be a little surprised at Arab judgments of them. They admit our veracity and honesty and like us on the whole, but they blame the men for their conduct to women. They are shocked at the way that Englishmen talk about hareem among themselves, and think the English hard and unkind to their wives and to women in general.'

'The fundamental idea in it all, in the mind of an upright

CONCEALING OF EVIL

man, is, that if a man "takes up" with a woman at all, he must make himself responsible for her before the world; and above all things for the fate of any child that he may have by her. You see the "Prophet of the Arabs" did not contemplate ladies "qui savent nager" so well in the troubled waters of life as we are now blessed with. Of course any unchastity is wrong and forbidden, but equally so in men and women. Some incline to greater indulgence to women on the score of their ignorance and weakness. It is impossible to conceive how startling it is to a Christian to hear the rules of morality applied with perfect impartiality to both sexes.

'The "concealing of evil" is considered very meritorious, and where women are concerned, positively a religious duty. "Le scandale est ce qui fait l'offense" is very much the notion in Egypt, and I believe that very forgiving husbands are commoner here than elsewhere. . . . I have never heard a woman's conduct spoken of without a hundred excuses—perhaps her husband had slave girls, perhaps he was old or sick, or she did not like him, or she could not help it. Violent love comes "by the visitation of God" as our juries say—the man or woman must satisfy it or die. A poor young man is now in the mad-house in Cairo, owing to the beauty and sweet tongue of an English lady whose servant he was. How could he help it; God sent the calamity.'

There were many things of which Lucie certainly did not approve, but on the whole she considered that Arab views on women were more sensible than those of Victorian England.

'If a dancing girl repents, the most respectable man may and does marry her, and no one blames or laughs at him. I believe all this leads to a good deal of irregularity, but certainly the feeling is amiable.' She approved that her

MUSLIM ATTITUDE TO WOMEN

Egyptian friends thought it inhuman that English women visiting the Near East should make a point of avoiding Lady Ellenborough, who was married to the Sheikh el Arab of Palmyra, and lived in Damascus. Lucie had known of her first as Miss Digby, a friend of the Taylor family in Norwich.



*View of the Nile at Giza, near Cairo, where Lucie's boat
was often moored*

Chapter XXX

THE NILE

LUCIE visited Boulak, the port of Cairo, to look for a boat to take her to Upper Egypt, so that she might spend the rest of the winter in the heat.

After much bargaining she became mistress of a dahabieh for £25 a month, which included a captain, mate, eight men and a cabin boy. She said that she 'admired the way in which the English travellers pay for their insolence and caprices. Similar boats cost people with dragomans £50 and £65. But then, "I shall lick the fellows," etc., is what I hear all round. The dragoman, I conclude, pockets the difference.'

Mr. Thayer, the American Consul-General, gave her letters to every consular agent dependent on him in Upper Egypt, which she was to find of the greatest assistance. Lucie also met two Coptic merchants at a fantasia, and they begged her to visit their houses in Upper Egypt.

They set sail from Cairo on November 20, 1862, for Wadi Halfa. The day after they started she wrote resignedly to Alexander: 'Next winter I shall stay with you. If this voyage does me as much good as it has done to others, I shall be well enough for anything. If not—it is not worth while to drag on a sickly life at so much expense of money and annoyance to others. I am so glad to hear such good accounts of Maurice and Urania. If I die soon you will have as much happiness as most people in such nice children.'

She was soon on friendly terms with the crew, who

THE NILE

were mostly men from near the first cataract, handsome, sleek-skinned, gentle and patient. The Reis (Captain) was always good-humoured and joked with the girls who came down to the Nile to fetch water in their earthen pitchers. Early in the voyage he hurt his leg on a rusty nail, and Lucie began her career as a doctor by applying poultices and lint strappings.

The most important person on the boat was the cabin boy, Achmed; 'the most merry, clever, omnipresent little rascal, with an ugly little pug face and a shape like an antique Cupid, liberally displayed, and a skin of dark brown velvet. His voice, shrill and clear, is always heard foremost; he cooks for the crew, he jumps overboard and gives advice on all occasions; grinds the coffee with the end of a stick in a mortar which he holds between his feet, and uses the same large stick to walk proudly before me, brandishing it, if I go ashore for a minute, and ordering everybody out of the way. "Ya Achmed" resounds all day whenever anybody wants anything, and the "walad" is always ready and able.'

He reminded Lucie of Hassan el Bakkeet, who had been such a devoted servant in England and had died of pneumonia at Esher. She preferred slipping ashore without Achmed, which she was not often successful in doing. 'How you would love the Arab women in the country villages,' she wrote to Alexander. 'I wandered off the other day alone, while the men were mending the rudder, and fell in with a troop of them carrying water-jars—such sweet, graceful beings, all smiles and grace. One beautiful woman pointed to the village and made signs of eating and drinking and took my hand to lead me. I went with her, admiring them as they walked. Omar came running after and wondered I was not afraid. I laughed, and said they were much too pretty and kindly-looking to frighten anyone, which amused them

immensely when he told them so. They all wanted me to go and eat in their houses, and I had a great mind to it, but the wind was fair and the boat waiting, so I bid my beautiful friends farewell. They asked if we wanted anything—milk and eggs—for they would give it with pleasure, it was not their custom to sell things, they said; I offered a bit of money to a little naked child, but his mother would not let him take it.'

Everywhere Lucie was received with the greatest hospitality, still experienced by travellers in Egypt, though there is now more demand for backsheesh than there was in her day. At Siut she found that the Copts she had met in Cairo had written to their friends to help her, and Wassef, Thayer's agent, loaded her with gifts. There was a procession to the boat of Wassef's clerk followed by five black mamelukes carrying a live sheep, a large basket of bread and piles of cricket balls of creamy butter. At Girgeh, another consular agent was waiting for her and 'was in despair because he had only had time to get a few hundred eggs, two turkeys, a heap of butter and a can of milk. At Keneh one Issa (Jesus) sent me three boxes of delicious Mecca dates, which Omar thought stingy.'

Lucie was delighted with the scenes on the banks as she sailed up the river. The mud villages with their houses cut in squares gave an impression of wretchedness at first, but she came to see how well they fitted in with the landscape, with the palm trees, tall pigeon houses and the occasional dome of a saint's tomb.

The brilliant patchwork of the fields glided by, with the vivid green of the clover predominating. The blue-black, hairy buffaloes cropped circular patches in the clover where they were tethered. Others, with their pale watery eyes blindfolded against the sun, turned the water-wheels, which

she could hear creak as wood turned on wood. She watched the villagers riding along the canal banks perched far back on their donkeys' hindquarters, and sometimes carrying an umbrella to keep off the sun. Camels padded along carrying huge bundles, their long necks rhythmically swaying. At the river's edge Fellaheen stood naked, oblivious of the women coming down to fetch water. She liked their natural unsophisticated ways, which were refreshing after the inhibitions of Victorian England. 'The men at work on the river banks are exactly the same colour as the Nile mud, with just the warmer hue of the blood circulating beneath the skin. Prometheus has just formed them out of the universal material at hand and the sun breathed life into them.'

Lucie understood how natural it was that when a Fellah had taken his bride's virginity—'seen her face'—the women should follow the ancient custom of taking her down to 'see' the Nile, which was still the God of increase. 'The *Fellah* women offer sacrifices to the Nile, and walk round ancient statues in order to have children. The ceremonies at birth and burial are not Muslim but ancient Egyptian.'

For five thousand years they had worked the fields in the same way and irrigated the canals. Their faces and ornaments were the same as could be seen in the tombs. 'Two beautiful young Nubian women visited me in my boat, with hair in little plaits finished off with lumps of yellow clay burnished like golden tags, soft, deep bronze skins, and lips and eyes fit for Isis and Hathor. Their very dress and ornaments were the same as those represented in the tombs, and I felt inclined to ask them how many years old they were.'

'It is all a dream to me,' said Lucie. 'You can't think what an odd effect it is to take up an English book and read it and then to look up and hear the men cry—"Yah Mohammed"—'

A PALIMPSEST

“Bless thee, Bottom; how thou art translated.” It is the reverse of all one’s former life when one sat in England and read of the East.’ At one moment she felt that she was in the world of Herodotus, or in that of the Arabian Nights, and at another that she was acting a passage in the Old Testament. ‘This country is a palimpsest, in which the Bible is written over Herodotus, and the Koran over that.’

At the same time the West was beginning to encroach with its relentless, brutal progress, and people were being snatched from their peaceful village life to build the Suez Canal. ‘The other day four huge barges passed us towed by a steamer and crammed with hundreds of the poor souls torn from their homes to work at the isthmus of Suez, or some palace of the Pasha’s, for a nominal piastre a day, and find their own bread and water and cloak. . . . Everyone is cursing the French here. Forty thousand men always at work at the Suez Canal at starvation-point, does not endear them to the Arabs. There is great excitement as to what the new Pasha will do (Ismail). If he ceases to give forced labour, the canal, I suppose, must be given up.’

When Lucie arrived at Luxor there were nine pleasure boats lying there, and the great object of the passengers was to ‘do the Nile’ as quickly as possible. She preferred the small villages, finding ‘the true poetical, pastoral life of the Bible in the villages where the English have not been, and happily they don’t land at the little places.’

On the way up the river from Luxor to Wadi Halfa she visited the monuments at Abu Simbel, Philae and the rest, and was very impressed but did not write about them, for she felt that it had been done sufficiently already and the people interested her more than the monuments. ‘The scribbling of names is quite infamous, beautiful paintings are defaced by Tomkins and Hobson, but worst of all, Prince

Puckler Muskau has engraved his coat of arms in huge letters on the naked breast of that august and pathetic giant who sits at Abu Simbel. I wish someone would kick him for his profanity.'

'The most lovely object my eyes ever saw is the island of Philae. It gives one quite the supernatural feeling of Claude's best landscapes, only not the least like them—quite different. If the weather had not been so cold while I was there I should have lived in the Temple, in a chamber sculptured with the mystery of Osiris' burial and resurrection. Omar cleaned it out and meant to move my things there for a few days, but it was too cold to sleep in a room without a door.'

Lucie enjoyed Nubia; the excitement of shooting the cataract, watching the beautiful Nubian girls with only a leather fringe round their haunches, the sympathy of all the people and the majesty of the monuments.

Near Assuan she met a party of slave merchants, who had just loaded their goods from a boat on to camels for their long journey to Sennaar. They asked Lucie and Omar to eat dinner with them—and Oh how delicious it felt to sit on a mat among the camels and strange bales of goods and eat the tough hot bread, sour milk and dates offered with such stately courtesy. We got quite intimate over our leather cup of sherbet (brown sugar and water), and the handsome jet-black men with features as beautiful as those of the young Bacchus described the distant lands in a way which would have charmed Herodotus. They proposed to me to join them—"they had food enough"—and Omar and I were equally inclined to go.'

She visited a number of places where the natives had never before seen a European woman. A Beduin Dervish who chaperoned her through a crowded Muslim festival below the first cataract was very pleased that she was not afraid

of Arabs. She laughed and asked if he were afraid of the English.

“Oh no, I would like to come to England. I would work to eat and drink and then sit and sleep in the Church.”

‘I was positively ashamed to tell my religious friend that with us the “House of God” is not the house of the poor stranger.’

Whenever Lucie left ‘the high-road and the backsheesh hunting parasites,’ she always found kindness and politeness.

At Kom Ombo they met a Rifaae Dervish with a basket of tame snakes. After a little talk he proposed to initiate her, and so Lucie and the Dervish sat down and held hands, like people marrying. Omar sat behind her and repeated the words, as her ‘vakeel.’ Then the Dervish twisted a cobra round their joined hands and asked her to spit on it; he did the same. Lucie was then pronounced safe and enveloped in snakes. ‘My sailors groaned and Omar shuddered as the snakes put out their tongues—the Dervish and I smiled at each other like Roman augurs. I need not say that the creatures were toothless.’

A handsome young Nubian girl, who had liked Lucie, gave her the most treasured possession she had. It was the mat on which she had first lain with her husband on the bridal night. She asked Omar to explain the significance of the present. ‘Omar translated the statement with equal modesty and equal directness. He likewise gave me an exact description of his own marriage, the whole ceremony in detail, and did not drop any curtain at all, appealing to my sympathy about the distress of absence from his wife. I intimated that English people were not accustomed to some words and might be shocked, on which he said :

“Of course, I not speak of my hareem to English gentleman, but to good lady can speak it.”

On the return journey from Wadi Halfa they had news of the Prince of Wales' marriage, and the crew sang an epithalamium, beating the tarabookh as hard as they could. Omar wished to know exactly when the Prince had 'seen his wife's face,' that they might shriek for joy according to Arab custom, but this could not be determined.

While on her way down the river she heard of the death of Lord Lansdowne: 'no friend could leave such a blank to me as that old and faithful one though the death of younger ones might be more tragic; but so many things seem gone with him into the grave.'

Her Coptic friend, Wassef, had arranged for dancing girls to make fantasia on her arrival, but had them counter-ordered owing to the fact that Lucie was in mourning. 'I can't describe how anxiously kind these people were to me. One gets such a wonderful amount of sympathy and real hearty kindness here. A curious example of the affinity of the British mind for prejudice is the way in which every Englishman I have seen scorns the Eastern Christians—and droll enough that sinners like Kinglake and I should be the only people to feel the tie of the "common faith" (vide *Eothen*). A very pious Scotch gentleman wondered that I could think of entering a Copt's house, adding that they were the publicans (tax-gatherers) of this country—which is partly true.'

Some way above Balianah, Omar asked eagerly for leave to stop the boat as a great Sheikh had called to them, and he said that they would inevitably have some disaster if they disobeyed. So they stopped and Omar said:

"Come and see the Sheikh, ma'am."

'I walked off, and presently found about thirty people, including all my own men, sitting on the ground round St. Simon Stylites, without the column. A hideous old man

POLYPHEMUS

like Polyphemus, utterly naked, with the skin of a rhinoceros, all cracked with the weather, sat there, and had sat night and day, summer and winter, motionless for years. He never prays, he never washes, he does not keep Ramadan and yet he is a saint.

‘Of course I expected a hearty curse from such a man, but he was delighted with my visit, asked me to sit down, ordered his servant to bring me sugar cane, asked my name and tried to repeat it over and over again and was quite talkative and full of jokes and compliments, and took no notice of anyone else. Omar and my crew smiled and nodded and all congratulated me heartily. Such a distinction proves my own excellence (as the Sheikh knows all people’s thoughts) and is sure to be followed by good fortune.

‘Finally Omar proposed to say the Fattah (equivalent to the Lord’s prayer), in which all joined except the Sheikh, who looked rather bored by the interruption and desired us not to go so soon, unless I were in a hurry.

‘A party of Beduin came up on camels with presents for the holy man, but he took no notice of them and went on questioning Omar about me and answering my questions.

‘What struck me was the total absence of any sanctimonious air about the old fellow; he was quite worldly and jocose; I suppose he knew that his position was secure and thought his dirt and nakedness proved his holiness enough.

‘Omar then recited the Fattah again and we rose and gave the servant a few foddahs—the saint takes no notice of this part of the proceeding—but he asked me to send him twice my handful of rice for his dinner, an honour so great that there was a murmur of congratulation through the whole assembly.

‘I asked Omar how a man could be a saint, who neglected

THE NILE

all the duties of a Muslim, and I found that he fully believed that Sheikh Seleem could be in two places at once ; that while he sits there on the shore he is also at Mecca performing every sacred function and dressed all in green.

““Many people have seen him there, ma’am—quite true.”’

Chapter XXXI

WILLIAM THAYER'S DIARY

WHILE Lucie had been on the Nile there had been a change of ruler in Egypt, and events at Alexandria and Cairo are amusingly described by her friend, William Thayer, in his diary.

Thayer was a charming, cultivated and upright American, and it was prophesied that he would have a brilliant career in the Consular Service. But he also suffered from weak lungs, and died in 1864 at the age of thirty-six, being buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Cairo near his friend Lucie Duff Gordon.

His diary covers the period from the time Lucie arrived in Egypt until July 1863, when he became too ill to continue it. He gives an interesting picture of official life in Egypt, and the diary is a good counterpart to Lucie's letters.

The two of them looked upon Egyptians from very different points of view. Thayer was busy with official work and was seldom surprised and indignant at anything peculiar that happened, looking on Egypt as a country apart from the rest of the world—an attitude adopted by most westerners, from Herodotus to the resident English of the present day. Lucie, however, was by upbringing a Benthamite. She looked upon her fellow-creatures, black, white and brown, as fundamentally similar to herself, and considered that institutions and those who governed were to a great extent to blame for lack of development.

The bald statements in Thayer's day-to-day account call

up entertaining pictures of consular intrigue round the dying Said Pasha and the weak-willed Ismail.

His account of social life then is very little different from the social life in Egypt to-day, except that Alexandria's suburbs were served only by a horse-tram as far as Camp Caesar, and Cairo was still largely an Oriental town. Alexandria then, as now, had 'scandalmongering propensities,' and even the names mentioned are familiar in Egypt to-day—Mr. Dumreicher; Count Ziziana, the Belgian Consul-General, who has given his name to an Alexandrian suburb to which a Belgian tramway now gives a rapid service; Zulficar Pasha, Grand Chamberlain, Rodocanachi and Mr. Salvago, known as Count, who was planning 'a mercantile house for the benefit of his daughters.' Young men of good family were to be tempted to marry the Salvago daughters in return for a partnership in the business; otherwise he estimated that it would cost him at least £4000 a head to marry them off.

Thayer was a good talker and liked going to parties. We find him at the house of the British Consul-General, Mr. Colquhoun, whose niece, 'a handsome but rather passé Scotch lady,' sang Jacobin songs. He is at the wedding of Rodocanachi to Miss Mavrogordato of Constantinople, and meets a 'highly painted maiden lady from Greece, commonly called the modern Sappho; she is prolific only in verse.'

He often went riding with Janet, though he was a little nervous on a horse. Ross as manager in Egypt for Briggs and Co., the bankers, entertained considerably. At the Rosses' house Thayer met Buckle, the author of the *History of Civilisation*, just before his death in Damascus; Miss Power, the niece of Lady Blessington, who was staying with the Rosses; de Lesseps; Halim Pasha, brother of the Viceroy; Saunders and others.

Thayer was a little awed by Janet, then twenty. She told him tall stories about Thackeray's snobbishness, Tennyson's selfishness, and Gladstone's bankruptcy. 'I suppose there is some truth in these stories,' notes the kind-hearted Thayer, having written them all down in his diary, 'but exaggerated, for Mrs. Ross's likes and dislikes are very *pronounced* and she is often inaccurate without intention. Still they are interesting as showing the sort of table talk and gossip she has heard in London society.'

She shocked him rather when she talked about love, and he noted down a long story she told him about Kinglake being 'desperately in love' with Lucie. After her marriage Janet said he wanted to elope with her, and on her refusing 'he went to the East to forget her and wrote *Eothen*.'

It was a good story for Alexandria table talk, but the facts are subject to the inaccuracies Thayer had noted, since Lucie was only fourteen years old when Kinglake travelled through Palestine and Egypt.

One morning when Thayer visited Janet she confided in him that she did not believe in love, only friendship; 'loved her father, but could not say that she loved any other man' states the diary. 'Even her husband worried her into marriage, for she told him before marriage that she did not love him more than her horse. Yet he seemed so unhappy that she agreed to take him. Still, since then she had liked and respected him more and more every day. On her marriage she had made him declare that he would never be jealous. These sayings doubtless mean nothing, and are but eccentricities of expression, for no woman loves her husband one-tenth more than Mrs. Ross.'

The freedom of Janet's manners and her hard riding was misunderstood by Alexandria society with its 'scandal-mongering propensities'; and she had to be extremely cold

on one or two occasions to gallant gentlemen who tried to make love to her. It was not unnatural they should misunderstand the situation when she announced that she loved her husband no better than a horse.

Thayer found Lucie less eccentric than her daughter. He described her as 'handsome, bright and forty and a capital traveller. She knows the literary people of England but does not gossip about them.'

Thayer was very busy with his consular as well as social duties. He had to deal with destitute Americans, and write long reports about cotton to the Secretary of State. Already cotton, introduced by Mohammed Ali, was becoming the staple crop in Egypt. Ginning factories were springing up everywhere, while the numerous factories set up by Mohammed Ali to weave cotton fabrics were falling into ruin. 'With all the materials of cotton fabrics at hand,' wrote Thayer, 'it is impossible to undersell or equal the English, with their capital, organisation and genius for industry. It is therefore cheaper to export the cotton and buy it back in the form of fabrics than to manufacture.'

He was also writing reports on the Suez Canal and on the scandal of the black regiment sent by Said Pasha to help Napoleon III's Mexican expedition. The police in Alexandria were told to collect as many black men as they could. They used to go up behind them at night, break their lanterns and arrest them for not carrying lights. They were then sent as prisoners to Mex and put on board a French frigate. By the time they arrived at Vera Cruz they were very ill and not eager to fight anyone. In the meantime there was commotion among the foreign Consuls; Thayer quarrelled with the French Consul, de Beauvais, and both of them ran backwards and forwards to the Palace to obtain interviews with Said Pasha.

DEATH OF SAID PASHA

On January 17th, 1862, Thayer called at Palace No. 3 to make a last attempt to extract a promise that no more negroes would be sent to fight with the French troops in Mexico, but the only satisfaction he could get was the typically Egyptian reply that it was useless to worry as there were no more negroes to send anyway. He was met in the hall by Nubar Bey, 'gloomy, with beard not shaved as usual'; the Pasha was dying and did not want to discuss negroes with anyone. In the middle of the night he had raised his huge bulk from the divan, shouting to his attendants to open all the windows in the Palace, and repeatedly called for ice water to assuage the fever of his stomach. As Thayer went out of the Palace he saw in the yard a group of speculators, mostly European, who had preyed on the Viceroy and were now waiting for news of his death.

He died early next morning, and at 10 a.m. the guns were fired in honour of his brother, Ismail Pasha, and the same group of speculators went promptly to call on the new Viceroy.

Thayer found Ismail better-looking than Said, which was not saying a great deal; he had a full red face, 'reddish sandy hair with whiskers neatly trimmed,' and was short but strongly built. He made a short speech in excellent French in which he promised to reverse the extravagant policy of his predecessors and allot a civil list which he would not exceed. He also promised to abolish the *corvée*, whereupon the French Consul quickly interrupted, asking that work on the Suez Canal should be excepted, to which Ismail agreed.

Ismail was never left in peace from the moment he assumed power. He was always beset by Consuls wanting him to try out some new invention brought by one of their nationals, or to persuade the Egyptian Government to order coal and

machinery from their country. Thayer was among the few who refused to intrigue in this way.

The French were perhaps the worst offenders, and they had the largest interests at stake at the time. De Lesseps had driven a hard bargain with Said over the building of the Suez Canal. It is possible that the gigantic task would not have been accomplished if the French engineers had not been able to make use of the free labour of the unfortunate Fellaheen, many hundreds of whom found their graves among the sands of the Suez desert, leaving their families destitute in Upper Egypt.

A few months before Ismail became Viceroy the first, or provisional, Canal had been dug as far as Lake Timsah, and the waters of the Mediterranean had been brought half-way across the Isthmus. But the Canal was as yet only a small channel which Janet Ross used to jump on horseback when she went riding with de Lesseps near Ismailia. There were many difficulties yet to overcome before it was completed six years later.

It was not long before de Lesseps obtained a new contract with Ismail, to the annoyance of the English, especially of Sir Henry Bulwer, British Ambassador at Constantinople, who had come to Egypt to look at the Canal. The English were beginning to realise that the Canal was likely to be a successful project and endanger their trade.

Apart from the hated *corvée* on the Canal, on which about 20,000 labourers were employed, the country was at this time fairly prosperous, profiting by other people's wars. The Crimean War had encouraged Egyptian agriculture by giving a ready market for wheat, and the American Civil War was creating a demand for Egyptian cotton.

Unfortunately Said and Ismail were both excited about the new inventions of the West. They wanted to have French

EXPRESS TRAIN FOR A UNIFORM

boulevards cut through the intricate streets of Cairo, palaces built and the railway and telegraph set up immediately. It was the West that now seemed to the Pashas like an Arabian Nights tale, and they spent fantastic sums on novelties; Mr. Savallan, a French banker, sold Said a tooth-brush, comb and hair-brush for 14,000 dollars. The Pasha had a passion for the new railway which had recently been built from Alexandria to Cairo, and delighted in ordering special trains whenever he or his friends wished to make the journey. In the middle of the day all traffic would be stopped for two hours while the Pasha took his siesta. It was difficult to run the line at a profit under such conditions.

Thayer gives a charming example of Ismail's despotic generosity which was not very much in keeping with the promise the Viceroy had made a few days previously to abandon the extravagances of his predecessors. A fortnight after Said's death Ismail gave a big reception to all the Consuls in Alexandria. Thayer did not receive the invitation until late, and had no opportunity to send for his uniform from Cairo. Ismail was informed, and ordered that a special train should bring the uniform. It left Cairo at 1 p.m. and reached Alexandria at 6 p.m. Thayer was a little horrified at the extravagance, but at the same time flattered. 'It was a great affair,' he notes in his diary, 'to provide an express train to bring a uniform 130 miles.' This was a small beginning to Ismail's fantastic career of extravagance.

Thayer had wanted to go for a trip up the Nile with Lucie. He had never been south and was stirred to go by the stories that Lucie told him after her journey up the Nile. 'What do you think?' Lucie wrote to Janet. 'Will grey hairs on my side and mutual bad lungs guarantee our international virtue; or will someone ask Alexander when he means to divorce me? Would it be considered that Yankeedoodle had "stuck

WILLIAM THAYER'S DIARY

a feather in his cap" by leading a British matron and grandmother astray ?'

Unfortunately Thayer became so ill that he could not move from his house, and he died a year later in Alexandria while Lucie was away in England.

Chapter XXXII

THE SULTAN'S VISIT

ON Lucie's return to Cairo she found that there was great excitement over the visit of the Sultan Abd-el-Aziz. It was the first visit since Selim had come as a conqueror 350 years previously.

Ismail had already travelled to Constantinople to obtain his Firman of investiture as Viceroy. Throughout his visit he had been in deadly fear of being poisoned by his uncle, Mustapha Pasha, who was Minister of Education at Constantinople and the legal successor of Ismail. Ismail had kept a European doctor in constant attendance. The Sultan on his visit to Egypt was even more apprehensive and brought not only his own doctors but also his food and water from Constantinople, so as to run no risk of being poisoned.

The evening after his arrival Alexandria was brilliantly lighted at a cost of £20,000, and the Sultan drove from Ras el Tin Palace through the streets of Alexandria. He was alone in the carriage drawn by four grey horses, followed by his escort of well-mounted Spahis in picturesque Zouave costume. There were also a number of 'Saracen' troops dressed in old chain armour, like Crusaders. The Sultan hardly looked at the people but gazed at the fireworks and the sky.

On April 9 he left for Cairo. He was astonished and delighted with his first railway journey, but at first extremely nervous and, like Prince Albert, he requested that they should drive slowly. Many of the old Muslims with him thought that the end of the world had come.

THE SULTAN'S VISIT

Lucie saw the Sultan drive through the streets of Cairo and the women being beaten by Ismail's men to make them keep indoors. The object, she said, was to prevent them from crying out to the Sultan against the tyranny and high taxation of his deputy ruler, for Egyptian women are much more outspoken and independent than the men. Ismail was particularly anxious that the Sultan should think that the country was being well governed as he wished to obtain a Firman making him Khedive, buying the succession for himself and his family.

While in Cairo the Sultan stayed at the Citadel, where the British Army of Occupation is now quartered.¹ Members of his large suite were also given hospitality in Halim Pasha's Palace at Shubra and in other palaces belonging to Ismail. The Viceroy and his family behaved like humble vassals throughout the visit, and gave up their possessions to the Sultan and his suite as if they belonged to them.

After a fortnight's stay they left the country, having stripped Egypt like locusts. Nearly all the valuables were taken out of the palaces including the jewelled mouth-pieces from the pipes. The Sultan took two steamers loaded with the best cattle in Egypt; also eighty grooms, goats, foxes, flamingoes, monkeys and large quantities of butter and sugar. Everything doubled in price after their departure.

The Sultan made some return to the Sultans and Beys, but, as usual, it was the people who suffered most. Before leaving, Abd-el-Aziz decided that he had not brought presents equal to the magnificent ones that Ismail made to him. As this was a question of prestige, he sent back his second eunuch, who had formerly been Hekekian's servant, to Constantinople to bring more suitable gifts.

¹ With the signing of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of August 1936, the British Army will leave the Capital in the near future.

The eunuch returned after the Sultan's departure with large sums of money and had a very enjoyable time handing out largesse. He did not forget his old master Hekekian, on whom he showered costly presents, and Hekekian had the honour of kissing his old slave's hand. The presents included 'some printed music composed by the Sultan, Abd-el-Aziz himself. *O tempora! O mores!* One was a waltz.'

Lucie had come down the river rather too early and fell sick in the Egyptian spring, but she was well looked after by Dr. de Leo Bey, Surgeon-in-Chief to the Viceroy's troops and Doctor to the Hareem. He refused to take any fee from Lucie, saying that he was 'Officier du Pasha.'

She used to hear Omar praying outside her door :

"Oh God, make her better. Oh my God, let her sleep."

'As to Hekekian, he is absolutely the good Samaritan, and these Orientals do their kindnesses with such an air of enjoyment to themselves that it seems quite a favour to let them wait upon one. Hekekian comes in every day with his handsome old face and a budget of news, all the gossip of the Sultan and his doings. I shall always fancy the good Samaritan in a tarboosh.'

Together they used to 'fronder' the Government. Like Lucie he took the side of the people and was angry at the acts of tyranny which were perpetrated daily. 'Of course half these acts are done under pretext of improving and civilising, and the Europeans applaud and say: "Oh, but nothing could be done without forced labour," and the poor Fellaheen are marched off in gangs like convicts, and their families starve—and (who'd have thought it!) the population keeps diminishing. No wonder the cry is:

"Let the English Queen come and take us."

Many writers on Egypt during the middle of last century have referred to the popular expectation among Egyptians

THE SULTAN'S VISIT

that the English would take Egypt. Eliot Warburton was puzzled by the existence of the idea when he visited Cairo in 1843, especially in view of the fact that 'Frenchmen abounded in every department from Suliman Pasha (Colonel Sevre) to the apothecaries' apprentice in the female surgery.' Kinglake had an intimation how matters were to develop and made his well-known prophecy about the Englishman planting a firm foot on the banks of the Nile and sitting in the seats of the Faithful; and Mohammed Ali in his old age expressed his fear of England when he said: "The great fish swallow the small."

And so it happened twenty years later.

Chapter XXXIII

ISMAIL AND POVERTY

LUCIE went to Alexandria for a short time in May 1863 to visit Janet and Henry Ross before leaving for England. They were living in a large house with a flat roof and a garden where Lucie used to sit looking over the harbour. In the corner of the garden was a pigeon-house and cages with three parrots, two parakeets and a monkey.

Janet had become *Times* correspondent for Alexandria, and with the help of her husband, who was on good terms with Ismail, and Lucie's knowledge of the country districts, she sent some excellent articles, though her point of view was very much more matter of fact and official than was Lucie's.

The Rosses' financial prospects were then excellent, as Halim Pasha, the Viceroy's brother, was an influential friend. 'Ross is director of the Sudan scheme, and hand in glove with all Ismail Pasha's affairs,' wrote Lucie. 'If things go on as now he stands to win pots of money. But Egypt will no longer be the poetical land it is, with weekly steamers up to remote Assuan and a railway through Nubia. Alhumdulillah! that I have seen the old things.

'I don't see things quite as Ross and Janet do, but mine is another viewpoint, and my heart is with the Arabs. I care less about opening up the trade with the Sudan and all the new railways—and I should like to see person and property safe, which is not the case here—(Europeans of course excepted). Ismail Pasha got the Sultan to allow him to take 90,000 feddans of uncultivated land for himself as private

property—very well;—but the late viceroy Said granted eight years ago certain uncultivated lands to a good many Turks, his employees, in hopes of founding a landed aristocracy and inducing them to spend their capital in cultivation. They did so—and now Ismail takes their improved land and gives them feddan for feddan of his new land (which will take five years to bring into cultivation) instead. He forced them to sign a *voluntary* deed of exchange—or they go off to Fazoogli—a hot Siberia whence none return. I saw a Turk the other day who was ruined by the transaction. The Sultan also left a large sum of money for religious institutions and charities, Muslim, Jew and Christian. None have received a foddah!

‘What is wanted here is hands to till the ground, and wages are very, very high. Food of course gets dearer and the forced labour inflicts more suffering than before and the population will decrease yet faster. This appears to me to be a state of things in which it is no use to say that public works *must* be made at any cost. I dare say the wealth will be increased, if meanwhile the people are not exterminated.

‘Then every new Pasha builds a huge new palace while those of his predecessors fall to ruin. Mohammed Ali’s sons even cut down the trees of his beautiful botanical garden and planted beans there;—so money is constantly wasted more than if it were thrown into the Nile, for then the Fellaheen would not have to spend the time, so much wanted for agriculture, in building hideous barrack-like so-called palaces. What chokes me is to hear the English people talk of the stick being the only way to manage Arabs, as if anyone would doubt that it is the *easiest* way to manage any people where it can be used with impunity.

‘They are very eager for you to put Maurice’s money into Halim Pasha’s loan. I can have no opinion, as of course I only hear one side of the question, but the Bible text “Put

not thy trust in Princes" rings with Eastern significance in my ears. One thing is that a Muslim is the best of debtors—but are these half Frenchified wine-bibbing Turks Muslims indeed? I should think the affair quite safe myself, but it is a great question whether one's peace of mind is not worth more than 8 per cent.

'I should wish if possible to let Maurice's money accumulate till he has to go to College. We shall feel the increased expense more then, and at present we can do without, can't we? I will do as cheaply as ever I can. I am quite vexed at how much I have spent now, but you will see that I shall not cost *nearly* as much again now I know so much better how to manage. Janet's cook in Cairo ruined me and I could not help myself, but now I go with Omar and Sally and though his wages seem high he saves more by his care and honesty.'

Fortunately Maurice's money was not invested in Halim Pasha's loan, which was not a success; Egyptian finance went badly in the course of the next few years and the Rosses were nearly ruined. In 1864 the old bank of Briggs and Co., of which Ross was a partner, was merged into the new Egyptian Commercial and Trading Company which went bankrupt two years later.

Lucie also felt strongly about the slave trade which Ismail had repeatedly promised he would stop. She herself became owner of a slave, which amused her friends in England in view of her Radical opinions. The slave was a little girl called Zeynab, who had been given to Thayer by one of his consular agents in Upper Egypt, and he did not know what to do with her.

Ali, Thayer's servant, said he would be pleased to take her as a wife, as he wanted a girl fresh from up-country, who had not been spoilt by residence in Lower Egypt. He said that he liked her appearance though he would have preferred

a lighter colour. In the market he thought she would fetch a hundred dollars. But when Lucie came to Thayer's house and saw the little slave being coarsely pulled about by Thayer's cook and groom she decided to take her. Sally quickly taught her to sew, and she sang little Kordofan songs to herself as she worked in the house. She set her heart on Lucie and cried bitterly when Omar told her that she was not her slave. She feared that she would be left behind, for she wanted to be taken to England as a present to Urania.

One day Lucie said she was surprised that Zeynab's ears were not bored, as was the custom among the people of the South. A moment later the child exclaimed in her soft voice: "Kidda tayeb?" (Is that all right?) as she stood with a large pin stuck through her ear.

'The utter slavishness of the poor little soul quite upset me,' said Lucie; 'she has no kind of will of her own. Sally takes great pleasure in teaching her and dressing her nicely, and is quite fond of her. Now she has taken to talking and tells all her woes and how bad everyone was at Khartum, and then she rubs her little black nose on my hand and laughs merrily and says all is wonderful here and hugs herself with delight. I think Rainy will like her very much. Mossey's portrait threw her into a violent ecstasy; she talked to it, and kissed her hand to it, and was enchanted at the prospect of such a Sidi (Lord).'

Chapter XXXIV

RELIGION AND PAGANISM

'ALICK is quite right that I am in love with Arab ways,' she wrote to Tom Taylor, 'and I have contrived to see and know more of family life than many Europeans who have lived here for years. When the Arabs feel that one really cares for them, they heartily return it. . . . They are extremely clever and nice children, easily amused, easily roused into a fury which lasts five minutes and leaves no malice, and half the lying and cheating of which they are accused comes from misunderstanding and ignorance.'

Lucie understood what an important factor religion was in their lives, and was careful never to hurt their feelings. She saw the departure of the Holy Mahmal to Mecca and had a longing to go too. She discussed an adventurous scheme with Omar according to which she was to go to Mecca as his mother, supposed Turk. 'To a European man, of course, it would be impossible, but an enterprising woman might do it easily with a Muslim confederate.' If Lucie had regained her health she might have done what no Christian woman had done. 'It is a deeply affecting sight,' she said of the pilgrimage, 'all those men prepared to endure such hardships. They halt among the tombs of the Khaleefeh, such a spot! Omar's eyes were full of tears and his voice shaking with emotion as he talked about it and pointed out the Mahmal and the Sheikh el Gemel, who leads the sacred camel, naked to the waist, with flowing hair. Muslim piety

is so unlike what Europeans think it is, so full of tender emotions, so much more sentimental than we imagine. . . .

‘In this country one gets to see how much more beautiful a perfectly natural expression is than any degree of the mystical expression of the best painters, and it is so refreshing that no one tries to look pious. The Muslim looks serious and often warlike as he stands at prayer. The Christian just keeps his everyday face. When the Muslim gets into a state of devotional frenzy he does not think of making a face and it is quite tremendous.’

In the Coptic churches there were not quite the same transports, but Lucie was enchanted by the lack of solemnity and intrigued by the pagan rites. ‘A little acolyte peeped into the sacramental cup and swigged off the drops left in it with the most innocent air, and no one rebuked him—and the quite little children ran about in the sanctuary; up to seven they are privileged, and only they and the priests and acolytes enter it. It is a pretty commentary on the words: “Suffer the little children,” etc.’

Throughout Egypt she found that they celebrated the ancient mysteries still, and the old image worship of ancient Egypt survived. ‘The sacred animals have all taken service with Muslim saints. At Minieh one reigns over crocodiles; higher up I saw the hole of Æsculapius’ serpent at Geybel Sheikh Hereedee, and I fed the birds who used to tear the cordage of boats which refused to feed them and who are now the servants of Sheikh Naooneh and still come on board by scores for bread, which no Reis dares refuse them. Bubastis’ cats are still fed in the Cadi’s court at public expense.

‘Maree Girgis (St. George) is simply Amen Ra, the God of the Sun and the great serpent slayer, who is still revered in Egypt by all sects, and Sayed el Bedawee is as certainly one form of Osiris. His festivals, held twice a year at Tantah,

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN

still display the "objectionable" symbol of the creator of all things. All is thus here. The women wail the dead as on their old sculptures; all the ceremonies are pagan and would shock an Indian Mussulman as much as his objection to eat with a Christian shocks an Arab; the wailing for the dead—directly contrary to the Koran; the observances at birth and the almost worship of the Nile, which are not Muslim but ancient Egyptian, these are a few of the ancient things and in domestic life are numbers more.'

Chapter XXXV

NILE FLOODS AND CATTLE MURRAIN

LUCIE left for England in June amid the lamentations of Zeynab, and even Omar 'shed manly tears.' During the short time she was allowed in England she saw as much as possible of her family and friends.

'Lady Duff Gordon comes here a good deal and looks very handsome and rather grand in her Arab wraps with her great gleaming eyes—and in a soft easy way tells travellers' tales,' said her old friend, Alice Taylor.

Meredith was away. 'I hoped to see her on my return,' he wrote to Janet, 'but I heard she was not alone, and in the end, as I was making up my mind to write for an audience, the news came that she had reached Calais. I smote my undecided head. I am vexed beyond measure at having missed her. The news of her is so good that it tastes like fresh life to me.'

Travelling back through France, Lucie found that there was a good deal of feeling about the movement in Egypt against forced labour, which was considered to be due to English intrigue to hinder the building of the Suez Canal. 'Liberté, égalité, fraternité, must sound well to the tune of the courbash on the backs of the Fellaheen! I told a Frenchman that I was disposed to be as great an intrigante as he could conceive if I had the power, if that was his notion of "intrigue." They are convinced that carrying earth in baskets for French masters is civilisation—la drôle d'idée!'

Lucie was delighted to be met by Janet at Alexandria,

looking 'as fresh and bright as a spring day,' and the faithful Omar was 'radiant with joy and affection.' He had had an offer of a place as messenger with the mails to Suez at £60 a year, and his brother Hajji Ali promised him high pay if he would help him with Lady Herbert. But he refused as Lucie was coming back :

"I think my God give her to me to take care of her. How then I leave her if she not well and not very rich? I can't speak to my God if I do bad things like that."

Henry Ross was full of praise of Omar's behaviour. 'It is a real pleasure,' said Lucie, 'to live in a nation of truly well-bred people after the savage incivility of France.'

Zeynab she found much louder and bolder, as the maids in Janet's house had wanted to make her a Christian and allowed her to go out unveiled and sit among the men. The veil was replaced, and Sally scolded them for want of decorum.

The Nile had flooded large stretches of Lower Egypt and eight miles of the railway from Alexandria to Cairo was gone. Omar found a boat to take them to Cairo for £12, all ready furnished, which was not more than the railway fares would have cost, since half the journey would have had to be done by steamer and donkey. Almost everything was doubled in price owing to the cattle murrain and the high Nile. The floods were unusually heavy, and some country people believed that the Nile God had shown his resentment of Speke's intrusion on his privacy. Speke had returned from his expedition the same year (1863) and published his *Journal of the Discovery of the Nile*.

Lucie, Sally and Omar set sail from Alexandria along the Mahmudieh Canal at the end of October, and after passing the first locks were met by the Nile tearing down like a torrent. It had begun to subside, leaving desolation on either bank.

Whole villages had been swept away, and the people with their animals were encamped on spits of sand or on the dykes in long rows of makeshift tents, while the boats sailed over where they had lived. Cotton was everywhere rotting and the dry tops crackled under the bows of the boat. When they stopped to buy milk, the poor Fellaheen women exclaimed :

“Milk ! From where do you want it : out of my breasts ?”

The cattle murrain, which was a far worse calamity than the flood, was believed to be a punishment for churlishness to strangers ; milk was generally brought in the end, and the Fellaheen would not accept more than the old rate of payment for what they sold.

Lucie's feelings against the French were increased when a Frenchman told her that he had been on board a Pasha's steamer under M. de Lesseps' command, and they had passed a flooded village where about two hundred people stood on the roofs crying for help ; de Lesseps passed on, leaving them to drown. ‘Nothing but an eye-witness could have made me believe such frightful villainy,’ she said.

While in Alexandria, Lucie had been told by Mr. Wilkinson, the American Vice-Consul in Cairo, that she could not have Mr. Thayer's flat as some noisy prostitutes had established themselves on the floor below. When she arrived, however, she found that this was a trumped-up excuse because Wilkinson wanted the flat for himself, Thayer being then in England.

Wilkinson had been making £1,300 a year in commissions behind Thayer's back. He obtained a large sum of money from Ismail Pasha by persuading a rich Copt to renounce American citizenship so that the Viceroy might deal with him as he wished, and he subsequently obtained a commission from the Copt for getting him an administrative post in the Government !

Lucie heard of this later through the servants. She was

NEMESIS FOR A ROGUE

amazed to find that while she had been ill in bed Omar had ordered Wilkinson out of what he described as Lucie's house. At the same time he told Lucie to be civil to Wilkinson if she should meet him, for it was not for her to know what a scoundrel he was, and that he, Omar, was dealing with the matter. Thayer's servant in Alexandria also sent Wilkinson an insulting telegram. 'Such is the nemesis for being a rogue here, the servants know you and let you feel it. I was quite flabbergasted at Omar, who is so reverential to me and to the Rosses, and who I fancied trembled before every European, taking such a tone to a man in the position of a "gentleman."' It is a fresh proof of the feeling of actual equality among men that lies at the bottom of such great inequality of position. Hekekian Bey has seen a Turkish Pasha's shins being kicked by his own servants who were cognisant of his misdeeds.'

Chapter XXXVI

THE JOURNEY TO LUXOR

LUCIE had decided to make her home at Luxor. She travelled up the Nile in one of Ismail Pasha's steamers, as it was very much cheaper than hiring a dahabieh of her own as she had done before.

Unfortunately Ismail had suddenly commissioned nearly all the boats on the Nile to do some work for him; 'fancy the Queen ordering all the river steamers up to Windsor!' The result was that the steamer had to do the work of three, towing a dahabieh and a Nubian boat, which was taking back the young son of the Sultan of Darfoor who had come as an envoy to Ismail.

A number of new passenger steamers had just appeared on the Nile, and Lucie might have gone in one of them, but Ismail had decided that they must remain in Cairo until after the horse-racing. 'Fancy the Cairo races! It is growing dreadfully cockney here, I must go to Timbuctoo; and we are to have a railway to Mecca, and take return tickets for the Haj (pilgrimage) from all parts of the world.'

Even Lucie found the fleas, dirt and confusion on the crowded steamer a little overpowering, and they had nothing with which to filter the Nile water. The best cabin was taken by a sulky, one-eyed old Turkish Pasha, while Lucie had a fore-cabin, where she slept with Sally and with Omar at her feet. He had tried sleeping on deck but had found the Pasha's soldiers bad company, so the Captain had begged Lucie 'to cover her face' and let him sleep in her cabin.

Life was made very much easier on board by the politeness of the Arab Captain. He had all the airs and manners of an English sailor and had been shipwrecked four times. During the Crimean War he was taken prisoner by the Russians and spent three years in Moscow. He was sixty-seven, had twelve children, but only one wife and was 'as strict a monogamist as Dr. Primrose.'

Lucie was not very popular when she first came on board, since it was considered that a white woman would be a nuisance, but her calm unruffled manner in the midst of periodic pandemonium soon won her respect. The Chief Engineer called her *el Ameereh*, an obsolete title, which he thought was equivalent to 'Ladysheep,' and she was appealed to by the Captain and others in moments of stress. She also helped to doctor the crew: 'The rhubarb pills are a real comfort to travellers, for they can't do much harm and inspire great confidence.'

When they arrived at Beni Suef, seventy miles above Cairo, there was no coal, as the Viceroy had been up the Nile before them and taken all. His Royal Highness of Darfoor stamped and fumed with rage at the delay. The Captain finally brought him to Lucie.

As she was English, he said, she would know that a ship without coal could not go, and would explain to the young man that it was not his fault.

The interview took place in Lucie's cabin. 'His Royal Highness was a pretty imperious little nigger, about eleven or twelve, dressed in a yellow silk *kufan* and a scarlet *burnoos*, who cut the old Captain short by saying:

"Why, she is a woman; she can't talk to me!"

"Wallah! Wallah! What a way to talk to English harem," shrieked the Captain, who was about to lose his temper.'

THE JOURNEY TO LUXOR

Lucie caused a diversion by offering a box of French sweetmeats 'which altered the young Prince's views at once.'

She asked him if he had brothers.

"Who can count them? They are like mice."

He told her that Ismail had only given a few presents and was evidently not pleased.

The old, one-eyed Pasha left fairly soon, and the Captain had all Lucie's belongings moved into the best cabin, turning out a Turkish Effendi, who was travelling south to collect the Pasha's taxes.

The Effendi begged that he might be allowed to stay and sleep in the cabin. There would be no impropriety. He was old and sick and stated that her company would be agreeable. Also it would be a shame for him to be turned out by an English woman, and would not look at all well. Lucie smoothed his dignity by asking him to spend the day and dine with her, which he did, and went off to the fore-cabin to sleep quite happily.

Lucie was delighted with the Chief Engineer, Achmed Effendi, and the crew, 'who all wore European clothes, and gave the orders in strange English: "All right—Go ahead—el Fattah"—in one breath.' The administration of the steamer service in Cairo was exceedingly bad. There was no order and no care taken for anyone's convenience except for that of the Viceroy; but the subordinates on the boats did their work perfectly.

Eventually coal was obtained and they proceeded to Siut, where there was further trouble. The Captain tried to prevent the men of Darfoor from disembarking as he wished to hurry on to make up for lost time, but they swore that they would cut off his head if he went without them. He was in difficulties also with the Turkish tax collector who threatened to telegraph to Cairo a complaint with regard to the delay.

‘SERPENT OF OLD NILE’

The Captain, knowing what trouble that might cause him, once more appealed to Lucie. She made up the longest sentence she could in Arabic to the effect that while they were on the boat they must all obey the Captain. This was received with great applause by everyone, except by the men of Darfoor, and so the steamer waited. But the Captain was pleased; “This ameerah is ready to obey like a mameluke, and when she has to command—whew!” he said, tossing back his head.

Lucie found Siut full of Fellaheen, who had been conscripted for the army. They had been forcibly collected from the villages in Upper Egypt and sent to Girgeh to await the arrival of Ismail Pasha, who had said he wished to choose the men himself. They waited three weeks at Girgeh and were sent to Sohag; after eight days there they went to Siut. In the meantime Ismail had forgotten about them and had returned to Cairo. The wretched Fellaheen, said Lucie, were likely to remain there indefinitely, for no one would venture to remind the Viceroy of their trifling existence.

At Keneh, Lucie and the Captain were invited to dine with the British consular representative, Said Achmed. They sat round a copper tray on the floor and ate titbits with their fingers, and then went to a fantasia at the house of the French consular agent, Jesus Buktor.

There were a number of dancing girls, but though one of them was especially handsome, Lucie found the dancing cold and uninteresting. ‘But the Captain called out to one Latifeh, an ugly, clumsy looking wench, to show the Sitt what she could do—and then it was revealed to me. The ugly girl started on her feet and became the “Serpent of Old Nile.” The head, shoulders and arms eagerly bent forward, waist in and haunches advanced on the bent knees—the posture of a

THE JOURNEY TO LUXOR

cobra about to spring. I could not call it "voluptuous" any more than Racine's *Phèdre*;—it is: "Venus tout entière à sa proie attachée," and to me seemed tragic.

'It is far more realistic than the fandango and far less coquettish, because the thing represented is au grand sérieux, not travestied, or played with, and like all such things the Arab men don't think it the least improper! Of course the girls don't commit any indecorums before European women, except the dance itself. She moved her breasts by some extraordinary muscular effort, first one and then the other. They were just like pomegranates and gloriously independent of stays or any support.'

Said Achmed said that he had wanted to give Lucie a fantasia when he heard that she was coming, but had feared that she might have men with her. He had had great trouble with two Englishmen 'who wanted to make the girls dance naked, which they objected to, and he had to turn them out of his house after hospitably entertaining them.'

The steamer finally arrived at Luxor in the middle of January and Lucie took farewell of the Captain. M. Tastu, the new French Consul-General in Cairo, whose wife had known Sarah Austin in Paris, had lent Lucie the house which then existed over part of the huge Temple of Khem. It had been built in 1825 by the English Consul-General, Mr. Salt, when he was co-operating with Belzoni for the removal of the giant bust of Memnon to the British Museum. The house was subsequently bought by the French Government and occupied for some time by Champollion and Roselli.

Perched on top of the towering Pharaonic columns, which were then half cluttered up by houses belonging to the native village, it commanded a magnificent view all round. The main windows gave on to the Nile and the mauve sandstone hills. To the south-east there was a spacious covered-in

THE HOUSE OVER THE TEMPLE

terrace looking out over brilliant green fields and the hills beyond.

Twenty Fellaheen came to clear away the dust of three years' accumulation, and the big reception room was soon made comfortable with carpets and a divan. There was very little furniture, and Lucie had the luxury of glass in only some of the windows, and of doors in only some of the rooms.

Chapter XXXVII

LETTERS FROM LUXOR

LUCIE DUFF GORDON'S letters to her family from Luxor cover a period of five and a half years, during which she and Sally were the only Englishwomen living in Upper Egypt. They are the best that she wrote, full of delightful sketches of her Arab friends.

Her wide sympathy put her in closer touch with her Fellaheen neighbours probably than any English person before or since. An inherent laziness made her enjoy oriental ways, and thus see many things from the Arab viewpoint, nor did she have any passion to reform people, which is so often a barrier to an understanding. 'I don't want to improve mankind at all,' said Lucie, 'or to assist in the advance of civilisation. Quite the other way.'

Unlike many English people, she liked the 'caessant' ways of the Arabs; 'The people come and pat and stroke me with their hands, and one corner of my brown abbaia is faded with much kissing.'

In her letters from Luxor she refers to herself as an old woman, but she was only in her forties, and was still strikingly handsome, and the grey of her hair against a fair skin, browned by the sun, was an added beauty. 'See how the sun of the Arabs loves her,' said an Egyptian sailor, 'he has kissed her so hotly that she cannot go home among English people.' She remained slim and continued to carry herself well, though she stooped with pain in her last years.

It was a very different life from the gaieties of the 'Gordon

Arms,' with George Meredith, Watts, Tom Taylor and Caroline Norton as visitors. Instead of reclining in an easy-chair in her riding-habit, a short pipe or cigar in her mouth, and shelves of books lining the walls, she sat cross-legged on her divan smoking a large nargeeleh in an almost empty room. She dressed most of the time in a loose shift, with an abbaia round her shoulders. Stockings, stays and petticoats lasted for only a short time with the hard-fisted washing of a negress. When her loose dress wore out she took to pink trousers, as the woman who came to sew could not make a dress. During the hot weather she lay 'with a minimum of clothes.'

"Alhumdulillah!" said Omar. "I see the clever English do just like the lazy Arab."

Her beauty, her wisdom and her sympathetic ways made her a favourite with all. Fellaheen, travelling Beduin from the Sudan, Nubians, great Sheikhs from Mecca, and Turkish Beys came to drink coffee with her, sitting round on the carpets of the big room.

'It is a favourite amusement to make one of the party read aloud; a stray copy of *Kamar ez-Zeman* and *Sitt Boodoora* went all round Luxor, and was much coveted for the village soirées. But its owner departed, and left us to mourn over the lost MSS. Do send me a good edition of the *Arabian Nights* in Arabic.'

Often they would still be sitting there when the sun began to set, and proceed to say their prayers where they were while Lucie sat quietly in the corner. They soon realised that, unlike many Europeans, she did not ridicule their religion. 'There is a very general idea among Arabs that Christians *hate* the Muslims. They attribute to us the old crusading spirit. It is only lately that Omar has let us see him at prayer for fear of being ridiculed, but now he is sure that is not so. I often

find him praying in the room where Sally sits at work, which is a clean, quiet place. Yussuf went and joined him there yesterday evening and prayed with him and gave him some religious instruction quite undisturbed by Sally and her needlework. I am continually complimented on *not hating* the Muslims.'

In spite of her own illness and failing strength she was always ready to attend to the illnesses of the Fellaheen men, women and children. Her fame as a Hakeemeh (doctor) spread throughout Upper Egypt. She became a power in the land so that Ismail Pasha came to look with disapproval upon the presence of an independent-minded Englishwoman who saw the tyrannies of his rule. Whenever she went to Cairo he had her carefully watched and did his best to turn her out of Egypt.

The fact that Lucie trusted the good faith of her neighbours, just as she refused to believe silly stories of Malays wanting to poison Christians, appealed to the hospitable Fellaheen. The doors and windows of her Luxor house were never barred, and when she visited villages she was accompanied only by Omar or an Arab friend, whereas the Fellaheen were accustomed to see the English go about armed and guarded.

"Madame, you are loved like a sister, and respected like a queen; it rejoices one's heart to see prejudice forgotten in this way," said Dr. Osman, a shereef and a lecturer at the Cairo School of Medicine, when he visited Luxor and heard praise of Lucie on all sides. "You alone in all Egypt know the people and understand what is happening. All other Europeans see only the outside. You inspire the confidence which is necessary to know the truth."

It often made Lucie unhappy to see how thankful the poor Fellaheen were to receive a little kindness from her. 'I feel quite hurt often at the way the people here thank me for what

the poor at home would turn up their noses at. . . . I am quite weary, too, of hearing: "of all the foreigners I never saw one like thee!" Was no one ever at all humane before? For remember I give no money, only a little physick and civility. How the British cottagers would "Thank ye for nothing," and how I wish my neighbours here could afford to do the same.'

What she saw of English behaviour in Egypt sometimes made her feel disgusted. 'I have been really amazed at several instances of English fanaticism. Why do people come to a Muslim country with such bitter hatred "in their stomachs" as I have seen three or four times?'

There is the temptation to liken Lucie's lonely life at Luxor to that led by Lady Hester Stanhope in Syria, but there was very little similarity. She came of eminently sane stock, and her interest in people and the life around her kept her normal and without any fantastic eccentricities. She was not an unhappy woman seeking solace in the East with its mysticism and oriental magnificence. In spite of all her misfortunes she enjoyed the life around her intensely, much more than did Janet, or Alexander when he came to visit her in Egypt.

She lived so much the daily life of the Fellaheen, saw so much suffering from hunger and the tyrannies of Ismail, that she came to identify herself with the Egyptians. 'It is curious to see the travellers' gay dahabihs just as usual,' she wrote in 1865 during a year of special hardship, 'and the Europeans as far removed from all care or knowledge of these distresses as if they were at home. When I go and sit with the English I feel almost as if they were foreigners to me too, so completely am I now "Bint el Beled" (daughter of the country) . . . and thus out of "my inward consciousness" (as Germans say) many of the peculiarities and faults of the people of Egypt are explained to me and accounted for.'

The better she came to know Orientals, the more she realised 'the difficulty of quite understanding a people so unlike ourselves.' She considered that, like children, they were not conscious of the great gulf which divided educated Europeans from themselves. 'We do not attempt to explain our ideas to them, but I cannot discover any such reticence in them. In many respects they are more unprejudiced than we are, and very intelligent, and very good in many ways; and yet they seem so strangely childish, and I fancy I detect that impression in Lane's book, though he does not say so.'

She did not make the mistake of looking at the Egyptian world with an Anglo-Saxon formula for morality or behaviour, and she did not start with the premise that the Englishman was inherently superior to the Oriental. 'I am fully convinced,' she said, 'that custom and education are the only real difference between one set of men and another; their inner nature is the same all the world over.'

This did not mean that she ignored the differences, but she considered that they could be overcome. 'As to that difference (between East and West) I could tell volumes. Are they worse? Are they better? Both and neither. I am perhaps not quite impartial because I am "sympathique" to the Arabs and they to me, and I am inclined to be "kind" to their virtues if not "blind" to their faults which are visible to the most inexperienced traveller. You see, all our own familiar "bunkum" (excuse the vulgarity), brave words about "honour," "veracity," etc., etc., they look blank and bored at. The schoolboy morality as set forth by Maurice is current here among grown men. "Of course we tell lies to Pashas and Beys; why shouldn't we?" But shall I call in that ragged sailor and give him an order to bring me up £500 in cash from Cairo when he happens to come? It would not be an unusual procedure. I sleep every night in a makaah

SIMPLIFICATION OF LIFE

(sort of verandah) open to all Luxor and haven't a door that has a lock. They bother me for backsheesh, but oh how poor they are and how rich must a woman be whose very servants drink sugar to their coffee! And who lives in the Kasr (palace) and is respectfully visited by Ali Bey—and come to that, Ali Bey would like a present even better than the poorest Fellaḥ who also loves to give one.'

Life in Luxor was then very much simpler than it is to-day with its big hotels. The Nile flowed very much closer to the houses, and during flood one year it even destroyed part of the house in which Lucie lived over the big Temple.

'You would be amused at the bazaar here,' she wrote to Alexander. 'There is a barber, and on Tuesdays some beads, calico and tobacco are sold. The only artisan is a jeweller! We spin and weave our own brown woollen garments, and have no other wants, but gold necklaces and nose and earrings are indispensable. It is the safest way of hoarding, and happily combines saving with ostentation. Can you imagine a house without beds, chairs, tables, cups, glasses, knives—in short, with nothing but an oven, a few pipkins and water-jars, and a couple of wooden spoons, and some mats to sleep on? And yet people are quite happy and civilised who live so. An Arab cook, with his fingers and one cooking-pot, will serve you an excellent dinner quite miraculously. The simplification of life possible in such a climate is not conceivable unless one has seen it. The Turkish ladies whom I visit at Karnac have very little more. They are very fond of me, and always want me to stay and sleep, but how could I sleep in my clothes on a mat-divan, poor spoiled European that I am?

'But they pity and wonder far more at the absence of my "master." I made a bad slip of the tongue and said "my husband" before Abdul Rafiah, the master of the house. The

ladies laughed and blushed tremendously, and I felt very awkward, but they turned the tables on me in a few minutes by some questions they asked quite coolly.'

When Lucie was making an inventory of the things on her boat, which was to be hired to tourists, an Effendi who was watching said: "There is no God but God: is it possible that four or five foreigners can use all these things to eat, drink and sleep?"

"Oh, Effendim, that is nothing," said little Achmed, son of Lucie's doorkeeper, who considered himself a travelled man of the world. "Our Lady is almost like the children of the Arabs. One dish or two, a piece of bread, a few dates, and peace, there is an end of it. But thou shouldst see the merchants of Alexandria; three table-cloths, forty dishes, to each soul seven plates of all sorts, seven knives and seven forks and seven spoons, large and small, and seven different glasses for wine and beer and water."

"It is the will of God," replied the Effendi; "but it must be a dreadful fatigue to them to eat their dinner."

Chapter XXXVIII

URANIA

ALTHOUGH Lucie was very fond of her Egyptian friends and entertained by the life around her, there was constantly in her heart a longing for home, and especially a desire to see her little daughter Urania, who was only a few years old. She was a delicate child, who died at the age of twenty.

She sent many letters to her, which are among the most charming that she wrote from Luxor and have not been included in previous editions of her letters.

'My Darling Rainy,' she said, 'I think you will like a letter from Mamma for yourself and I dare say Aunt Charley¹ will read it to you. I have written the name of the place where I am living in Arabic letters. It is very difficult to learn them, and I think the little Arab boys, who sit in the court-yard of the Mosque, as the Church is called, with their slates must have harder work with their A B C than you have: and only think, they read and write the other way from us—what we should call the wrong way, and begin their books from the end.

'I went to a farm-house near here a few days ago and I wished so you were there to play with the tiny calves and kids and lambs. They are all so very tame, the little kids jumped up on my lap for a bit of bread I was eating and they played so with the little children. And so many chickens and turkeys and such lots of pigeons and great camels who carry all the corn and sugar cane instead of waggons, and big ugly black

¹ Miss Charlotte Austin, sister of John Austin.

buffaloes who give much better milk than even the very pretty cows. And the buffaloes go and swim about in the big river with only their noses out of the water for hours and come up all wet and slimy like otters. The chickens and turkeys and pigeons all live in sort of cupboards built up of mud which look like very big large jars, taller than Papa, and which stand in a row all round the yard. They run about in the day and go in at night to be safe from the foxes.

‘I have got chickens and a great chestnut coloured turkey cock and hundreds of pigeons on top of my house and hawks come and fly about among them and never seem to hurt them. There are some funny little owls who live in the ruins under my house and who fly about and bark like little puppies and don’t mind the brightest sun-shine; but they look very angry at us, as if they thought we had no business in their home.

‘I wish I could send you my pretty white pigeons who say “Allah Allah” (the Arabs say they are praying), and they are so kind that they take care of all the young pigeons which Omar buys in the market and feed them as if they were their own children. It is quite curious to see them with five or six young birds round them gaping for food.

‘There is a little girl called Zeynab, who comes to see me sometimes; her Papa is a very kind old gentleman with a black face and a white beard who lends me his horse to ride and is called Mustapha Aga.¹ Little Zeynab is just as big as you, and if you were painted dark brown you would be very like her, so I enjoy to see her because she resembles my darling Rainy. I gave her a little dolly and some sugar plums and she made a feast on a little round plate like an Arab dinner which comes in on a big round tray.

‘I live in a very big house with hardly any furniture. The

¹ The British Consular representative.

OWLS THAT BARK

room outside my room is quite open on one side to the country and the swallows have begun to build. their nests there and often fly in where I sit, for I have no doors, only Papa's old plaid hung up for a curtain. At night funny little pale brown lizards run about on the ceiling and never tumble down. They catch flies and chirrup very loud and have curious little tips to their toes to hang on by; also very big eyes to see in the dark, and very little bats with white stomachs and brown backs fly about in the room sometimes.

'I have just bought a little black donkey and ridden him; he is very small but runs along so fast and does not seem to think me at all too heavy. The donkeys here are very good tempered and don't want a bridle, only to point with a little stick, first on one side of their heads and then on the other, to show them where to go, and they run along and scramble up and down banks so nicely. . . .

'I did not get your nice letter and the pretty bird till New Year's Day—for I had come up the great river Nile. So it came after me by the post which is carried all the 600 miles by men running from one place to another. I was so pleased to see your *own* writing and I have put my darling Rainy's first own letter in my box to keep it always.

'A little Arab girl, Fatimeh (Sheikh Yussuf's daughter), was with me when it came, she is younger than you but can write a little which few little girls can in this country. Her father teaches her and she looked at your letter and thought it very nice though she could not read the writing and wondered at it as much as you would at hers. And she was so delighted at the robin, which she said was an English sparrow. So after I had kept it for a week or two I gave it to her, for I thought you would like her to have it.

'It is such beautiful warm weather here; while you had frost and snow, we had hot sun and warm air like the middle

of summer. Perhaps when summer really comes I shall have a boat of my own and then I hope Papa will bring you to live in it with me all the winter and we will come up here. How nice it would be.

‘A poor man, a traveller, was very ill and died in my house, and his black slave, a boy bigger than Mossey, is here still. He is called Khayr, but his name in his own village far away in the middle of Africa was Faragalla. He was stolen by Turkish soldiers and can only speak a little Arabic yet. When I heard you had been reading *Robinson Crusoe*, I wished to send him to you to bē your Man Friday, when you play at Desert Islands. He is a very good boy and very merry and now is Man Friday to my other little boy Achmed, who is very little and very brown and very clever and teaches big clumsy Khayr to clean knives and help cook and to wash the clothes and all sorts of things. Khayr is as black as ink and very ugly and his teeth were filed to sharp points like a dog’s when he was little in his own country,¹ but he is a very good boy and I like him and shall be very sorry when he goes to his master who is a little boy of 8 or 9 and whom he means to take great care of and to work for, if his father has left him no money. But if his little master’s family sell him he wants me to buy him very much.

‘One boy is no bigger than you; he comes from Darfoor, a country far away to the south, where they have a king of their own, and all the people learn to read and write so they are not savages, though quite black and with thick lips and woolly hair. When a little boy has learnt to read and write quite well, his master carries him on his shoulders to his father’s house who makes a feast for him and all his school-fellows. At least so my little boy tells me, only he was stolen when he was too little to know his letters.

¹ He belonged to a cannibal tribe.

THE CAMELS HAVE DINNER

'Dear little Rainy I do long to see you so very much and I hope I shall next summer. Your picture hangs over my table where I write so I am looking at your face now. I wish I could kiss your real face.

'Our gardener here, whose name is Suleyman and who is a Christian, has given me a pretty little very old silver cross for you, I will send it to Janet to take care of till she can send it with Suleyman's kind salaam—and Omar sends you his best love and kisses your hand, and Sheikh Yussuf, a very nice Arab gentleman who is teaching me to read and write, sends you his love and is very glad to hear you are learning to write.

'I went yesterday evening and ate some supper with Abduracheem, a gentleman who was seeing his wheat threshed. Here they thresh it out in the field with a sort of sledge with little iron sharp wheels, which cut up the straw all small for the cattle to eat. The sledge is drawn round and round by two great handsome bulls driven by a little boy, quite naked and very dark brown, who sings to the bulls, how they shall get some barley if they are good—and everybody is paid with corn, not money, and the little brown boys trot home quite pleased with their little bundles of wheat on their heads. It is very pretty to see.

'I wish I could send you a jug of camel's milk every morning such as I drink; it is better than any other milk, with thick froth like whipped cream. The Arabs think it very good for sick people and a man called Shergeff brings his camel here every morning and milks her for me. Her baby camel is so funny; he looks all legs and big black eyes with soft fluffy buff coloured hair and so very little a body to such tall legs.

'I wish you could see the camels have their dinner; they are the only people here who use a table cloth. The camel driver spreads a cloth on the ground and pours a heap of

maize (doura) upon it and then old Mrs. and Mr. Camel sit down at the top and bottom very gravely and the others all take their places in proper order and eat quite politely bowing their long necks up and down. Only one was sulky, and went and had his dinner by himself, like a naughty boy—and sometimes would not eat at all.

‘This year an American gentleman and lady came with two little boys and two little girls; the eldest eight, the youngest two. They were nice children and I was very glad to see them, and all the little Arabs ran after them and were so astonished at their white faces and fair hair—they had never seen white children before and admired them very much and wondered at their clothes.

‘Nothing amuses my Arab friends so much as the atlas I brought with me; Sheikh Hassan el Ababdeh, the black Sheikh, especially sits on the carpet for hours looking at the maps and asking questions. He never saw any before but he understands them very well, and I found that he knew that the world was round like a ball.

When later Lucie bought a dahabieh to take her on the Nile trips between Luxor and Cairo, she called the boat after her daughter. ‘I wish I had you to see all the strange things and to sail with me in the boat which is called the *Urania*, but the sailors call her *Aroset er Ralee* (the darling bride). All little girls are called brides here when people mean to be civil.

‘The river is very full now. You know each year it rises and waters all Egypt, and then the people sow their corn. It never rains, and when the earth gets dry, they water all the fields with wheels turned by oxen or with baskets lined with leather at the end of a long pole which goes up and down like a see-saw when the men work it, and the water runs in little gutters which are made all over the fields like the lines

'THE DARLING BRIDE'

on a chess board, and the green of the fields is brighter than even in England.

'My boat is quite a nice little house; there is first a bedroom and a pantry for Omar, then a little drawing-room with divans and a writing table in one corner and your picture and Janet's and Maurice's on the walls; then two little bedrooms, then a bath place, etc., and quite at the end under the steersman is my bed-room which is very comfortable. All the sailors and the boys sleep outside on the decks; they have no beds at all, but they are used to it and sleep quite soundly on the boards. When we travel there are eight or ten men, the Reis, a steersman and a boy. Up the river we sail with such a big sail, and if there is no wind, the men tow the boat with a rope, which is hard work against the stream. When we come down the river the great big sail is taken down and we float down or the men row singing very prettily all the while. They cannot pronounce Urania, so they sing:

“Sail fast and safe on our darling bride:”

Chapter XXXIX

SLAVES AND CHILDREN

LUCIE wished that she had her husband and children with her to fill her rambling house. She had to console herself with the many children and youths who came in to see her. 'I am a special favourite with all the young lads; they must not talk much before grown men, so they come and sit on the floor round my feet, and ask questions and advice, and enjoy themselves amazingly. Hobble-de-hoy-hood is very different here from what it is with us; they care earlier for the affairs of the grown-up world, and are more curious and more polished, but lack the fine animal gaiety of our boys. The girls are much more "gamin" than the boys, and more romping and joyous.'

Then there was little Achmed and Mabrook, a slave captured from Somaliland. 'I cannot think why I go on expecting so-called savages to be different from other people. Mabrook's simple talk about his village, and the animals and the victuals; and how the men of a neighbouring village stole him in order to sell him for a gun (the price of a gun is a boy), but were prevented by a razzia of Turks, etc., who killed the first aggressors and took all the children—all this he tells, just as an English boy might tell of bird-nesting, which delights me. He has the same general notion of right and wrong; and yet his tribe know neither bread nor any sort of clothes, nor cheese nor butter, nor even drink milk, nor the African beer. They have two products

of civilisation—guns and tobacco—for which they pay in boys and girls whom they steal.

‘I must tell you a black standard of respectability (it is quite equal to the English one of the gig, or of the ham for breakfast). I was taking counsel with my friend Rachmeh, a negro, about Mabrook, and he urged me to buy him from Palgrave, because he saw that the lad really loved me. He added :

“Moreover the boy is of a respectable family, for he told me that his mother wore a cow’s tail down to her heels (that and a girdle to which the tail is fastened constituted her whole wardrobe), and that she beat him when he told lies or stole his neighbour’s eggs.”

‘Poor woman,’ said Lucie, ‘I wish this abominable slave trade had spared her and her boy. What folly it is to stop the Circassian slave trade, if it be stopped, and to leave this. The Circassians take their children to market, as a way of providing for them handsomely, and both boys and girls like being sold to the rich Turks; but the blacks and Abyssinians fight hard for their own liberty and that of their cubs.’

Mabrook grew enormous and developed a voice of thunder. ‘He is of the elephantine rather than the tiger species, a very mild young savage. I shall be sorry when Palgrave takes him. In the boat Achmed is enough under Omar; but in this large dusty house, and with errands to run, and comers and goers to look after, pipes and coffee and the like, it takes two boys to be comfortable. Mabrook, too, washes very well. It is surprising how fast the boys learn, and how well they do their work. Achmed, who is quite little, would be a perfectly sufficient servant for a man alone; he can cook, wash, clean the rooms, make the beds, do all the table service, knife and plate cleaning, all fairly well, and I believe now he would get

along even without Omar's orders. Mabrook is slower but he has the same merit as our poor Hassan had; he never forgets what he has once been told to do, and he is clean in his work though hopelessly dirty as to his clothes. He cannot get used to them, and takes a roll in the dust, or leans against a dirty wall, oblivious of his clean-washed blue shirt.

'Achmed is quicker and more careless, but they both are good boys and very fond of Omar. "Uncle Omar" is the form of address, though he scolds them pretty severely if they misbehave. The little rogues have found out that their laughing does not affect my nerves, and I am often treated to a share in the joke.

'How I wish Rainy could see the children: they would amuse her. Yussuf's girl, "Meer en Nezzil," is a charming child, and very clever; her emphatic way of explaining everything to me, and her gestures, would delight you. Her cousin and future husband, aged five (she is six), broke the doll which I had given her, and her description of it was most dramatic, ending with a wheedling glance at the cupboard and: "Of course there are no more dolls therè. Oh no, no more."

'She is a fine little creature, far more Arab than Fellaha. She came in full of making cakes for Bairam, and offered her services. Rolling up her sleeves she said:

"Oh my Aunt, if thou wantest anything I can work."

Achmed was the most amusing of Lucie's many small servants. 'His assumption of dignity is quite delicious. He has provided himself with a huge staff, and he behaves like the most tremendous janissary. He is about Rainy's size, as sharp as a needle, and possesses the remains of a brown shirt and a ragged kitchen duster as turban.'

When Baron and Baroness Kevenbrinck passed up the river Achmed confided in Lucie that he had fallen in love with the

Baroness. 'He played at cards with her yesterday afternoon and it seems lost his heart (he is twelve) and he said he was wishing to play a game for a kiss as the stake. He had put on a turban to-day, on the strength of his passion, to look like a man, and had neglected his dress otherwise because :

"When young men are sick of love they always do so."

'The fact is the Baroness was kind and amiable and tried to amuse him as she would have done to a white boy, hence Achmed's susceptible heart was "on fire for her." He also asked me if I had any medicine to make him white, I suppose to look lovely in her eyes.

'He little knows how very pretty he is with his brown face—as he sits cross-legged on the carpet at my feet in his white turban and blue shirt reading aloud. I have grown very fond of him; he is so eager to learn and to improve and so remarkably clever.'

When visitors called he was in his element, feeling as important as Hassan used to feel when announcing distinguished visitors at Queen Square. "Fee wahid Lord" ("Here's a Lord"), he stated, when Lord Spencer called from his Nile boat.

Achmed was exceedingly jealous of other people serving Lucie. He could not do anything against large Mabrook, but he used to bully the little boy from Darfoor, who was called by the name of his country.

Khayr had been a slave of a respectable old dragoman, er-Rasheedee, who was working for one of the young Rothschilds, a boy of fourteen, when he came up the Nile, travelling like a prince, in one of the Khedive Ismail's steamers.

"All that honour to the money of a Jew," said an old Fellah contemptuously to Lucie.

At Luxor er-Rasheedee had fallen sick. Rothschild paid

him his bare wages and a very insufficient sum to take him back to Cairo with his son, and Khayr. The poor old man was obviously dying. Lucie took him into her big house to nurse him, and after ten days he died. 'He sank to sleep quietly at noon with his hand in mine; a good old Muslim sat at his head on one side and I on the other. Omar stood at his head and his black slave boy Khayr at his feet. We had laid his face to the Kibleh and I spoke to him to see if he knew anything, and when he nodded the three Muslims chanted the "Islamee La Illaha" while I closed his eyes.

'The "respectable men" came in by degrees, took an inventory of his property which they delivered to me, and washed the body, and within an hour and a half we all went out to the burial-place; I following among a troop of women who joined us to wail for "the brother who had died far from his place."

'The scene as we turned in between broken colossi and the pylons of the temple to go to the mosque was overpowering. After the prayer in the mosque we went out to the graveyard, Muslims and Copts helping to carry the dead, and my Frankish hat in the midst of the veiled and wailing women; all so familiar and yet so strange.

'After the burial the Imam, Sheikh Abd el Waris, came and kissed me on the shoulders, and the Shereef, a man of eighty, laid his hands on my shoulders and said:

"Fear not, my daughter, neither all the days of thy life nor at the hour of thy death, for God is with thee."

'I kissed the old man's hand and turned to go, but numberless men came and said:

"A thousand thanks, Oh our sister, for what thou hast done for one among us."

'Now the solemn chanting of the Fikees, and the clear voice of the boy reciting the Koran in the room where the

KHAYR IN THE INVENTORY

man died are ringing through the house. They will pass the night in prayer and to-morrow there will be the prayer of deliverance in the mosque.

‘Poor Khayr has just crept in to have a quiet cry. He is in the inventory and I must deliver him up to the authorities to be forwarded to Cairo with the rest of the property. He is very ugly with his black face wet and swollen, but he kisses my hand and calls me his mother quite “natural like.” He said :

““For myself, I wish to stay with you, but then what would my little master do ?””

Eventually Khayr left, which delighted little Achmed. When the latter finally went himself some months later, Mabrook also was pleased, although he had to do Achmed’s work as well. ‘He tells me he likes it best so,’ said Lucie ; ‘he likes to be quiet.’ He just suits me and I him ; it is humiliating to find how much more I am to the taste of savages than of the “polite circles.”’

Chapter XL

LUCIE'S VISITORS

'THESE people are of high blood,' wrote Lucie of the Luxor Arabs, 'and a sort of "roll of battle" is kept here for the genealogies of the noble Arabs who came in with Amr—the first Arab conqueror and lieutenant of Omar. Not one of these brown men, who do not own a second shirt, would give his brown daughter to the greatest Turkish Pasha. This country noblesse is more interesting to me by far than the town people, though Omar, who is quite a cockney, and piques himself on being "delicate," turns up his nose at their beggarly pride, as Londoners used to do at bare-legged Highlanders. The air of perfect equality—except as to the respect due to the head of the clan—with which the villagers treat Mustapha Aga, and which he fully returns, makes it all seem so very gentlemanly. They are not so dazzled by a little show, and far more manly than the Cairenes. I am on visiting terms with all the "country families" resident in Luxor already. The Magistrate is a very nice person, and my Sheikh Yussuf, who is of the highest blood (being descended from Abdul Haggag himself), is quite charming.'

Seleem Effendi, the Turkish magistrate, used to come in frequently to talk and told her all his family affairs: how he had bought two black slave women, mother and daughter, from a Copt for £35 the two. The mother cooked and the daughter was 'for his bed' as his wife did not want to leave Cairo her boys being at school there. 'It gives one a sort

OLIVES FOR THE MAGISTRATE'S HAREEM

of start to hear a most respectable magistrate tell one such a domestic arrangement,' said Lucie.

The story of his marriage was quite 'unfit to meet the virtuous eyes of British propriety.' As a boy he had known his wife before marriage. She had fallen in love with him when she was about twenty-six and had courted him with glasses of sherbet and trays of sweetmeats. They married in Cairo and when he was sent up to Luxor he left her behind to look after the children: 'Seleem related how, being a very healthy man, and not old (46) he was assailed by such fearful temptation, that he was constantly forced to ask pardon of God for his wicked thoughts at the sight of a woman, and, from terror lest he should commit some offence quite unpardonable in a religious man, he bought the black slave girl, who was the only woman he had ever known in his life beside the Sitt his wife.'

One day the magistrate came in to see Lucie, attended by Osman Effendi, his cavass and pipe-bearer. In his hands Seleem bore a saucer and wore the look, 'half-sheepish, half-cocky, with which elderly gentlemen in all countries announce what he did, *i.e.* that his black slave girl was three months gone with child and longed for olives.' Seleem had walked all over the bazaar but could find no olives anywhere; 'so he hoped I might have some and forgive the request, as I of course knew that a man must beg or even steal for a woman under these circumstances. I called Omar and said:

"I trust there are olives for the honourable hareem of Seleem Effendi."

'Fortunately Omar had a few olives with which he was just going to stuff the pigeons for dinner.'

The magistrate took the olives and returned along the Luxor street balancing them carefully on his saucer.

The black girl was now free, since Seleem had stated openly

LUCIE'S VISITORS

that he had got child by her. She could leave his house when she wished after the infant had been born, and probably would marry someone and Seleem pay the expenses. The child was added to the other eight members of his family and would be on exactly the same footing though black as coal.

Sometimes Lucie returned the magistrate's calls and sat on the bench in front of the door, listening to the people as they came with their grievances. She had to complain to him herself about the children, who had begun to be a great nuisance to her with their demands for backsheesh. It was only in Luxor where tourists went that they were troublesome. Seleem Effendi assembled a committee of parents and told them that they must enforce better manners, which had the desired effect.

Seleem was an ardent Muslim and 'held forth very much as a very superficial Unitarian might do, evidently feeling considerable contempt for the absurdities, as he thinks them, of the Copts (he was too civil to say Christians). He couldn't understand how people could believe such nonsense. He is an excellent specimen of a good, honest, steady-going man-of-the-world; a strong contrast to the tender piety of the dear Sheikh Yussuf, who has no inclination whatever for doctrinal harangues like worthy Seleem.'

The magistrate was very pleased about a verbal quibble in the Arabic Gospel, according to which Christ is described as either 'Son' or 'Prophet'—depending upon the reduplicative sign *u*—sheddeh—over one letter. Lucie reminded him that the original was not written in Arabic but in Greek. He was a little put out, but became reassured when she told him that many Christians, including herself, did not believe that Jesus Christ was God, but only the greatest of Prophets and teachers.

One day she overheard Seleem Effendi and Omar discussing

PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE

Englishwomen, including herself. "When I feel my stomach tightened I go to the divan," said Omar, "and say to her :

"Do you want anything? a pipe? or sherbet? or so and so?"

"And I talk until she lays her book down and talks to me, and I question and amuse my mind, and by God if I were a rich man and could marry one English harem like that, I would stand before her and serve her like her *mameluke*. You see I am only this lady's servant and I have not once sat in the coffee shops because of the sweetness of her tongue. Is it not true, therefore, that the man who can marry such harem is rich more than with money?"

"I nearly laughed out," said Lucie, "at hearing Omar relate his manœuvres to make me "amuse his mind." It seems I am in no danger of being discharged for being "dull in the gig." Compare this with Halim Pasha's detestation of all "*femmes d'esprit*."

Lucie was not long in Luxor before she had a proposal of marriage from a handsome young Sheikh el Arab, aged thirty. He told Omar that he was sending a marriage brokeress to make the arrangements, and insisted that Lucie could easily divorce her husband in England; the difference in age was nothing. She was not, he told Omar, like the stupid modern women, but like an ancient Arab *Ameereh*, and worthy of Antar or Abu Zeyd—a woman for whom men killed each other and themselves—and that he would pay all he could afford as dowry.

Eventually Omar persuaded him that it was useless to send his brokeress, and the young Beduin went disconsolately away.

Sally, too, received an offer of marriage. Mustapha Aga, the richest and most influential person in Luxor, wanted her to marry his son Said, aged twenty, who was studying

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at Alexandria. He said that she could keep her own religion and her own customs.

'A handsome offer deserves a civil answer,' said Lucie, who decided that Sally must say that her father would object in order not to hurt the old man's feelings.

One of Lucie's visitors was Ismail, the grandfather of Mohammed, her doorkeeper. He was over a hundred years old and had seen Napoleon's army in Luxor. He had been Belzoni's guide and thought that Lucie was Madame Belzoni. He believed Belzoni was still alive and wished to take Lucie to him at Abu Simbel.

Occasionally there were family quarrels which Lucie and Omar would try to settle. Mohammed came in a great state one day because his wife, a girl of eighteen, had wanted to go home at Bairam, so that her mother might wash her hair and unplait it ready for the festival after the long fast of Ramadan. Mohammed said that he had particularly told her that he did not want her to leave him on that day, and that she was to send for a woman to do her hair instead.

Thereupon she flew into a tantrum and cut off all her hair.

Mohammed in his turn got into a passion and told her 'to cover the face,' the equivalent to a divorce, and to go to her father's house with her baby.

The next few days Mohammed mooned about Lucie's house, in and out of the kitchen, looking very glum. Omar decided to take matters in hand, and when Lucie walked into the kitchen one morning she was surprised to see him cooking with a baby in his arms.

"Why, what is that?"

"Oh, don't say anything. I sent Achmed to fetch Mohammed's baby and when he comes here he will see it and then in talking I can say so and so, and how the man must be good

to the hareem, and what this poor small girl do when she's big enough to ask for her father?"

Lucie returned to the kitchen a little later. 'It was a pretty scene. Mohammed in his ample brown robes and white turban lay asleep on the floor with the baby's tiny pale face and little eyelids, stained with kohl, against his coffee-brown cheek—both fast asleep; baby in her father's arms and wide brown sleeves.'

Omar leant against the stove in his house dress, a white shirt open at the breast and white drawers reaching to the knees, with the red tarboosh and red-yellow koofyeh round it like a turban, contemplating them with his large soft eyes.

The two men made a good contrast between Upper and Lower Egypt. Mohammed was the true Arab type—'coffee-brown, thin, spare, sharp featured, elegant hands and feet, bright glittering small eyes and angular jaw—not a handsome Arab but bien caractérisé. . . . Omar very inferior to the purer Arab blood which prevails here, but most sweet in expression. He is the true ahouh benat (brother of girls). I never knew anyone so truly chivalrous to hareem in my life.'

'I think you would enjoy as I do the peculiar sort of social equality which prevails here,' she wrote to Tom Taylor; 'it is the exact contrary to French égalité. There are great and powerful people, much honoured (outwardly at all events), but nobody has *inferiors*. A man comes in and kisses my hand, and sits down off the carpet, out of respect, but he smokes his pipe, drinks his coffee, laughs, talks and also questions as freely as if he were an Effendi or I were a Fellah. He is not my inferior; he is my poor brother.

'The servants in my friends' houses receive me with profound demonstrations of respect and wait at dinner reverently,

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but they mix freely in the conversation and take part in all amusements, music, dancing girls or reading of the Koran. Even the dancing girl is not an *outcast*; she is free to talk to me and it is highly irreligious to show any contempt or aversion.

'The rules of politeness are the same for all. The passer-by greets the one sitting still, or the one who comes into a room those who are already there without distinction of rank. When I have greeted the men they always rise, but if I pass without, they take no notice of me.

'All this is very pleasant and graceful though it is connected with much that is evil. The fact that any man may be a Bey or a Pasha to-morrow is not a good fact, for the promotion is more likely to fall upon a bad slave than on a good or intelligent free man. Thus the only honourable class are those who have nothing to hope from the great. I won't say nothing to fear, for all have cause for that.'

It was a form of society which appealed to Lucie, and she was a great favourite at all fantasias, banquets and religious gatherings. But it was her sympathy for all who suffered which won her the greatest affection and first made her close friends with Sheikh Yussuf, for 'charity covers all sins with Muslimeen.'

'My poor Sheikh Yussuf is in great distress about his brother, also a young Sheikh (*i.e.* one learned in theology and competent to preach in the Mosque). Sheikh Mohammed is come home from studying in El Azhar at Cairo, I fear, to die. I went with Sheikh Yussuf, at his desire, to see if I could help him and found him gasping for breath and very, very ill. I gave him a little soothing medicine and put mustard plasters on him and as it relieved him I went again and repeated them. All the family and a lot of neighbours crowded in to look on.

‘There he lay in a dark little den with mud walls, worse off to our ideas than any pauper, but these people do not feel the want of comforts, and one learns to think it quite natural to sit with perfect gentlemen in places inferior to our cattle-sheds.

‘I pulled some blankets up against the wall and put my arm behind Sheikh Mohammed’s back to make him rest while the poultices were on him, whereupon he laid his green turban on my shoulder and presently held up his delicately brown face for a kiss like an affectionate child.

‘As I kissed him a very pious old Mollah said: “Bismillah” (“In the name of God”), with an approving nod, and Sheikh Mohammed’s old father (a splendid old man in a green turban) thanked me with effusion and prayed that my children might always find help and kindness.’

Lucie, who still had that characteristic of seeing herself in a separate world in opposition to others, added:

‘I suppose if I confessed to kissing a “dirty Arab” in a “hovel” the English travellers would execrate me. But it shows how much there is in “Muslim bigotry, unconquerable hatred, etc.,” for this family are Seyyids (descendants of the Prophet) and very pious.’

Sheikh Mohammed died a few days later. Lucie herself was ill, and Sheikh Yussuf took care that no one in her house should be told, for he knew ‘what was in her stomach towards them,’ and feared she would be made worse by the news.

She was very touched when she heard of this afterwards, and exclaimed in one of her letters home: ‘How often I have been advised not to meddle with sick Arabs because they are sure to suspect a Christian of poisoning those who die!’

As Lucie was sitting on the balcony writing this letter to her mother, Omar came in to say that there was a deputation

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of Fellaheen to see her. Dressed in their brown flowing gallabiehs and little round skull-caps, they had come to ask her if she would speak to the English travellers to try to stop them from shooting the pigeons.

Already this practice had begun which resulted thirty years later in the Denshawi incident. When the Fellaheen of Denshawi village attacked British officers for shooting their tame pigeons, it was not a question of bigoted fanaticism, as the British public was given to understand at the time, but the revolt against an injustice which the Fellaheen had endured many years.

Lucie did what she could to prevent the English from shooting what belonged to the Fellaheen, and told the deputation that they must say that the pigeons belonged to her and that she was not going to have her possessions shot at. One pigeon was shot by an English visitor as it was sitting on her balcony. She considered that the dragomen were also much to blame, as they never told foreigners that the pigeons were private property.

While Lucie hated and attacked the unmannerly and overbearing ways of some of the English who came to the East, she was proud and pleased when the Fellaheen saw English people whose behaviour could be admired. 'We English are certainly liked here. Seleem Effendi said recently that he had often had to do business with them and found them always straight, men of one word and no circumlocutions and so unlike all the other Europeans and especially the French! The fact is that few but decent Englishmen come here, I fancy; our scamps go to the Colonies, whereas Egypt is the sink for all the iniquity of the South of Europe.'

She gives several instances of how English people were trusted. Teodoros, a Copt of Luxor, who as a race 'are not at all green where their pockets are concerned,' accepted a

piece of paper' for £20 worth of antiquities bought from him by an Englishman. It was a circular note, but he had not the least idea what he was to do with it until Lucie explained.

Another Englishman, Mr. Close, told Lucie that when his boat had sunk in the first cataract and he had remained half clothed on one of the rocks without any money, he had been very impressed by the fact that four Arabs had come to offer to lend him anything he wanted. Omar, she found, had paid an Englishman's tradesmen's bills amounting to £7 while she was away in England. He had left and Omar had told no one lest Europeans might say 'shame for the English.' Fortunately the Englishman sent the money as soon as he reached Malta.

Every now and again a visitor came up the Nile and gave Lucie news of England. There was Lady Herbert, Edward Lear, Mr. and Miss Marianne North, Lord and Lady Spencer, General Hay and Prévost Paradol, who committed suicide a few years later when he was French Ambassador at Washington.

Prévost Paradol was enchanted by Lucie, and when he returned to France sang her praises to all his French friends. 'He was exceedingly struck by her talents, her eloquence and extraordinary strength of understanding,' wrote Barthélmy St. Hilaire. 'Clever and witty as he is he could not find words to express his admiration. She is the Queen of the Arabs at Thebes.'

When General Hay called he found Lucie surrounded by Fellaheen friends, who were squatting on the carpet enjoying their coffee and pipes. They rose in consternation when this tall blue-eyed soldier first came in, but Lucie and the General insisted that they should all remain seated. She told them that in England the General was in the habit of asking his

LUCIE'S VISITORS

farmers to sit and drink wine with him, just as they were sitting round then.

“Mashallah, tayib katir” (“It is the will of God and most excellent”), said old Omar, Lucie’s Fellaḥ friend, and kissed his hand affectionately to the General.

Chapter XLI

SHEIKH YUSSUF AND RELIGION

EVER since the night that Lucie had first sat with Sheikh Yussuf's dying brother, Yussuf had been devoted to her. He used to come regularly to teach her Arabic, and a close friendship sprang up between the two. His charm, ingenuousness and essential goodness appealed strongly to Lucie; while she was to him a wise and beautiful woman, who had mixed with the world and yet had remained kind and good. She was as much a surprise and revelation to him as he was to her.

'I think he is the sweetest creature in look and manner I ever beheld,' she wrote to Alexander; 'so refined and so simple and the animal grace of a gazelle. A high bred Arab is as graceful as an Indian but quite without the feline suppleness, or the look of dissimulation; the eye is as clear and frank as a child's. . . . The feelings and prejudices and ideas of a cultivated Arab as I get at them little by little are curious beyond compare. It won't do to generalise from one man, of course, but even one gives some very new ideas. The most striking thing is the sweetness and delicacy of feeling—the horror of hurting anyone (this must be individual of course, it is too good to be general).

'I never before saw a pious person amiable like him. He is intensely devout and not at all bigoted—a difficult combination! And moreover he is lovely to behold and has the prettiest and merriest laugh possible. It is quite curious to see the mixture of a sort of learning with utter ignorance,

and great superstition, and such perfect high breeding and beauty of character. It is exactly like associating with St. John.'

Lucie was particularly touched by the fact that one evening when she was in the kitchen with Omar and had inadvertently answered Sheikh Yussuf's greeting to Omar—'Salaam Aleikoom,' which she as an 'unbeliever' could not accept, Yussuf had coloured crimson, touched her hand and kissed his own, distressed lest the distinction might wound her.

The next day he walked in and startled Lucie by a 'Salaam Aleikee' addressed to her. He had thought it over and decided that it was not wrong to give her the greeting :

"Surely it is well for all the creatures of God to speak peace (Salaam) to each other."

'No uneducated Muslim would have arrived at Yussuf's conclusion,' said Lucie. 'Omar would pray, work, lie, do anything for me, and sacrifice money even, but I doubt whether he could utter "Salaam Aleikoom" to any but a Muslim. I answered, as I felt :

"Peace oh my brother, and God bless thee."

'It was almost as if a Catholic priest had felt impelled by charity to offer the communion to a heretic !'

Sheikh Yussuf was thirty years old and studied only religious matters. He could repeat the whole Koran without a book, in twelve hours, and had read the Old Testament and the Gospels, but no light reading, such as *Thousand and One Nights*, was proper for an Alim. He told Lucie that of course Europeans did not realise that, as their religion was to enjoy themselves. 'See the mutual ignorance of all ascetics.'

'In answer to the invariable questions about all my family, I once told him my father had been a great Alim of the law, and that my mother had got ready his written books and put

IDENTITY WITH CHRISTIANITY

some lectures in order to be printed. He was amazed, first that I had a mother, as he told me he thought I was fifty or sixty—and immensely delighted at the idea.

“‘God has favoured your family with understanding and knowledge: I wish I could kiss the ‘Sheikhah,’ your mother’s hand, may God favour her.’”

‘Maurice’s portrait (as usual) he admired fervently and said one saw his good qualities in his face, a compliment I would have fully returned as he sat looking at the picture with affectionate eyes and praying sotto voce for “el Gaddar, el gameel” (the youth, the beautiful) in the words of the fatha: “Oh give him guidance, and let him not stray into the paths of the rejected.”’

‘I suppose some mediaeval monks may have had the same look, but no Catholic I have ever seen looks as peaceful or as unpretending. I see in him, like in all people who don’t know what doubt means, that easy familiarity with religion. I hear him joke with Omar about Ramadan and even about Omar’s assiduous prayers—and he is a frequent and hearty laugh.

‘I wonder if this gives you any idea of a character new to you. It is so impossible to describe *manner* which gives so much of the impression of novelty. My conclusion is the heretical one that to dream of *converting* here is absurd and I will add wrong. All that is wanted is knowledge and education, and the religion will clear and develop itself. The elements are identical with those of Christianity, encumbered as that has been with asceticism and intolerance; on the other hand the creed is simpler and there are no priests—a decided advantage. I think the faith has remained wonderfully rational considering the extreme ignorance of those who hold it.’

One of the main criticisms of Mohammedanism is usually

that it encourages fatalism and checks all initiative. But when one of Lucie's patients refused to allow his son to be vaccinated against smallpox, arguing that if the child developed it, it would be 'from God,' Yussuf said to him :

"Oh man, if the wall against which I am now sitting were to shake above my head, should I fold my feet under me and say 'God is Merciful,' or should I use the legs God has given me to escape from it? In all things do the best of thy understanding and means, and then say 'Min Allah,' for the end is with him."

'There is not a pin to choose in fatalism here between Muslim and Christian,' Lucie wrote, 'the lazy like Mohammed and Suleyman (one Arab and the other Copt) say "min Allah," meaning "poco a poco," or "Malaish," or any other form of dawdle as you please; but the true Muslim doctrine is "do all you can and be resigned to whatever be the result." In fact I am very much puzzled to discover the slightest difference between Christian and Muslim morality or belief if you exclude certain dogmas—and in fact very little is felt here. No one attempts to apply different standards of morals or of piety to a Muslim and a Copt.

'There is no hope of a good understanding with Orientals until Western Christians can bring themselves to recognise the common faith contained in the two religions; the real difference consists in all the class of notions and feelings (very important ones no doubt) which we derive, not from the Gospels at all, but from Greece and Rome, and which of course are altogether wanting here.'

Lucie was most surprised when Yussuf offered to read with her in the Koran despite the fact that 'she was a heretic.' Yussuf had discussed it all with Abd el Waris, the Imam, and it was decided that her 'charity to the people in sickness' was proof that she had received 'direction,' and

HOMERIC CHARACTER

that she was among those Christians of whom Mohammed had said: "they have no pride, they rival each other in good works and God will increase their reward."

'Yussuf wants me to write a short account of the faith from his dictation. Would anyone publish it? It annoys him terribly to hear the Muslims constantly accused of intolerance, and he is right—it is not true. They show their conviction that their faith is the best in the world with the same sort of naïveté that I have seen in very innocent and ignorant English women; in fact display a sort of religious conceit, but it is not often bitter or haineux, however much they are in earnest.'

One evening she tried to make him interested in the Arab heroes Abu Zeyd and Antara, who slew 10,000 for the love of Ibla. But the good Yussuf was bored and said:

"What are Antara and Abu Zeyd compared to the combats of our Lord Moses with Og and other infidels of might, and what is the love of Antara for Ibla compared to that of our Lord Solomon for Balkees (Queen of Sheba) or their beauty and attractiveness to that of our Lord Joseph?"

'And then he related the combat of Seyyidna Moussa with Og, and I thought, "hear O ye puritans, and give ear O ye methodists," and learn how religion and romance are one to those whose manners and ideas are the manners and ideas of the Bible, and how Moses was not at all a crop-eared Puritan but a gallant warrior.

'There is the homeric character in the religion here, the prophet is a hero, like Achilles, and like him directed by God (Allah instead of Athene). He fights, prays, teaches, makes love, and is truly a *man* not an abstraction. And as to wonderful events, instead of telling one to "gulp them down without looking" (as children are told, with a nasty dose, and as we are told about Genesis, etc.), they believe them and delight in

them and tell them to amuse people. Such a piece of deep, disguised scepticism as *credo quia impossibile* would find no favour here. "What is impossible to God?" settles everything. In short Mohammed has somehow left the stamp of romance on the religion or else it is in the blood of the people, though the Koran is prosy and "commonsensical" compared to the Old Testament.

'I used to think Arabs intensely prosaic until I could understand a little of their language, but now I can trace the genealogy of Don Quixote straight up to some Sheikh el Arab.

'It is impossible to say how exactly like the early parts of the Bible every act of life is here, and how totally new it seems when one reads it here. Old Jacob's speech to Pharaoh really made me laugh (don't be shocked) because it is so exactly what a Fellah says to a Pasha. "Few and evil have been the days," etc. (Jacob being a most prosperous man), but it is manners to say all that. "Ana Fellah," etc., etc. And I feel quite kindly to Jacob whom I used to think ungrateful and discontented.

'And when I go to Sidi Omar's farm does he not say: "take now fine meal and bake cakes quickly" and wants to kill a kid. Fatereeh with plenty of butter is what the "three men" who came to Abraham ate; and the way that Abraham's chief mameluke, acting as vakeel, manages Isaac's marriage with Rebecca!

'Sheikh Yussuf laughed so heartily over a print in an illustrated paper, from a picture of Hilton's, of Rebecca at the well, with the old vakeel of Sidi Ibraheem (Abraham's chief servant) *kneeling* before the girl he was sent to fetch like an old fool, without his turban, and Rebecca and the other girls in queer fancy dresses, and the camels with snouts like pigs!

“If the painter could not go to Es-Sham (Syria),” said Yussuf, “to see how the Beduin really look, why did he not paint a well in England with girls like English peasants? At least it would have looked natural to English people, and the vakeel would not seem so like a magnoon (madman) without his hat.”

‘All the vulgarised associations with puritanism and abominable little Scripture tales and pictures peel off here and the inimitably truthful representation of life and character—not a flattering one certainly—comes out, and it feels like Homer. Joseph’s tears, and his love for the brother born of the *same mother*, is so perfect. Only one sees what a bad inferior race the Beni Israel were compared to the Beni Ishmael or to the Egyptians. Leviticus and Deuteronomy are so very heathenish compared to the Law of the Koran and to the early days of Abraham. Verily the ancient Jews were a foul nation judging by the police regulations needful for them. Please don’t make these remarks public or I shall be burnt with Stanley and Colenso (unless I suffer Sheikh Yussuf to propose to me El Islam).’

Yussuf never made any attempt to convert her. He was indeed against proselytising. She was annoyed with herself when, talking with Yussuf about people trying to make converts, she said ‘that eternal bêtise, “Oh, they mean well.”’

“True Oh Lady!” Yussuf replied, “perhaps they do mean well, but God says in the noble Koran that he who injures or torments those Christians whose conduct is not evil merely on account of religion shall never smell the fragrance of the Garden (Paradise). When men begin to want to make others change their faith it is extremely hard for them not to injure or torment them, and therefore I think it better to abstain altogether and to wish rather to see a Christian a good Christian and a Muslim a good Muslim.”

SHEIKH YUSSUF AND RELIGION

It was a sentiment after Lucie's own heart, and recalls the arguments on religion she used to Alice Spring Rice and Janet Shuttleworth when she was fifteen years old.

Once only did Sheikh Yussuf try to interfere with Lucie's beliefs, and that was after much deliberation. He had been told by some Christians of the doctrine that all unbaptized infants went to the eternal fire. He was made miserable to think that any Christian should hold such a belief. He knew that Lucie had lost a very young child, and the idea weighed on his mind that she fretted about this. One day when he came up to give her an Arabic lesson he broached the subject, arguing that God was not so cruel and unjust as the Christian priests represented Him.

"Would that I could take the cruel error out of the minds of all the hundreds and thousands of poor Christian mothers who must be tortured by it and let them understand that their dead babies are with Him who sent them and took them."

When Lucie was attacked by blood-spitting one evening that he was with her, he sat up all night by her side to give medicine every hour. At the prayer of dawn, an hour and a half before the sunrise, he washed and prayed. Lucie could hear his supplications for her life and health and for that of all her family.

He was not afraid to show his devotion for a heretic and a woman, even though it earned him at first the contempt of some of the religious pundits who visited Luxor.

One evening when Lucie was coming back by moonlight from Karnac, she went to the house of Mustapha Aga, where a large party was gathered before the door. Abd el Mootoal, a great Sheikh el Islam from Tunis, was there, seated on a carpet and receiving homage. He clearly showed that he did not like the presence of an heretical woman. Even

LUCIE DEFENDED

Lucie's friend Seleem Effendi did not dare to be as polite as usual to her, and took the seat above her, next to the Holy Man. Mustapha Aga also was in a great state, fussing about the Sheikh and at the same time afraid not to do what was respectful to Lucie.

The situation was awkward until the arrival of Yussuf, who settled the question of divided allegiance to the annoyance of the great Sheikh but to the relief of everyone present. He salaamed Abd el Mootoal, who motioned him to sit in front of him, but Yussuf came round and sat below Lucie, leaned his elbow on her cushion and made more demonstration of regard for her than ever.

The next year the fanatical Sheikh el Islam paid another visit to Luxor for the festival of Abdul Haggag. He saw Lucie and scowled at her, remembering the incident at Mustapha's house. Someone was telling him about the young Rothschild's visit and how he had turned out er-Rasheedee to die at Luxor. Sheikh Abd el Mootoal spat upon the ground and held forth about the hatred of all unbelievers to the Muslims. Sheikh Yussuf, who had noticed the scowl the Sheikh had given Lucie, told him of all that she had done for the sick man. The great Sheikh looked surprised. He questioned them about Lucie and then went over to her, took her hand and hoped that she would visit the tomb of Abdul Haggag with him. The Luxor people who saw the sudden change in his manner were delighted.

The next day he came to visit Lucie, and was very civil, which delighted Omar. He sat on the divan sipping coffee and asking many questions about steam engines, telegraphs and chemistry. The Sheikh especially wanted to know whether it were true that Europeans still fancied that they could make gold.

When she told him that they had not believed that for

nearly two hundred years, he said that he had wondered to hear that Europeans, who were so clever, still believed it. He told her that she was the only European to whom he had ever spoken, and throughout the interview he was careful to keep off religion, and uttered no pious phrases, though he preached a little about the vanity of all things, having just visited the tombs in the Valley of the Kings.

Lucie used often to visit Yussuf's house to talk to his third wife, whom he had recently married. She used to talk of 'el Sheikh' with pride and delight, and embraced Lucie, calling her 'mother' most affectionately.

The story of Yussuf's love affair, as told by him to Lucie, was a charming Arab romance.

"Ah, Lady," he said one day, apropos of a Luxor elopement, "it is love, and that is terrible. I can tell you; love is terrible indeed to bear" (then he hesitated and blushed and went on): "I felt it once, it was the will of God that I should love her who is now my wife. Thirteen years ago I loved her and wished to marry her, but my father and her grandfather and my uncle, the Shereef, had quarrelled, and they took her and married her to another man. I never told anyone of it, but my liver was burning and my heart ready to burst for three years; but when I met her I fixed my eyes on the ground for fear she should see my love, and I said to myself:

"Oh Yussuf! God has afflicted thee, praise be unto Him; do you remember your blood and let your conduct be that of the Beni Azra, who when they are thus afflicted die rather than sin, for they have the strongest passion for love and the greatest honour.'

"And I did not die but went to Cairo to the El Azhar University and studied, and afterwards I married twice as thou knowest. But I never loved any but that one. When my last wife died, the husband of this one had just divorced

HIS LOVE AFFAIR

her to take a younger and prettier one, and my father then desired me to take her, but I was half afraid, not knowing whether she would love me; but Praise be to God I consented, and behold, poor thing, she also had loved me in like manner."

Chapter XLII

FAME AS A DOCTOR

LUCIE thanked providence that she had brought with her a large store of rhubarb pills and what she described as a 'lavement machine.' With these remedies she was able to save many lives and give practical effect to her passion for helping her neighbours.

'Luckily I am very well,' she wrote to Alexander, 'for I am worked hard, as a strange epidemic has broken out, and I am the Hakeemeh (doctor) of Luxor. The people get stoppage of the bowels and die in eight days unless they are physicked; all who have sent for me in time have recovered. Thank goodness that I can help the poor souls. It is harvest, and the hard work, and the spell of intense heat, and the green corn, beans, etc., which they eat, brings on the sickness. Then the Copts are fasting from all animal food, and full of green beans and salad, and green corn.'

So many people had died and so many were ill that the Government sent up a doctor from Cairo, but all he did was to frighten everyone by saying that the epidemic was catching.

Lucie was the only person there who knew what to do and was prepared to do it. Sheikh Yussuf begged her not to go to the people's mud-huts as he was anxious for her safety. But she and Omar were not to be kept away from the work, and she told Yussuf that she did not believe the epidemic was infectious. Mustapha Aga also tried to dissuade her from giving medicine, in case she should be accused of having poisoned people.

THE BISHOP WANTS A DRINK

The Coptic Bishop, who was in the habit of drinking, tried to make a little money by hinting to Lucie that if she considered it advisable that her patients should not fast, their indulgences could be bought. He paid her a visit of three and a half hours, 'and pour me tierer une carotte he sent me a loaf of sugar, so I must send a present "for the Church" to be consumed in arakee. The old party was not very sober, and asked for wine. I coolly told him that it was forbidden to us to drink during the day—only with our dinner. I never will give the Christians drink here and now they have left off pressing me to drink spirits at their houses.'

Omar kissed the Bishop's hand on leaving, and Lucie remarked :

"What! Do you kiss his hand like a Copt?"

"Oh yes, he is an old man, and a servant of my God, but dreadfully dirty."

It was not an easy time for Lucie and Omar; the doctoring itself was exceedingly unattractive and always had to be done with a crowd of people round. Nor were they always thanked for their trouble. One peevish little Copt refused the chicken broth that Lucie brought him, and told her fretfully that Europeans all had their heaven in *this* world, which was nothing but a torment to him.

The implication was obvious, but Lucie was not to be roused: "Oh my brother, God has made the Christians of England unlike those of Egypt, and surely will condemn neither of us on that account—may you find a better heaven hereafter than I now enjoy here."

"Oh thou good one," said Omar, "surely our Lord will reward thee for acting thus with the meekness of a Muslimeh and kissing the hand of him who strikes thy face."

Lucie was amused and remarked: "See how each religion claims humility."

FAME AS A DOCTOR

But such comments were unusual. The majority of patients were full of gratitude, and the women used to watch for Lucie's coming at the doors of their mud-huts.

The wife of a Fellah who had returned with gastric fever from work on the Suez Canal said to Lucie :

“Are there more women like you in your village?”

“Wallah! There are many better and good doctors, Praise be to God!”

“Thank goodness! Then the people don't want you so much, and by God you must stay here for *we* can't do without you—so write to your family and say so, and don't go away and leave us.”

Another woman, whose son Lucie had saved, asked what she was to call her. Lucie told her that her name meant noor (light—Luce), but as that was one of the names of God it could not be used. A man who was in the room at the time said :

“Thy name is ‘Noor ala Noor’ (‘Light from the Light’),” and thus it remained throughout her life in Egypt.

On Saturday, April 23, 1864, Lucie noted that the sickness was diminishing. But even so, the report which was brought to her about her patients by one of her Arab assistants was as follows that day :

Hassan Abu Achmet kisses the Ameereh's feet and the bullets have cleaned his stomach six times and he has said the Fattah for the Lady.

The two little girls who had diarrhoea are well.

The Christian dyer has vomited his powder and wants another.

The mother of the Christian cook who married the priest's sister has got dysentery.

The Harem of Mustapha Abu Abeyd has two children with bad eyes.

The Bishop had a quarrel and scolded and fell down and cannot speak or move.

CHARMS FOR FERTILITY

The young Deacon's jaundice is better.

The slave girl of Kursheed Agha is sick and Kursheed is sitting at her head in tears.

At least four of these required a visit from Lucie and so it continued every day; sometimes there were at least a dozen sick, and she had to do a long round of visits.

During the fast of Ramadan the work was particularly heavy, and at one period the 'practice' became so large that Lucie had to close shop on market days. She had difficulty in keeping up her supplies of Epsom salts, senna, aloes, rhubarb, quassin, and Omar had to resort to making castor oil. She arranged to have big supplies sent out from home by the doctor at Esher; the Arab doctors on their way up and down the river used to give what they could spare, and Lucie begged pills from all English and American travellers who passed in their Nile boats.

A nice young doctor, Ali Effendi, the son of a Fellah, who had been trained at Pisa, came from Keneh to give Lucie advice. He went to try to see her patients, but they all refused to let him doctor them saying that they were quite well. As soon as he had gone they came again to Lucie with their complaints. When she scolded them they said:

"Wallah, ya Sitt, ya Emeereh; that is the Hakeem Pasha, and he would send us off to the hospital at Keneh, and then they would poison us; by thy eyes do not be angry with us, or leave off from having compassion on us on this account."

Nothing that Lucie could say was of any avail. 'He is the Government doctor, and they had rather die, and will swallow anything from el Sittet Noor ala Noor. Here is a pretty state of things.'

The old women were the greatest trouble, for they used to spend hours telling her of all their aches and pains. Many of them came to ask for charms to make them fertile and for

love-potions. Lucie gave one old woman a powder wrapped up in a copy of the *Saturday Review*. She returned and declared:

“Masallah! The charm was a powerful one, for though I have not been able to wash off all the fine writing from the paper, even that little has done me a deal of good.”

One Fellaah offered her a camel load of wheat if she would read something over him and his wife to make them have children, but she replied that such practices savoured of black magic and were forbidden by the Koran.

She was amazed at the generous return that the Fellaheen made for any kindness done to them or to their relatives. They insisted that Lucie should accept eggs, corn, vegetables, chickens, etc., and were very hurt if she tried to refuse. Turkeys were given her when they were worth six and eight shillings each.

Lucie came to inspire sufficient confidence for them to bring their children to be doctored, which was unusual, since they were all so nervous of the evil eye. But it had become established that Lucie's eye was lucky. Much of her time was taken up in having to go and look at young brides, visit houses that were being built, inspect cattle, etc., in order to bring good luck, and it gave her ‘many a curious sight.’

‘Superstition is wonderfully infectious here, even Ross believes in the evil eye. The fact is that the Arabs are so intensely impressionable and so cowardly about inspiring any ill-will that if a man looks askance at them it is enough to make them ill; and as calamities are not infrequent there is always some mishap ready to be laid to the charge of somebody's “eye.”

‘A part of the boasting about prosperity, etc., is politeness, so that one may not be supposed to be envious of one's neighbours' nice things. My sakka (water-carrier) admired

SPREADS TO THE DESERTS

my bracelet as he was watering the verandah floor, and instantly told me of all the gold necklaces and ear-rings he had bought for his wife and daughters that I might not be uneasy and fear for his envious eye!

Lucie's fame as a hakeemeh spread throughout Upper Egypt and even to the deserts above Edfou. Several parties of Beduin came to her across the desert with their sick carried on camels. Others walked as much as forty miles out of the desert to visit her, and sometimes twenty or thirty Beduin slept outside the house. She asked what had brought them, and they told her that a bard had gone about singing her praises: "How the daughter of the English was a flower on the heads of the Arabs, and those who were sick should go and smell the perfume of the flower and rejoice in the brightness of the light (noor)."

Lucie, feeling that such high-flown language needed some explanation, added: 'We don't feel that a man makes a fool of himself here when he is romantic in his talk even about an old woman.'

One evening, as she was preparing to go to bed, Mustapha Aga came to her with a merchant who was in great grief because his only son was very ill on board a boat which had come up from Cairo. He was on his way back to Khartum where he lived, and was overcome with distress to think that when he arrived he would almost certainly have to tell his wife that their son had died. He had been told that there was an English lady who would not turn her face from anyone in trouble, and had therefore come to seek her out. He described the boy's symptoms, and she gave him a dose of castor oil, saying that she would go to the boat in the morning.

The next morning Lucie went down to the boat. 'It was a regular old Arab cangia lumbered up with corn, sacks of

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matting, a live sheep, etc., etc., and there I found a sweet boy of fifteen or so in high fever. The oil had not acted and I sent for my medicine chest and the layement machine and warm water and gave him an injection to the great admiration of his father and the others present. As usual he had been stopped up for five days.'

Lucie told them that it was only the 'epidemic' and asked why they had not sent for the doctor at Keneh on the way up the river. It was the old story that they were afraid of what the Government doctor might do to the boy.

Among those looking on to see if the boy would recover consciousness was a rich landowner, el Bedrawee, who was being sent to banishment at Fazoogli. When Omar came on board he gave a start of surprise when he saw el Bedrawee and said :

"Oh my master, why do we see thee thus? Masallah! I once ate of thy bread when I was of the soldiers of Said Pasha, and I saw your riches and your greatness, and what has God decreed against thee?"

El Bedrawee, who had been one of the richest men in Lower Egypt, owning 12,000 acres between Tanta and Samanud, related how he had been sent for by Effendina (Ismail Pasha) to the Citadel to transact some business, as he had thought. As soon as he had ridden his horse into the Citadel, a cavass arrested him at the order of Ismail. He was taken down to the Nile and put on board an ordinary cargo boat. El Bedrawee had asked to see his son or a member of his family before starting, but he was made to go at once. Fortunately a relation had followed him to Cairo in order to hand over £700, and came with him on the boat to share his banishment. The money enabled el Bedrawee to buy a certain amount of freedom and to avoid having a chain round his neck and fetters on his legs and arms. He declared

SAVES A BOY

that he had no idea of what he was accused or how he had offended Ismail Pasha. Lucie expressed amazement and indignation.

"Ah! I know you English manage things very differently," he said. "I have heard all about your excellent justice."

He was a stout, dignified Turk, not very healthy, and about fifty years of age; it did not seem likely that he would survive the heat of Fazoogli. 'He consulted me a great deal about his health, and I gave him certainly very good advice. I cannot write in a letter, which I know you will show, what drugs a Turkish doctor had furnished him with to "strengthen" him in the trying climate of Fazoogli. I wonder was it given to kill him or only given in ignorance of the laws of health equal to his own?'

After a little while, as they watched the boy, he recovered consciousness, and the father, who had been helping with trembling hands and tears in his eyes, exclaimed:

"By God the Most High, if ever I find any of the English poor or sick or affected up in Khartum I will let them know that I, Abu Mohammed, never saw a face like the pale face of the English lady bent over my sick boy."

Then el Bedrawee and his Fellaheen relation and all the crew blessed her. She gave medicine and directions to Abu Mohammed, kissed the boy and went off the boat. El Bedrawee followed her and said he had a request to make—would she pray for him in his distress.

"I am not of the Muslimeen," she replied.

"Never mind, for it is quite certain thou art not of the Muskireen for they hate the Muslimeen and their deeds are evil. But Blessed be to God many of the English begin to repent of their evil and to love the Muslims and to do them kind actions."

'So we parted in much kindness,' Lucie wrote. 'It was

a strange feeling to me to stand on the bank and see the queer, savage-looking boat glide away up the stream bound for such far more savage lands, and to be exchanging kind farewells quite in a homely manner with such utter "aliens in blood and faith."

"God keep you, lady!"

"God keep you, Mustapha!"

The story of Lucie and the son of Abu Mohammed spread in this way southwards. In Assuan the party met a great doctor from Mecca, who was so learned that he could read the Koran in seven different ways, and had learnt medicine according to European methods. They told him about Lucie, and he decided that when he came to Luxor he would go to see her.

As she sat on her verandah one afternoon she was surprised to see a stately Arab suddenly walk into the room, dressed in a gorgeous Hedjaze costume. He bowed and said:

"Madame, tout ce qu'on m'a dit de vous fait tellement l'éloge de votre cœur et de votre esprit que je suis arrêté pour tâcher de me procurer le plaisir de votre connaissance."

Lucie was surprised and flattered. While he was with her a number of Luxor people came to pay their respects to the great man. He said that he hoped Lucie had not been interfered with on account of her religion, and that if she had been she must forgive it, as the people were very ignorant and "barbarians were bigots everywhere."

"Wallahi! The people of Luxor are my brothers," said Lucie.

"True, the Fellaheen are like oxen," said Seleem Effendi, "but not such swine as to insult the religion of a lady who has served God among them like this one. She risked her life every day."

"And if she *had* died," said the great theologian, "her place

CHANGE IN EL ISLAM

was made ready among the martyrs of God, because she showed more love to her brothers than to herself."

'Now if this was humbug,' said Lucie in a letter to Alexander, 'it was said in Arabic before eight or ten people by a man of great religious authority. Omar was aux anges to hear his Sitt spoken of in "such a grand way for the religion."

'I believe that a great change is taking place among the Ulema; that Islam is ceasing to be a mere party flag, just as occurred with Christianity, and that all the moral part is being more and more dwelt upon.'

The Alim said that Lucie had practised the precepts of the Koran, and then laughed and said:

"I suppose I ought to say the Gospel; but what matters it, el Hakh (the truth) is one, whether spoken by our Lord Jesus or by our Lord Mohammed."

Chapter XLIII

'LET THE ENGLISH COME'

THOSE who know Egypt, after nearly half a century of capable British administration, tend to forget the sufferings of the Fellaheen in the 'sixties and 'seventies. Even Henry Ross and others who lived in Cairo and Alexandria at the time never realised the degree of misery which existed, for the Government petted the capital with its dangerous elements at the expense of the country.

Lucie was the only European living in the country districts to describe the desolation, and her testimony is very valuable in view of the subsequent attempts, especially by the late King Fuad, to whitewash Ismail's reputation. In 1866 she was the only European from Khartum to Siut, north of Luxor.

As Ismail became more and more insolvent, in his desire for ostentation, the taxes were increased, and the oppression became so unbearable that many of the Luxor people deserted the villages and took to Beduin life. 'The country is a waste for want of water,' wrote Lucie in 1865, 'the animals are skeletons and the people are hungry.' Two years later she said: 'When I remember the lovely smiling landscape which I first beheld from my windows, swarming with beasts and men, and look at the dreary waste now, I feel the "foot of the Turk" heavy indeed. Where there were fifty donkeys there is but one. Camels, horses are all gone; not only the horned cattle, even the dogs are decimated, and the hawks and vultures seem to me fewer; mankind has no food to spare for hangers-on.'

CRUEL TAXATION

Taxation made life almost impossible. There was a tax of £1 an acre, a tax on every crop, on every animal when it was born, and another when it was sold in the market, a tax on charcoal, on butter and on salt. 'The ha'porth of onions we buy in the market is taxed on the spot, and the fish which the man catches under my window. I paid a tax on buying charcoal, and another on having it weighed. People are terribly beaten to get next year's taxes out of them, which they have not the money to pay.'

The poll-tax on every man, which had been remitted for the three years after Ismail's accession, for Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta, was reimposed, and people were forced to pay for the years they had been excused. Omar had to pay £8, nearly three months' wages. 'You may conceive the distress this must cause among artisans, etc., who have spent this money, and forgotten it, and feel cheated out of the blessings they then bestowed on the Pasha.' Even the prostitutes were taxed, which excited more disgust than any of the other impositions. "We now know the name of our ruler," said a Fellah; "he is el Muarras Pasha (Pimp Pasha)."

The prisons were full of respectable Sheikh el Beled, whose villages could not pay the taxes. Lucie and the others who could afford it sent them meals in turn.

'The humours of tax gathering in the country are *impayable* you perceive—and ought to be set forth on the escutcheon of the new Knight of the Bath, whom the Queen hath delighted to honour. "Cavass Battant; Fellah rampant; and Fellaha pleurant" would be the proper blazon. The distress in England is terrible, but, at least, it is not the result of extortion as it is here, where everything from nature is so abundant and glorious, and yet mankind is so miserable. It is not a little hunger, it is the cruel oppression which maddens

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the people now. They never complained before, but now whole villages are deserted, and thousands have run away into the desert between this and Assuan.’

In the meantime the Greeks ‘piously and zealously attend to the divine commandment to spoil the Egyptians—poor Egypt! or rather poor Egyptians! Of course I need not say that there is great improvidence in those who can be fleeced as they are fleeced. Mustapha Aga’s household is a pattern of muddling hospitality and Mustapha is generous and mean by turns; but what chance have people like these, so utterly uncivilised and isolated as the Upper Egyptians, against Europeans of unscrupulous characters?’

Then there was the *corvée* for the Nile canals, for the Suez Canal, for the archaeological excavations under Mariette Pasha, and forced labour in the new sugar mills.

‘To-day,’ she wrote on January 10th, 1865, ‘the sand in front of the house is thronged with all the poor people with their camels of which the Government has made a new *levée* of eight camels to every thousand *feddans* (a *feddan* is not quite an acre). The poor beasts are sent off to transport troops in the Sudan, and not being accustomed to the desert they all die; at all events their owners never see one of them again. The discontent is growing stronger every day. Last week the people were cursing Ismail in the streets at Assuan, and everyone talks aloud of what they think.

‘The whole place is in desolation; the men are being beaten, one because his camel is not good enough, another because its saddle is old and shabby, and the rest because they have not money enough to pay two months’ food and the wages of one man to every four camels to be paid for the use of the Government beforehand.

‘The *courbash* has been going on my neighbours’ backs and feet all the morning. It is a new sensation too, when

‘PITY BECOMES A PASSION’

a friend turns up his sleeve and shows the marks of the wooden handcuffs and the gall of the chain on his throat! The system of wholesale extortion and spoliation has reached a point beyond which it would be difficult to go. The story of Naboth’s vineyard is repeated daily on the largest scale. I grieve for Abdullah el Habscale and men of high position like him, sent to die by disease or murder in Fazoogli, but I grieve still more over the daily anguish of the poor Fellaheen, who are forced to take the bread from their starving families and to eat it while toiling for the private profit of one man. Egypt is one vast “plantation” where the master works his slaves without even feeding them.

‘From my window now I see the men limping about among the camels that are waiting the Pasha’s boats to take them and the great heaps of maize, which they are forced to bring for their food.

‘I can tell you that the tears such a sight brings to one’s eyes are hot and bitter. These are no sentimental grievances—hunger and pain, and labour without hope and without reward—and the constant bitterness of impotent resentment! To you all this must sound remote and almost fabulous. But try to imagine farmer ——’s team driven off by the police and himself beaten till he delivered his hay, his oats and his farm servant for the use of the Lord Lieutenant, and his two sons dragged in chains to work at railway embankments, and you will have some idea of my state of mind to-day.

‘You will think me a complete rebel—but I may say to you what most people would think “like my nonsense”—that one’s pity becomes a perfect passion, when one *sits among the people*, as I do, and sees it all; least of all can I forgive those among Europeans and Christians who can help to “break these bruised reeds.”’

From Luxor 220 men were taken out of the population of

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2000, excluding the women, to work for sixty days for the Government without food and without pay. This meant that Luxor paid in labour during this time about £1320. Eleven camels were taken for the Sudan and each was worth from £18 to £40.

‘We are all miserable here, all we Fellaheen,’ wrote Lucie just before going on a visit to England, and the Bairam of the summer 1865 was not gay. But Mohammed and Mustapha gave their usual dinner outside the tomb of Sheikh Gibreel, at which two hundred men sat down.

Lucie was asked to join them: “Can one like thee eat the melochea of the Fellaheen?”

She sat down with a party of five round a little wooden tray, tucked up her sleeve and ate, dipping her bread into the melochea, which is like very sloppy spinach. Then came the master and his servants to deal the pieces of meat out of a large basket. Lucie’s portion was too large for her, so she tore off pieces and handed them to each of her companions, who said:

“God take you safe and happy to your place and your children and bring you back to us in safety to eat the meat of the festival once more.”

After a little time Lucie rose and went to the Sheikh’s tomb and listened to the men swaying in the moonlight as they held a zikheer, seated in a circle, exclaiming: “Allah! Allah!” in ever faster rhythm.

A tall Fellah came up with his bundle on his back full of bread, having been summoned to work for Ismail. He prayed by the tomb for his wife and children:

“Ask our God to pity them, Oh Sheikh, and to feed them while I am away. You know how my wife worked all night to bake all the wheat for me and that there is none left for her and the children.”

Then, turning to Lucie, he went on:

“You know this Lady, Oh Sheikh Gibreel, take her happy and well to her place and bring her back to us. El Fattah,” and they said the prayer together.

‘I could have lain my head on Sheikh Gibreel’s wall and howled,’ said Lucie. ‘I thanked him as well as I could for caring about one like me while his own troubles were so heavy. I shall never forget that tall, athletic figure and the gentle brown face, with the eleven days’ moon of Zulheggeh and the shadow of the palm tree. That was my farewell. “The voice of the miserable is with thee, shall God not hear it.”’

To add to the distress there was a revolt led by a religious fanatic, Achmed et Tayib. ‘The affair began thus,’ wrote Lucie. ‘A certain Copt had a Muslim slave girl who could read the Koran and served him. He wanted her to sleep with him and she refused and went to Achmed et Tayib who offered money for her to her master. He refused it, and insisted on his rights, backed by the Government. Thereupon Achmed proclaimed a revolt and the people, tired of taxes and oppressions, said: “We will go with you.”’

The revolt became serious and Ismail had to send troops to quell it, and plans were made to evacuate the Europeans in Upper Egypt. Lucie, however, remained at Luxor and all swore to protect her in the event of trouble. The feeling of the Luxor people turned to pity when they learned that Ismail’s soldiers had beheaded two thousand unfortunate men and women, who had joined Achmed et Tayib.

Some of Lucie’s friends stated that they believed that there would be a serious outbreak against the Government—but not yet. It came in fact seventeen years later under Arabi.

Lucie did not at first think that such a revolt was possible. She considered that the people were too thoroughly accustomed to suffer and obey; also that they had no proper

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means of communication. The Government steamers could go up and down the Nile and destroy them in detail in a country which was eight hundred miles long and where the cultivation was only one to eight miles wide. She realised that Cairo would be able to organise a revolt, but she did not think that it was likely, as everything was done to please the Cairenes at the expense of the Fellaheen. On a later visit to Cairo, however, she saw that Ismail was too much in debt to be able to afford to pamper the townspeople any longer.

Ross was among those to suffer heavily from Ismail's bankruptcy. He had been too trusting in Ismail and in his agents, in spite of the many reports that Lucie had sent him with regard to real conditions in the country districts and of the dishonesty of Ross's agents. Having spent the greater part of his life in the East, and being considered an authority on it, he probably distrusted the reports of a mother-in-law whom he may have thought was too influenced by sentiment. He did not realise the accuracy of her accounts until too late.

He was an enterprising business man, showing the same boldness as when he used to go pig-sticking with Layard near the mounds of Nineveh. He wrote to his sister with pride about a successful cotton speculation he had brought off some years earlier: ‘Even Mr. Briggs is too slow and cautious for modern trade, when one runs a neck and neck race with the Greeks. If I had my way I would make such strokes! All Alexandria was staggered with the boldness of the first, and thought that Briggs and Co. had run wild. Faint heart never won fair lady, and most certainly it never makes money.’¹

Unfortunately it can lose money, and Lucie was horrified

¹ *Letters from the East, 1837-1857*, by H. J. Ross.

to find the state that his affairs were in after the tremendous success that he had been making. 'Is it not a strange thing,' she wrote, 'that so many intelligent Europeans should have been led by the nose by a "Turkish mule" all this time, and have gone on extolling the "administrative talents" of a rapacious tyrant until the day when they felt his claws? No one is paid now; all pensions and salaries are three months in arrears; the soldiers and workmen unpaid; a forced loan of £3000 each on 500 villages;—in short universal ruin and distress.'

Ismail was beginning to get apprehensive, not so much of the disaffection among the people, for he felt that his troops were strong enough to deal with that, but of unfavourable reports reaching Europe, since that would restrict his opportunities of obtaining further credit. He began to worry the Europeans in Upper Egypt and harry them out of Egypt so that they should not see his iniquities. Lucie was an especial object of disfavour. Whenever she went to Cairo she was shadowed by Ismail's spies. 'The espionage is becoming more and more close and jealous,' she wrote from Cairo, 'and I have been warned to be very careful. The people who come to see me always up at Luxor, dare not come near me here—Arabs I mean.' She could no longer trust her letters to the post, but gave them to an Arab friend who put them on board a boat at Alexandria. Many of her letters never reached her family and were probably seized in transit by the Egyptian Government.

Ismail knew that Lucie exerted a certain influence on public opinion in England, not only through Janet, as Alexandria correspondent for *The Times*, but also through her own letters from Egypt.

These were first published in 1865 and were exceedingly popular, running rapidly into several editions. An attractive

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pirated American edition was also published at the same time. Sheikh Yussuf was very puzzled by the civilities he received from American visitors to Luxor, until he was told that Lucie had written a book, ‘which had made him (the American) wish well to the poor people of Egypt.’

Ismail decided towards the end of 1866 that he would make a good impression in Europe by introducing a Constitution, and, indeed, the Press in England and France was full of praise. ‘What a canard your papers have in Europe about a Constitution here,’ wrote Lucie to Alexander. ‘La illah illah Allah! I won’t write politics, it is all too dreary; and Cairo gossip is odious. . . . Only remember this, there is no law nor justice, but the will, or rather the caprice, of one man.

‘It is nearly impossible for any European to conceive such a state of things as it really is; and between ourselves, Ross, for instance, has not yet understood it, and will make mistakes in consequence. Nothing but perfect familiarity with the governed, *i.e.* oppressed class, will teach it. However intimate a man may be with the rulers he will never fully take it in. I am à l’indexe. Ismail Pasha’s chief pleasure is gossip, and a certain number of persons, chiefly Europeans, furnish him with it daily, true or false.

‘If the farce of the Constitution ever should be acted here, it will be superb. Something like old Colquhoun (the British Consul-General) going in his cocked hat to ask the Fellaheen what wages they got! I could tell you a little about the value of consular information, but what is the use? Europe is enchanted with the enlightened Pasha who has ruined this poor country.’

She was indignant that the European Press apparently took Ismail at his word when he said that he had abolished slavery. ‘With 3000 in his harem, several slave regiments

and lots of gangs on all his sugar plantations, his impudence is wonderful. He is himself the greatest living slave trader and owner. My lads are afraid of going out alone for fear of being snapped up by cavasses and taken to the army or the sugar works.'

When Ismail visited Paris the Arabs at Luxor and along the river were convinced that the Egyptian crews he took with him would be forcibly detained by the French 'Sultan,' Napoleon III. Many thought it was a degradation for their companions to be taken for the Parisians to stare at, like curiosities. One old father died of grief at his son's going. He had seen so many people go into service with the Pasha and never come back that nothing would console him.

The son returned as did all the others from Luxor, and Lucie watched them sitting in the coffee-houses, surrounded by admiring crowds while they described the wonders they had seen. They had been very shocked by the dancing and by the prostitutes, but were enthusiastic about the French Police. They were most impressed that they were not beaten when they got involved in a quarrel. Instead the Police scolded the Europeans concerned and accompanied the Egyptians back to their boat quite politely; 'the novelty and triumph of not being beaten was quite intoxicating.'

The situation with regard to land caused the most hardship. There was no ownership in Egypt; all the land belonged to the Sultan of Turkey and was farmed out by his representative in Egypt, and the Fellaheen paid as tenants about seven shillings to one pound an acre. If the 'owner' died childless the land reverted to the Pasha and it could only be sold by application to the Government. If Ismail chose to have anyone's land he could take it without payment, and the tenant received an equivalent acreage in desert.

It was not surprising, as Lucie said, that the cry everywhere

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in Upper Egypt was, ‘Let the Franks come, let us have the laws of the Christians.’

‘I wish to God,’ said Lucie, ‘that the Pasha knew the deep exasperation which his subordinates are causing. I do not like to say all I hear. As to the Ulema, Kadees, Muftis, etc., I know many from towns and villages, and all say :

“‘We are Muslims, but we should thank God to send Europeans to govern us.”

‘The feeling is against the Government and the Turks up here, not against the Christians.’

Yussuf urged Lucie to get Alexander appointed as Consul-General in Luxor. She replied that her husband was no longer young, and that to a just man the injustices would be a martyrdom.

“‘Truly thou hast said it,” exclaimed Yussuf, “but it is a martyr we Arabs want; shall not the reward of him who suffers daily vexation for his brethren’s sake be equal to that of him who dies in battle for the faith? If thou wert a man, I would say to thee, take the labour and sorrow upon thee, and thine own heart will repay thee. . . . I only pray for Europeans to rule us—now the Fellaheen are really worse off than slaves.”

What Lucie has to say on this subject is of considerable interest in view of later developments. Two important Sheikhs of the Bishareen and Ababdeh tribes up the Nile came to visit Lucie in Luxor. ‘They begged me to communicate to the Queen of England that they would join her troops if she would invade Egypt. One laid my hand on his hand and said :

“‘Thou hast 3000 men in that hand.”

‘The other rules 10,000. They say that there are 30,000 Beduin ready to join the English, for they fear that the Viceroy will try to work and rob them like the Fellaheen,

INVASION OF ABYSSINIA

and if so they will fight to the last, or else go off into Syria. I was rather frightened—for them, I mean, and told them that our Queen could do nothing until 600 Sheikhs and 400 Ameers had talked in public—all whose talk was printed and read at Stambul and Cairo, and they must not think of such a thing from our Queen, but if things became bad, it would be better for them to go off into Syria. I urged great caution upon them, and I need not repeat that to you, as the lives of thousands may be endangered. It might be interesting to be known in high places and in profound secret, as one of the indications of what is coming here.'

The attitude with regard to the British advance into Abyssinia was the same. Ismail had sent Baker Pasha to the Sudan to suppress the slave trade, to open the great lakes to navigation, and to annex the river and territory south of Gondokoro. Theodore, King of Abyssinia, had become alarmed and applied in 1863 to Queen Victoria against the threat of invasion from Egypt. His letter was neglected, and feeling slighted, Theodore imprisoned the British Consul and a number of missionaries. The British Government issued an ultimatum in April 1867, ordering that the prisoners should be delivered within three months. No notice of this was taken, and Sir Robert Napier was sent to invade Abyssinia.

Lucie states that Omar met an Abyssinian merchant in Cairo, who had left with his wife and concubines because of the tyranny of Theodore. 'His account is that the mass of the people are delighted that the English are coming to conquer them, as they hope, and that everyone hates the King except two or three hundred scamps who form his bodyguard. He had seen the English prisoners, who, he says, are not ill-treated, but certainly in danger, as the King is with difficulty restrained from killing them by the said scamps who fear the revenge of the English. . . . Hassan,

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the donkey boy, when he was scullery boy in Cairo, knew the Sultan Theodore, as he was the only man who could be found to interpret between the then King of Abyssinia and Mohammed Ali, whom Theodore had come to visit.’

After the defeat of the Abyssinians at the Battle of Magdala and the suicide of Theodore, Lucie said that the country people in Egypt were delighted and exclaimed:

“Thank God! Our Pasha will fear the English more than before, and the Sultan also.”

Lucie complained of the expense of such a campaign, but they exclaimed:

“Never mind the expense, it is worth more than ten millions to you; your faces are whitened and your power enlarged before all the world; but why don’t you take us on the way back?”

‘The Abyssinian affair is an awful disappointment to Ismail,’ she wrote; ‘he had laid his calculations for something altogether different, and is furious. The Coptic clergy are ready to murder us. The Arabs are all in raptures: “God bless the English general, he has frightened our Pasha.”’

When the English did come it was in support of the Khedive and to crush a genuine nationalist movement, wrongly described in the consular reports as a military revolt.

Chapter XLIV

'QUEEN OF THE ARABS'

WHEN Lucie left Luxor to go to Cairo or up the river the people used to count the days to her return. They came to depend upon her not only as their doctor and as a person who brought them good fortune, but as a kind of local ruler, who gave sound advice and would do her best to defend them against the despotic acts of the Government. She was, as Prévost Paradol said, 'The Queen of the Arabs.'

When the Maohn was in trouble with the Mudir of Keneh, Ali Bey, because it had been reported that the cattle which had died of the terrible murrain were left lying about the streets of Luxor, Lucie arranged that a round robin should be drawn up, denying the slander, and signed by the respectable people of Luxor. The Maohn was delighted and said: "The words of the Englishwoman will defeat Ali Bey." When Mariette Bey, the French archaeologist, struck Mustapha Aga, Lucie engineered a strong complaint to the British and American consular representatives in Cairo, and a Commissioner was sent to enquire into the matter. The people of Luxor knew that they could count on her to do her best for them when they were in trouble.

Thus it was that her return to Upper Egypt was always a triumphal procession and there used to be a series of fantasias. 'The last night before reaching Keneh, the town forty miles north of Luxor, my men held a grand fantasia on the bank,' wrote Lucie when she returned after her last

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visit to England. ‘There was no wind, and we found a lot of old maize stalks; so there was a bonfire, and no end of drumming and singing and dancing. Even Omar relaxed his dignity so far as to dance the dance of the Alexandria young men; and very funny it all was. I laughed consumedly, especially at the modest airs and graces of a great lubberly fellow, who acted the bride in a representation of a Nubian wedding festivity.

‘As soon as we reached Keneh a couple of tall young soldiers in the Nizam uniform rushed after me, and greeted me in English; they were Luxor lads serving their time. Of course they attached themselves to us for the rest of the day. We then bought water-jars (the speciality of Keneh) and I went on to the Cadi’s house to leave a string of beads.

‘I saw the Cadi giving audience to several people, so I sent in the beads and my salaam: but the jolly Cadi sallied forth into the street and “fell on my neck” with such ardour that my Frankish hat was sent rolling by contact with the turban of Islam.

‘The Cadi of Keneh is the real original Cadi of our early days; sleek, rubicund, polite—a puisne judge and a dean rolled into one, combining the amenities of the law and the Church—with an orthodox stomach and an orthodox turban, both round and stately.

‘I was taken into the Hareem, welcomed and regaled, and invited to the festival of Said Abd er-Racheem, the great Saint of Keneh. I hesitated and said that there were great crowds, and some might be offended at my presence; but the Cadi declared “by him who separated us” that if any such ignorant persons were present it was high time they learnt better, and said that it was by no means unlawful for virtuous Christians, and such as neither hated nor scorned the Muslimeen, to profit by, or share in their prayers, and that I should

HOLY AND PROFANE

sit before the Sheikh's tomb with him and the Mufti; and that "du reste," they wished to give thanks for my safe arrival.

'Such a demonstration of tolerance was not to be resisted. So after going back to rest, and dine in the boat, I returned at nightfall and went to the burial-place. The whole way was lighted and thronged with the most motley crowd, and the usual mixture of holy and profane, which we know at the Catholics fêtes also; but more "prononcé" here. Dancing girls, glittering with gold brocade and coins, swaggered about among the brown-shirted Fellaheen, and the profane singing of the Alateeyeh mingled with the songs in honour of the Arab prophet chanted by the Moonsheeds and the deep tones of the "Allah, Allah" of the Zikheers.

'Rockets whizzed about and made the women screech, and a merry-go-round was in full swing. And now fancy me clinging to the skirts of the Cadi el Islam and pushing into the tomb of the Said Abd er-Racheem, through such a throng. No one seemed offended or even surprised. I suppose my face is so well known at Kench. When my party had said a "Fattah" for me and another for my family, we retired to another "kubbeh," where there was no tomb, and where we found the Mufti, and sat there all the evening over coffee and pipes and talk. I was questioned about English administration of justice, and made to describe the process of trial by jury.

'The Mufti is a very dignified, gentlemanly man, and extremely kind and civil. The Cadi pressed me to stay next day and dine with him and the Mufti, but I said I had a lantern for Luxor, and I wanted to arrive before the festival was over, and only three days remained. So the Cadi accompanied me back to the boat, looked at my maps, which pleased him very much, traced out the line of the

‘QUEEN OF THE ARABS’

railway (through Upper Egypt) as he had heard it, and had tea.

‘Next morning we had the first good wind and bowled up to Luxor in one day, arriving just after sunset. Instantly the boat was filled. Of course Omar and the Reis organised a procession to take me and my lantern to the tomb of Abu el Hajjaj, it was the last night but one of his festival. The lantern was borne on a pole between two of my sailors, and the rest, reinforced by men from a steamer which was there with a Prussian prince, sung and thumped the tara-bookeh, and we all marched up after I had undergone every variety of salutation, from Sheikh Yussuf’s embrace to the little boys’ kissing of hands.

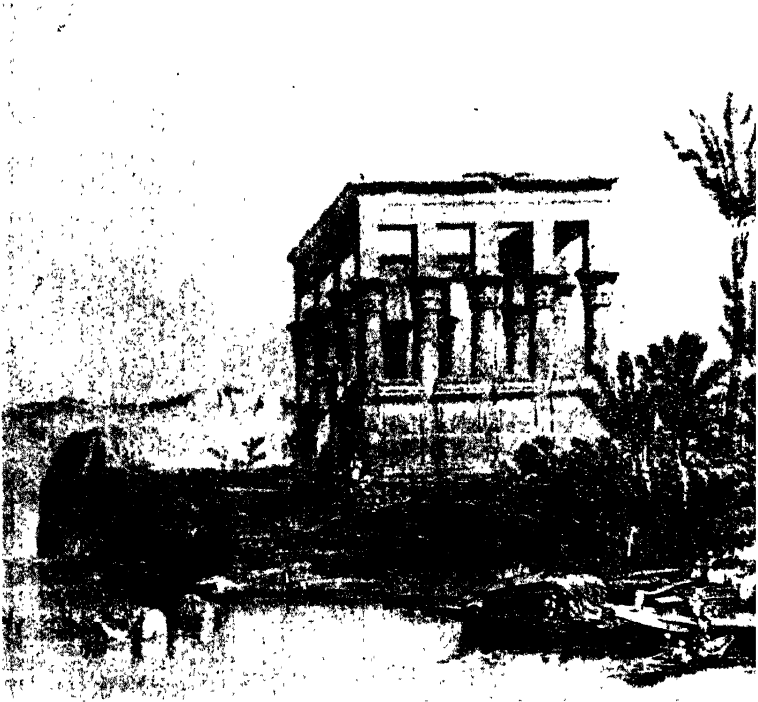
‘The first thing I heard was the hearty voice of the old Shereef, who praised God that “our darling” was safe back again, and then we all sat down for a talk; then more Fattahs were said for me, and for you, and for the children; and I went back to bed in my boat.

‘The day after my arrival was the great and last day. I was sitting with the people on the sand looking at the men doing fantasia on horseback for the Sheikh, and a clever dragoman of the party was relating about the death of a young English girl whom he had served, and so “de fil en aiguille” we talked about the strangers buried here, and I said:

“Never mind, the people have been hospitable to me alive and they will not cease if I die, but give me a tomb among the Arabs.”

‘One old man said: “May I not see thy day, Oh Lady, and indeed thou shouldest be buried as a daughter of the Arabs, but we should fear the anger of thy Consul and thy family, but thou knowest that wherever thou art buried thou wilt assuredly lie in a Muslim grave.”

“How so?” I asked.



The Temple on the Island of Philae where Lucie slept, and which is now submerged by the waters of the Assuan reservoir

TO LIE IN A MUSLIM GRAVE

““Why, when a bad Muslim dies the angels take him out of his tomb and put in one of the good from among the Christians in his place.”

‘This is the popular expression of the doctrine that the good are sure of salvation.’

Chapter XLV

MISTRESS AND SERVANT

IN spite of Lucie's many worries about her friends, and the hard work she had to do as Hakeemeh of Luxor, the great heat was temporarily helping to restore her to health. Her cough was less racking, and she began to lose the terrible listless feeling which often made her lie for long periods unwilling to make any effort. Her hair was now cut short in Turkish hareem fashion, as it had begun to fall out, and she had sent the long plaits home to Alexander.

The greater the heat the better she felt, and when the sickness abated in Luxor she decided to take a river trip up to Assuan in the heat of May. She spent two days and nights at the lovely island of Philae, which then stood high out of the river, before the Assuan Dam was built which submerged the Temple. Then there were palm groves and many birds such as pelicans, wild geese, duck, and plover. But the waters have destroyed the palm groves, and the Italian masons who built the dam shot the birds.

Sally and Lucie slept in the Osiris chamber, while Omar lay across the door. Lucie could not sleep for the heat and went and lay on the parapet of the Temple. 'What a night! What a lovely view! The stars gave as much light as the moon in Europe, and all but the cataract was still as death and glowing hot, and the palm trees were more graceful and dreamy than ever.'

It was such a night as to make Lucie feel more than usually romantic. Omar awoke and came and sat by her. He began

to rub her feet and sing the song of a Turkish slave. She protested :

“Do not rub my feet, Oh brother—that is not fit for thee.”

But Omar continued singing: “The slave of the Turk may be set free by money, but how shall one be ransomed who has been paid for by kind actions and sweet words?”

‘Then the day broke deep crimson and I went down and bathed in the Nile, and saw the girls on the island opposite in their summer fashions, consisting of a leathern fringe round their slender hips—divinely graceful—bearing huge saucer-shaped baskets of corn on their stately young heads; and I went up and sat at the end of the colonnade looking up into Ethiopia, and dreamed dreams of “Him who sleeps in Philae,” until the great Amun Ra kissed my northern face too hotly, and drove me into the temple to breakfast, and coffee and pipes and kief.’

Lucie enjoyed bathing in the Nile, and the sailors had arranged a kind of tent over the side of the boat.

On one occasion Ramadan, the Reis, saw a Copt, called Macarius, trying to peep in while Lucie was bathing. He caught him round the neck and nearly strangled him. There was a tremendous row on board. Omar called him a dog and an infidel. Macarius retorted that Lucie was a Christian woman and not ‘Omar’s Hareem.’ Whereupon Omar lost his temper and appealed to the Reis and all the sailors:

“Oh Muslims, ought I not to cut his throat: if he had defiled the noble person of the lady with his pig’s eyes! God forgive me for mentioning her in such a manner.”

‘Then they all cursed him for a pig and an infidel and threatened to put him ashore and leave him for his vile conduct towards noble Hareem. Omar sobbed with passion, saying that I was to him like the “back of his mother,” and “how dare Macarius take my name in his dirty mouth,” etc.

‘The Copt tried to complain of being beaten afterwards, but I signified to him that he had better hold his tongue, for that I understood Arabic, upon which he sneaked off.’

Between Lucie and Omar there was a strong bond, formed by constant companionship. Lucie liked to manage, control, and organise, and had the grand manner which inspired respect; Omar was the willing and eager servant, when he considered the master or mistress to be just.

“Wallahi! The English are fortunate in their customs and in the enjoyment of the society of learned and excellent women,” said Seleem Effendi one night after dinner, which they had eaten out of doors.

Omar, lying on the green rushes by the Nile, added: “This is the happiness of the Arab. Green trees, sweet water, and a kind face, make paradise.”

Seleem laughed and said that he was surprised that a ‘child of Cairo’ like Omar could put up with Fellah life.

Lucie had been looking at the heaps of wheat and thinking of Ruth, when she was startled to hear Omar ‘utter the very words which the Egyptian girl spoke more than a thousand years ago’:

“Behold my mother! Where she stays I stay, and where she goes I will go; her family is my family, and if it pleases God, nothing but the Separator of friends (Death) shall divide me from her.”

Lucie was moved by the words said in that Biblical setting. She kissed the top of Omar’s turban, Arab fashion, and Seleem Effendi blessed him and said solemnly:

“God reward thee, my son; thou hast honoured thy lady greatly before thy people, and she has honoured thee, and ye are an example of master and servant, and of kindness and fidelity.”

“Verily, it is true, and God be praised for people of

THE WORDS OF RUTH

excellent conduct," added the Fellaheen who were sitting round.

'I never expected to feel like Naomi,' said Lucie, writing to her mother, 'and possibly many English people might only think Omar's unconscious repetition of Ruth's words rather absurd, but to me they sounded perfectly in harmony with the life and ways of this country and these people, who are so full of tender and affectionate feelings, when these have not been crushed out of them. It is not humbug; I have seen their actions. Because they use grand compliments, Europeans think they are never sincere, but the compliments are not meant to deceive, they only profess to be forms. Why do English people talk of the beautiful sentiment of the Bible and pretend to feel it so much, and when they come and see the same life before them they ridicule it?'

Chapter XLVI

SALLY MARRIES OMAR

THE faithful Sally, who had been with Lucie many years, in South Africa and Egypt, managed to fit in remarkably well to a life which must have seemed very strange and often been very lonely. Whenever Lucie writes of her it is always with high praise, saying that she was in many ways a more agreeable and more tolerant companion than many better-educated people would have been. Sally liked the Egyptians, just as she had liked the Malays and negroes in South Africa.

The Lucie, Omar and Sally ménage worked admirably for a number of years, but there came at last a break when Sally and Omar became enamoured. If Sally had not had a child it is possible that Lucie would not have known that she spent her nights with Omar. He himself said afterwards :

“I could not tell you *her* secret. She had been with you ten years and would not trust you and she is a woman. You know *I could* not speak but my stomach has burnt ever since.”

When Sally gave birth to a child, however, there was discord. Lucie was extremely angry, more angry than one would have expected, considering her forgiving nature and her respect for Sally.

According to Lucie, Sally had been far gone with child during their visit to Cairo in the spring of 1865, and had concealed her state from everyone, including Omar and an English doctor who had seen her in Cairo. How this was possible is not explained. After four days' sail from Cairo in the dahabieh which Lucie had bought, the child was born.

Lucie, who was ill at the time, was summoned hastily at midnight to act as midwife. 'She was delivered without a twinge and did admirably'—but Lucie was horrified that 'she had no clothes or anything for the child. It looked—God forgive me—as if she had hoped to kill it.'

Lucie was thrown into a fever by it all and lost her sleep, which aggravated her cough. In addition she had to act as monthly nurse, a business which she said she did not understand.

From now on the ménage at Luxor was anything but comfortable. Sally was insistent that Omar should divorce his wife and be married to her alone. Lucie was equally determined that she should not do such an injustice to Omar's wife; the child screamed, and Omar was miserable. He was very penitent and refused to go near Sally again, which made her very angry and, according to Lucie, 'she let out how entirely the whole thing was her doing; how he had resisted all along, and indeed had declined any further intrigue after the first few weeks because she refused to marry him and inform me.'

'I never saw such a curious thing as her perfect coolness and his utter despair. He wanted me to have him beaten and could not bear my saying a kind word without fresh tears. . . . You would have thought that he was the seduced girl and she a regular old roué by the way she took it. She is quite offended because her family (in England) don't approve of her, and really has not shown the least shame.'

Sheikh Yussuf was sent for and told the story, and a marriage ceremony was gone through. He gave Omar a severe scolding beforehand for 'his conduct to women he was bound to defend,' and was very polite to Sally, handing her a chair, which an Arab does not do for a woman.

'Of course the marriage is nothing at all as far as Sally is

concerned,' Lucie wrote. 'I told her so, and said that I should expect her to "keep herself to herself" if I allowed her to remain here until we go down. Sally is simply an English subject living in open adultery, and her marriage is null and void from the beginning. Omar has got the watchman and the boy Achmed sleeping with him in the big hall outside my door, while Sally is religué to the other end of the house with her child, sous prétexte that its noise would disturb me, which is true; and he keeps Achmed always with him.'

It was a tense domestic situation, and an arrangement that was not likely to make Sally amiably disposed to Lucie; but she continued to do her work well, although she was feeding the child. Lucie was very anxious to have Alexander's views on the affair, and wrote to him: 'I hope you will think I have done the best I could under the circumstances. I must say that Omar's conduct—barring the first slip, and really he was hardly to blame—has been quite admirable. . . . I only hope that I shall have done well in your eyes, and that you will agree with me that there is no cause for dismissing Omar. He at all events has had a lesson in sorrow and in money that he won't forget.'

'You know Arab phraseology; well, he said, when I told him it would be difficult to trust him with another maid: "By God! if an English girl comes to me and pulls up her skirt before me again, with the permission of God I will slap her face, though I am only an Arab and she English."'

From Lucie's subsequent letters it was obvious that Alexander did not see eye to eye with her, and thought she was hard on Sally. Lucie wrote her defence to her mother:

'I never was given to be a dragon of virtue and I have been perfectly kind to her, but I cannot keep her about me. . . . She is not half as ill off as most women in such a case. Omar bears all the trouble and expense and she will go back to

England and may keep her own secret. She loses nothing but her place with me. She has desired Omar to divorce her when we go down, which I am glad of for his sake. I did not like to oppose his marrying absolutely, because the poor lad was so bent on doing everything possible he could to make up for his fault, and that is a feeling I had not the heart to throw cold water on. But he has steadily refused to live with her or to divorce his other wife, a point on which I, too, was peremptory.' Lucie could not bring herself to forgive Sally for wanting to be rid of Mabrooka, and have Omar to herself; 'nothing will satisfy English people short of the complete abolition of those who stand in the way of their selfish prejudices.'

Lucie writes of an Englishwoman visiting Luxor, 'who, would you believe it, told me that the ways of Providence were inscrutable and that my maid's "error" (what would she call it under other circumstances?) might be the means of bringing my Mahommedan servant to see the light, etc., etc. (faugh! such dirty bigotry stinks)—so that he might divorce his heathen wife and found a Christian family.

'I fear I was rude, for I asked if Christian families were well established by trampling a few commandments underfoot for a foundation, especially that great one about *not* doing to others what we would not have them do to us.

'I find that these disasters are wonderfully common here; is it the climate or the costume I wonder that makes the English maids ravish the Arab men so continually?' A handsome young dragoman told Lucie that he refused all engagements with women:

"Where there are ladies," he said, "there is a maid, and I fall in it somehow. If I refuse her she tells lies of me all the way, and if I do as she likes there is some mischief."

There is little doubt that Lucie's sympathy for Sally was stifled

at the beginning by the fact that she had concealed everything. One is reminded of Rose's remark to Evan Harrington: 'Deceive her, and she cannot forgive you. It is not in her nature.' But there was more to it than that. It is surprising that Lucie did not seem to realise that the Omar-Sally love affair was a not unlikely development, and that when it occurred Lucie should have been so exercised about it. The truth was that she could not bear to part with Omar and excused him at Sally's expense.

Omar's grand brother, Hajji Ali, took a very different view. He was furious with Omar and told Lucie that he considered his brother had done her a grave injury, and promised to do all he could to atone for it. He offered to come in Omar's place for £3 a month and cook and do everything. "I would rather come for nothing," he said, "but that would be to talk nonsense to a lady like you."

Lucie, however, was determined to get rid of Sally and to keep Omar. When they reached Cairo, Omar paid Sally's expenses to England and Mabrooka took care of the child, which was fair, with blue eyes, and 'hideous,' according to Lucie.

Chapter XLVII

THE NEW MORALITY

'As the time slips on I get more and more the feeling of all I am losing of my children,' wrote Lucie. She had been delighted when Alexander had come out to Cairo for a few months in 1864, and lived with her à l'arabe, but he would not stay long for the climate did not agree with him. She had gone to England the next year, but the cold and damp made her very ill and she realised that it was her last visit home. She did not see her husband or mother again. The former was preparing to come out to Egypt just before her death, but started too late, and her mother died in 1867.

'Poor mother weighs on my mind,' wrote Lucie; 'there is something inexpressibly painful to me in the very sense of relief which I cannot but feel. Thank God she did not outlive me, for her sake, and above all, for yours, I thank God her illness was short. Poor woman! She had many great and good qualities, but yet one cannot regret that her life was not prolonged.'

Sarah had left Omar £100, to which Lucie added £50 and he bought a house in Alexandria. When they heard of Sarah's death, Omar arranged that the Koran should be recited in Lucie's Nile boat from the afternoon of one day to daybreak on the next.

There was a question of Maurice coming out to visit his mother, which filled her with pleasure. Alexander hinted that he might be bored, whereat Lucie exclaimed: 'Was I different to other children and young people, or has the race

changed? When I was that age I should have thought anyone mad who talked of a Nile voyage as possibly a bore, and would have embarked in a wash-tub if anyone would have offered to take me, and that with rapture. All romance, and curiosity too, seems dead and gone. Even old and sick and not very happily placed I still cannot understand the idea of not being amused and interested—the dread of ennui is really an illness in itself to Alexander and Janet. . . . I am more and more of Omar's opinion, who said, with a pleased sigh, as we sat on the deck under some lovely palm trees in the bright moonlight, moored far from all human dwellings, "how sweet are the quiet places of the world."

Lucie was particularly anxious that Maurice should come because she wanted to get him away from Brussels where his father had sent him. "A town of vulgar vice. . . . Surely you must see that it is not a desirable place for him," she wrote, for she had heard that he had got into bad company.

It was decided eventually that Maurice should come out. In the meantime Janet and Henry Ross came up the Nile to visit Lucie. 'Here we are enjoying Mamma's wonderful talk,' wrote Janet to her father from Luxor, 'all we wish for is that you were here too. I can't say she looks well and I found her a good deal aged. You have no idea what a power she is in the land. Henry, who knows the East, is astonished. At first when we stopped to coal or to buy food, we found the villages deserted. Only a few tiny children or very old women were to be seen, who said they had nothing, no sheep, no chickens, no milk, no bread. Our Mahommed grasped the situation. A Government steamer meant no piastres, and courbash into the bargain, so he tumbled over the side of the boat, swam ashore, and cut across the fields, where the river made a great bend, to the village where we were to anchor for the night. There he proclaimed aloud that the daughter

MAURICE'S ARRIVAL

of the Sitt el Kebir (the Great Lady) was on board, who, like her mother, loved the Arabs. The effect was magical. No more difficulties about food. Milk, fowls, lambs, etc., suddenly appeared at absurdly low prices, some were even brought as gifts and we had to insist on the people taking money for them. . . .

'In the evening we dined with Seleem Effendi, the magistrate of Luxor. Our procession to dinner was quite Biblical. Mamma on her donkey, which I led, while Henry walked by her side. Two boys in front had lanterns, and Omar in his best clothes walked behind carrying some sweet dish for which he is famous, followed by more lantern-bearers. As we went through the little village the people came out of their mud-huts and called on Allah to bless us, the men throwing down their poor cloaks for my mother to ride over and the women kissing the hem of her dress.'

Maurice arrived in Egypt at the end of 1867 with a Belgian tutor. He had grown to be an extremely attractive young man of twenty, was easy-going, amiable, and intelligent, but hated study. He was not well, after the life he had been leading in Brussels, and Lucie was rather concerned, especially as the tutor, whom she disliked from the first, was always trying to lead Maurice astray. "I shall hold the child by the neck and not let him go near the bad women," said Omar.

After talking with Maurice she realised that the Belgian family had been even worse than she had at first thought. 'How was it, my dearest Alex,' she wrote, 'that you thought fit to have him with a tutor whose wife was like that? Do you think that you need such instruction so much? I own I do not understand your *strict* European morals. If I were to buy him a slave girl you would be shocked, but I think it a sight worse to deliver a lad over to such an instructress.'

'Indeed I would rather do what I never did and get him a clean Fellaha girl if I cannot keep him from it entirely, but what a pity we cannot buy him a nice Abyssinian like respectable people.'

Darfoor was delighted by Maurice and called him 'Son of a Crocodile' because he swam so much in the Nile, and the little ex-slave grinned at him all the time he waited at table. Maurice was very happy shooting, walking, riding and learning Arabic. 'He inherits my faculty for getting on with "damned niggers"; all the crew kissed him on both cheeks and swore to come back again in the winter, and up-country he was hand in glove with all the Fellaheen, eating a good deal of what he called "muck" with great enjoyment, walking arm in arm with a crazy Dervish, fetching home a bride at night and swearing lustily by the prophet. The good manners of the Arab "canaille" have rubbed off the very disagreeable varnish which he got at Brussels.'

Lucie wished he had more brains and a little industry, but she said that she was too happy in his pleasant kindly ways and too sick and weary to find fault with anyone who was so affectionate to her. 'I feel it like a new life to me to have the dear boy with me.'

Soon after the journey up the river from Cairo she had got rid of the Belgian tutor, whom the crew also disliked: 'A more illiterate, vulgar, impudent little beast I never saw, and always wanting to lead Maurice into dissipation. Reis Mohammed clawed Maurice at Girgeh and told him that he would show him better girls than the Belgian knew, and walked him round and round all manner of deserted streets and brought him home, nothing accomplished.'

Maurice told her about the Reis's trick as a great joke, and the Reis came to Lucie in great excitement, saying:

"There is no God but God. Shall that unclean fornicator

and son of a — father and unchaste mother lead the produce of thy noble bowels among harlots, and bring uncleanness into our boat, which has always been like a mosque: Truly I fear lest he bring calamity upon us from the angels. But for thee I had beaten him.”

Lucie's Egyptian friends could not understand why she left him without a wife or at least a slave. ‘They were sincerely shocked at such indifference to a son's morals and it is horribly difficult to answer arguments which are just as true for a person professing Christianity as for a Muslim.

‘Maurice visited a dancing girl at Luxor and pronounced her a darling, but he was comically disconcerted by the way in which she told him that Omar, Mohammed, etc., were good men and never went to her house, while Achmed and Alee were *wicked* men and went there after him. He is also somewhat astounded to see that out of a party of fourteen men only three ever go “on the loose,” though all talk pretty plainly about their wives.

‘A boat's crew is a curious school of morality, but the old adage of example being better than precept is not bad and Maurice is the more puzzled by the men's continence that they don't preach or talk virtuous, but contrariwise.’

Omar went with Maurice to the dancing girl's door, and when Maurice asked him to go in replied :

“No, my feet don't know that road; if I *fall* in it, God is merciful, but I won't *walk* into it; nor would I sit at the door for any man but you, who are like my brother, and because I fear for you.”

Lucie's common-sense way of dealing with the matter impressed Maurice, so that he was the more prepared to admit her arguments that he had allowed himself to get into a morbid state of mind and body, and that it was time that he pulled himself together. Regarding her arrangements with the

THE NEW MORALITY

Luxor dancing girl Lucie wrote to Alexander: 'I fear it was not moral, but it has worked well and Maurice looks as blooming as a rose now.'

Lucie was anxious about Maurice's education and did not think much of Eton methods. 'He knows nothing and the education he has had is such as effectually to prevent his ever learning. He is so deeply imbued with the idea that it is "snobbish" to read and to know, and that nothing on earth is worth living for but animal pleasures, that nothing can change that.'

Maurice said he liked being with Lucie, but was rather ashamed that she was considered to be high-brow.

"Why, you know even the Governor says you talk like a blue-stocking," he told her.

She had met a number of Etonians who had come up the Nile, and had observed that all those of Maurice's age 'have exactly the same baronial view of life and hate the "cads," who are base enough to read books. The living among Arabs has greatly improved Maurice's manners. I had had ideas of Colonial life, for decidedly the animal predominates so utterly over the intellectual activity that he will never be fit for any desk or bookwork.'

Lucie searched for a teacher for him; the only man she knew of was Haggi Daboos, a first-rate Arabic scholar, speaking French and Italian perfectly. She felt that perhaps Alexander would be shocked because he was a negro. 'Que faire? "It's not catching," as Lady Morley said, and I won't present you with a young mulatto any more than with a young Belge.'

Chapter XLVIII

LUCIE'S DEATH

LUCIE was so ill by now that she was coughing continuously, and so short of breath that she could not even continue reading to her son. She was often only able to speak a few words at a time, and she sat and moved always in a bent position.

In a desperate attempt to regain her health she accepted a doctor's advice to try Syria, where she went with Maurice, Omar and little Darfoor. She was nearly killed by the journey and the climate, 'which is absolute poison to consumptive people.'

Ten days after she arrived a doctor told her that she must settle her affairs, as she only had a few days to live. She was at Beirut and tried to go to one of the hospitals which were managed by religious sects, but the Sisters of Charity would not nurse a Protestant, and the Prussian Sisters would not take in a non-Lutheran. She was well nursed, however, by Omar and little Darfoor, and Maurice, who wrote pathetic letters about her illness to his father, did what he could.

Lucie rallied, however, and was carried on board a steamer to return to Egypt. It was a terrible journey and they were nearly shipwrecked, as the Russian captain had his bride on board and did not bother about the ship.

For a few months more Lucie returned to the life she loved among her friends at Luxor and at Assuan. 'On Christmas Day,' she wrote to Alexander in 1868, 'I was at Esneh; it was warm and fine, and I made fantasia and had the girls to dance. Zeynab and Hillaleah came to be my own special Ghazawee,

LUCIE'S DEATH

so to speak my ballerina da camera, and they did their best. How I did long to transport the whole scene before your eyes—Ramadan warbling intense love songs, and beating on a tiny tambourine, while Zeynab danced before him and gave the pantomime to his song; and the sailors and girls, and respectable merchants sat pêle-mêle all round on the deck, and the player on the rabab drew from it a wail like that of Isis for dead Osiris. I never quite know whether it is now or four thousand years ago, or even ten thousand, when I am in the dreamy intoxication of a real Egyptian fantasia; nothing is so antique as the Ghazawee—the *real* dancing girls. They are still subject to religious ecstasies of a very curious kind, no doubt inherited from the remotest antiquity. Ask any learned pundit to explain to you the Zarh, it is really curious.

‘Now that I am too ill to write I feel sorry that I did not persist and write on the beliefs of Egypt in spite of your fear that the learned would cut me up, for honestly I believe that knowledge will die with me which few others possess. You must recollect that the learned know books, and I know men, and what is still more difficult—women.’

That was one of the last letters Lucie wrote. She knew by the-spring of 1869, when she was still only forty-eight, that she was not likely to survive another winter.

She said a touching farewell to all her friends in Luxor; none of them expected to see her again. They wept and kissed her hand passionately, and the poor Fellaheen asked leave to touch her for a blessing. Many brought presents of bread, vegetables and lambs. ‘They are kinder than ever now that I can no longer be of any use to them.’

Lucie’s chief concern was for Omar’s future, for he said that nothing could console him for the loss of ‘the mother he had found in the world.’ She was very relieved when

the Prince of Wales agreed to take him as his dragoman, while Alexander said that he could have her boat, the *Urania*.

Ismail sent a message to Lucie that she was not to see the Prince of Wales on his visit to Upper Egypt, or he would deprive her of her Arab boatmen. He feared that she would inform the Prince of the tyranny and poverty. Lucie did not want to get her Arab boatmen into trouble, so refused the Prince's invitation to visit his dahabieh, whereupon he came with Princess Alexandra on board the *Urania*. 'They were more considerate than any people I have seen,' said Lucie. 'My sailors were so proud at having the honour of rowing him on *our own boat*, and of singing to him.'

Lucie sailed down the Nile to Cairo, and Maurice left for England; she did not feel that she could keep him any longer from his studies. He was the last member of the family to see her. Janet and Alexander were in England, planning to come to Egypt, but they delayed too long; Lucie did not allow anyone to inform them how ill she was.

The spring passed and the summer came. The *Urania* lay still, moored on the Nile off Boulak, while Lucie fought for her life in the sultry cabin. She was alone with Omar, little Darfoor, her crew and Miss Mathews, whom she had engaged to look after her as she could now do hardly anything for herself.

She longed to see Alexander once again, but did not wish to bring him out in the hot summer, just to see her die. In spite of her utter loneliness, she wrote to him in June to put off his visit. 'Dearest Alick, do not think of coming here as you dread the climate. Indeed it would be almost too painful to me to part from you again; and as it is, I can wait patiently for the end among people who are kind and loving enough to be comfortable (with) without too much feeling of the pain of parting.'

LUCIE'S DEATH

'The leaving Luxor was rather a distressing scene, as they did not think to see me again. The kindness of all the people was really touching, from the Cadi, who made ready my tomb among his own family, to the poorest Fellaheen.

'If I live till September I will go up to Esneh where the air is softest and I cough less and live in a home there and send down the boat to be let. I would rather die among my own people in the Saeed than here.'

Another month passed, and she was so weak that she knew there was only a short time more to live, though she pretended to herself that she would be able to do some Nile trips next winter with her husband, and described her plans to Miss Mathews.

For the last twelve days of her life she was unable to go to bed, as she could not lie down; the fits of choking were more frequent and threatened to suffocate her. A dentist lent one of his chairs, which enabled her to rest a little in different positions. She described him as her 'greatest benefactor.'

Lucie took off her wedding ring and placed it in a box for Alexander. She said that she did not wish to take anything with her to the grave, and that she was to be dressed only in a Siut linen nightdress and wrapped in a sheet.

By her chair she kept a picture of Urania. She liked the expression of her little girl's face, and said that she was glad Rainy was being brought up properly with Miss Charlotte Austin 'and not in the modern style of affectation and coquetry.' One of the last letters she received was from Urania, and she cried bitterly at the thought of never hearing from her again. Then she said:

"How wrong it is to murmur against the will of God, for why should I desire to give pain to others?"

Her pain was so intense that she prayed earnestly for the end.

On July 9, with great difficulty, she wrote her last letter: 'Dearest Alick, don't make yourself unhappy and don't send out a nurse. Miss Mathews nurses me as well as possible. My two Reises, Ramadan and Yussuf, are strong and tender and Omar is as ever. I am too absorbed in mere bodily suffering to wish anyone else to witness it. The worst is I am so strong. I rehearsed my death two days ago and came back after a whole night insensible.

'I repeat I could not be better cared for anywhere than by my good loving crew. Tell Maurice how they all cried and how Abd el Haleem forswore drink and Hasheesh. He is very good too. But the Reises are incomparable.

'God bless you my dearest of all loves. How sad that your Nile project was too late.

'Kiss my darlings all, and dear Charlotte. I grieve for her eyes. I don't write very well, I suppose being worn out by want of sleep and incessant suffocation.

'Forgive me all my faults towards you. I wish I had seen your dear face once more—but not now; I would not have you here on any account. Your own Lucie.'

On July 13, before Alexander had received her letter, she told Miss Mathews to be prepared for the end, for she could not live another day. Lucie asked for a telegraph form and wrote a message to announce her death to Alexander, leaving blanks for the time and date to be filled in afterwards. Miss Mathews sat up with her throughout the night, while Omar, little Darfoor and the crew kept vigil on deck, praying by the dark Nile.

At midnight Lucie said: "I am very cold."

Blankets were brought, and after a little time she smiled and said: "No use."

At 2 a.m. she asked for some café au lait, and in drinking it said:

LUCIE'S DEATH

"How nice it smells." Then she added :

"You know what is coming. Do not be afraid. I am in no pain. I only wish I could have seen Alexander."

When Omar and the others were summoned, Lucie smiled at them as they tiptoed into the cabin.

One of them said that he hoped she would get better.

"That is not kind to wish me to linger on in pain," she replied. "I pray only for the end."

She could just speak enough to bless them and to embrace each one by turn.

Heartbroken they stood there as the dawn broke over the Nile, powerless now to do anything for her. Omar knelt by her side in utter misery.

She was conscious to the last, and between the fits of coughing managed every now and then to say a few words to her faithful servants and friends.

At last, at seven in the morning, Lucie was attacked by a fit of coughing from which she could not recover, and she died of suffocation.

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