# Queen Elizabeth's Gentlewoman

Sybil Cust

# QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GENTLEWOMAN
## AND OTHER SKETCHES

*Photo by W. A. Call, Monmouth*

MONUMENT TO BLANCHE PARRY IN BACTON CHURCH, HEREFORDSHIRE

# QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GENTLEWOMAN AND OTHER SKETCHES

BY

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TO

ANNE THACKERAY RITCHIE

# PREFACE

THE kind reception given to my former small volume of essays, *From a Little Town-Garden*, has encouraged me to offer another series to my readers. These sketches are obviously too miscellaneous to form a connected work, ranging, as will be seen, from Queen Elizabeth to a dormouse. For this shortcoming I can offer no apology, but trust to the friendly indulgence of those into whose hands my little book may fall.

My special thanks are due to Lt.-Col. J. A. Bradney, C.B., and the Rev. C. T. Brothers, Rector of Bacton, Herefordshire, for their kind assistance with the history of Mistress Blanche Parry, and to the Rev. H. F. Westlake for permission to use his photograph of her tomb in St. Margaret's, Westminster. Also to Fräulein Auguste Gieseler

and Frau Niemoeller for their help in obtaining for me much curious information and several rare old books bearing on the romantic and—to English people—little known history of the principality of Lippe Detmold.

SYBIL CUST.

DATCHET, *July* 1914.

## POSTSCRIPT

THE following pages were completed, as will be readily seen, before the world was set on fire in August of this year. It is interesting to find that Princess Pauline of Lippe, more than a century ago, when her little country was in danger between two threatening forces, chose the tyranny of Napoleon rather than that of Prussia.

I regret that two mistakes have remained in the text. On page 119 I have stated that Peter Martel climbed Mont Blanc, whereas he only reached the glacier of the Montanvert; and on page 41, line 8, for "exile" read "captive."

DATCHET, *October* 1914.

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# QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GENTLEWOMAN

THERE are some who played a distinguished part in their day, and moved in great historic scenes, whom history has so strangely neglected that they now have passed almost beyond her reach. Such a one is Blanche Parry, a great English lady of the sixteenth century. If we turn back over the years and try to follow in the way she trod, we find that we can, at first, but just trace her faded footmarks, and touch the fringe of her shadowy garments. Then, as we watch, we find we are not too late. Slowly she takes form and life before us, more and more clearly she stands out at last against a bright and gorgeous background, the scene of her long life's faithful service, the Court of Queen Elizabeth.

No portrait exists with her name; but her

face and form are known to us on two grand contemporary monuments and in one stained-glass window. In a picture at Hampton Court by the recently discovered painter Hans Eworth, of "Queen Elizabeth and the Three Goddesses," Her Majesty is seen issuing from her palace door in splendour outshining their celestial charms; behind her stand two ladies, richly attired; and in one, wearing a square headdress, who is evidently of mature age, it is perhaps not entirely fanciful to trace the features of Blanche Parry.

The longest and most detailed account of her was written by George Ballard in his *Memoirs of several learned Ladies of Great Britain;* yet even he, to his regret it seems, included her as an afterthought, and owns that he can say but little of her. . . . "Yet it might seem very unkind and ungrateful in a lover of antiquities not to insert this worthy gentlewoman in his catalogue of learned women, who appears, not only to have been a lover of antiquities herself, but likewise an encourager of that kind of learning in others.

. . . I have seen," he continues, "a pedigree of the Parry family drawn up by her own hand which discovers the gentility of her descent. But I did not extract anything from it, having not then thought of drawing up any account of this gentlewoman."

There are further a few references to Blanche Parry in the pages of half a dozen chronicles of the time; there are lines of undying grace and beauty inscribed on her tomb in Bacton Church, near her home in Herefordshire; for the rest, her history is that of the mighty Queen whose servant and loving confidant she was until death called her from her mistress' side.

She rocked her cradle at Greenwich; she watched over her motherless childhood; she stood beside her through the tormenting anxieties of her reign, and she lived to see its crowning glory in the year of the Armada.

We are obliged to lift the veil from an unfortunate episode in Elizabeth's early life, to find the first mention in contemporary history of Blanche Parry. The Princess herself was in no way to blame for the wicked

and shameful courtship of the Lord High Admiral Thomas Seymour, which he pursued before the very eyes of his wife, the widowed Queen Catherine Parr, and resumed with increased audacity after her death; but it is probable that to a certain extent the incident warped the child's precocious and impressionable mind—she was only fourteen—and left its mark on her after-life.

The scandal was spread and fostered by those among her so-called friends whom she most confidently trusted: Mrs. Ashley, her governess, and Thomas Parry, her treasurer;[1] but they narrowly escaped paying for their heartless treachery with their lives. They were involved as confederates in the charge brought against Seymour in that he "did by secret and crafty means practise to achieve the purpose of marrying the Lady Elizabeth," and with him they were arrested and confined in the Tower. That they came out alive was solely due to Elizabeth's earnest

[1] Various writers have assumed that this man was kinsman to Blanche. There was, however, no relationship that can be traced between them.

and touching intercession with the Protector Somerset.[1]

Sir Robert Tyrwhitt, Commissioner of the Council, was appointed to ascertain how far the Princess herself was implicated. This horrid task he attempted to carry out by means of a written statement addressed to the maid of honour, which he requested her to show to Elizabeth. We may be sure that Blanche Parry did her part with gentleness and discretion; but on reading this sinister document, between her shame and perplexity and her generous desire to shield her servants, the Princess broke down and wept.

"It may please your Grace," wrote Sir Robert Tyrwhitt shortly after to the Protector Somerset, "to be advertised that after my Lady's Grace had seen a letter (which I devised to Mistress Blanche from a friend of hers) that both Mistress Ashley and her cofferer were put into the Tower, she was marvellously abashed and did weep very tenderly a long time. . . ."

[1] See her letter, written from Hatfield, in the Burleigh State Papers.

Thomas Seymour paid the extreme penalty on March 20, 1549. Gay, beautiful, and fascinating, bad man though he was, he kindled, we believe, the only spark of real affection that the heart of Queen Elizabeth ever knew; for she never loved again, though she flirted all her life.

Blanche Parry came of a fine old stock in the West Country, the Parrys of New Court in the Golden Valley. They gave at least one distinguished soldier to the nation, Harry ap Griffith ap Harry (son of Griffith, son of Harry), who fought at Mortimer's Cross. Ap Harry, the Welsh form of the family name, became, through various changes, Parry in succeeding generations. These modifications of surnames "by shortnesse of speach and change of some letters" were very common in mediæval documents, and joined to the compilers' indifference to spelling—for they thought nothing of writing the same word in a dozen different ways—make many a confusion in family history. Another of Blanche's kinsmen in her own time was principal huntsman to Queen

Elizabeth. Through her grandmother Jane, daughter of Sir Henry Stradling, she was related to the first Earl of Pembroke, and to the chief families of her native county. There were marriages also between certain Parrys her cousins, and cousins of the Cecils, the family of the great treasurer Burleigh; and he acknowledges this relationship when witnessing her will as executor.

With his powerful aid she brought the cause of many who were in want and suffering before the Queen. We know through the memorial lines on her tomb at Bacton that she herself would often "move her Grace's ear" for the sake of some poor servant fallen on evil days: and moreover that she always knew, in venturing thus, how far she might go without offence: but also she had the courage which true pity gives, and she resolutely set her face against what appeared to her injustice, even though she had to reckon with the highest in the land. Among the Cecil papers at Hatfield is a letter from "Mistress Blanche Parry to Lord Burghley, dated 1582, August 16. Desires

his favour on behalf of Mr. Pendryth, whose wife nursed the Queen, and also is one of the Queen's tenants of the Manor of Norborn, County Kent. The bishop of Canterbury has appointed certain persons to carry away Mr. Pendryth's tithe corn without suit commenced in law.—From the Court at Nonsuch."

Another testimony to her kindness of heart is contained in a letter she wrote to Sir Edward Stradling on behalf of one of her relations: it runs thus:

"To the Right worll. my very loving Cosen Sr. Edward Stradling Knight.—After my very harty comendacõns unto you—wheras the Queenes Ma$^{tie}$ of her gracious favour. hath heretofore graunted a patent of the gayolershipp of [a certain county] to my kinseman Davyd Morgan, w$^{ch}$ he hath ever sence enjoyed: for that he is a younger brother, and hath noe other way of livinge, I have thought good to praye you most hartely that he maye, w$^{th}$ yo$^{r}$ favo$^{r}$ and likinge, enjoye the same by him selfe or his

deputye wthout troble; and you shall have sufficyent suertyes to save you harmeles according as her Ma^ties sayd graunte doth purporte; and what favor you shall shewe him I will be readye to requytte. And soe, trustinge that he shall need noe other helpe herein besyd my request, I byd you hartely well to fare. From the Courte at Windeso^r the XIIth of December 1582.—Yo^r assured loving Cosen,

BLANCHE PARY."

Like her mistress, Blanche was deeply influenced by the spiritualistic beliefs and fancies of those days, and touched by the magician's wand wielded by the hands of her lifelong crony, that very dubious comrade of the angels, sorcerer, quack and arch impostor, the Welsh astrologer fitly named Dee or Black. To this man, who was of beautiful persuasive presence, and went on his crooked way "robed in a gowne like an artist's gowne," with a "long beard as white as milke," who could make himself adored by his friends, but was dreaded by the people

for a wizard, Queen Elizabeth bent her commanding intellect in childish credulity. He led her on in her forlorn quest of perpetual youth and beauty, he persuaded her she was rightful Sovereign of strange and far-distant thrones, and made the stars in their courses combine to flatter her. We can well imagine the old maid of honour present when the Queen took dark counsel with Dr. Dee. We can see her standing one day beneath the churchyard wall at Mortlake, the magician's home, when Dee, who had that very morning laid his wife in her grave hard by, allowed "the maiden majesty of England" to gaze into his magic mirror. She penetrated no further, however, into the spirit world on this occasion, graciously abandoning her intention to visit his library and hold further converse with his shadowy companions, out of regard for his very recent widowhood.

The Queen made many a promise of aid and advancement to Dee which she did not remember to fulfil. These repeated disappointments, his evil fame as a conjuror, and his ceaseless journeys on the Continent

in search of the philosopher's stone, brought him more than once to the verge of starvation. "When most distressed by the lubricity of fortune," Blanche Parry, as always, stood his friend, and she procured for him from the Queen the Mastership of Saint Cross, Winchester; but his life closed in great misery. An entry in his diary, under date July 16, 1579, records the christening of his son Arthur: "Mistres Blanche Parry of the Privie Chamber" being his godmother. She also stood sponsor and gave her name to Blanche Parry, a man who became Sheriff of Breconshire, in which county she possessed considerable landed estates; and where she instituted a suit against one Hugh Powel of Llangasty for her rights to a moiety of fishery in Brecknock mere. She appears to have had a sharp eye for any flaw in a business transaction, and the poor man must have regretted the day when he crossed her path. He lost his case and the Court decided to destroy certain weirs that he had erected on the disputed water.

Blanche Parry's skill in learning extended

beyond the occult sciences. She was famous in her day for her mastery of foreign languages, and she was deeply interested in historical and antiquarian research. She obtained from Sir Edward Stradling his manuscript account of the conquest of Glamorgan "out of the Welshmen's hands," for her friend David Powel, who inserted it in his *Historie of Cambria*, and in the final paragraph acknowledges her aid:

"Thus farre the copie of the winning of Glamorgan as I received the same at the hands of Mistris Blanch Parrie, collected by Sir Edward Stradling, Knight."

A glorious light is cast on this great lady from a passage in a very rare book of which only three or four copies are known to exist, a treatise on *Most approved and Long experienced WATER WORKES*, by G. Rowland Vaughan, Esquire, 1610. He was her great nephew, and inherited New Court from his mother Joan, daughter and coheir of Miles Ap Harry, the brother of Blanche. We see her here reigning supreme over the dazzling

throng of Queen Elizabeth's courtiers, and also in the person of a somewhat formidable aunt ridding herself of her loafing young nephew for his good. He has the generosity, however, to acknowledge the lofty excellence of her character:

"After I had spent some yeares," he writes, "in Queene Elizabeth's Court, and saw the *greatness* and *glory* thereof under the command of Mistres *Blanche Parry* (an honourable and vertuous Gentlewoman, my Aunt and Mistresse) my *spirite* being too tender to indure the bitternesse of her *humor;* I was by her carefull (though crabbed austerity) forced into the *Irish* wars. . . ." We must, however, give this young scapegrace the credit of having later in life settled down to at least one sober pursuit, as witness his diligent labours on the Water Works. In her will his aunt, ever mindful of her kith and kin, bequeathed to him a hundred pounds.

The account of the Queen's Purse in Nichol's *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth* contains the regular entry of Blanche Parry's name among the givers of jewels and other

costly presents each New Year's Day to Her Majesty. She had an insatiable craving for every description of finery; and she demanded those tokens of her servants' loyalty from them throughout her life. Nothing came amiss to her—whether it were a "a night-coif of cambric, cut work and spangles, or a suite of ruffs of cut work, flourished with gold and silver," or "one fair pie of quinces," or even—a frequent offering from clergymen of rank—ten pounds in gold coin. In addition to her own gifts to the Queen, Blanche Parry was the bearer of many from others, both within and without the Royal Household. As we glance down the pages, we find ourselves in a blaze of thousand-coloured lights; we can see the gem-starred raiment of England's splendour-loving Sovereign, and hear the clink of golden coins that was ever grateful to her ear.

Among these New Year's gifts are the following:

Delivered to Mrs. Blanch Apparey, and given by various Knights, sums of money in French crownes in dimy soveraignes, in purses

of blak silk and silver knytt in angells, in blak silk and gold. . . .

A book of the Armes of the Knights of the Garter now being, covered with tynsell.

A cofer of wodde paynted and gilt with combes carved, glasses and balls, given by Mrs. Blanche Apparey.

One square piece unshorne vellat edged with silver lase.

Given by Mr. William Huggyns, and delivered to the said Mrs. Blanch, a greate swete bag of tapphata with a zypher, and a border of rosses and sphers embrodered with Venice gold and pearles. A peice of fine cameryk, delivered to Mrs. Blaunch Apparey.

Here the Maid of Honour receives a present from Her Majesty; a somewhat simple one, it would seem: Presented by the Queen, to Mrs. Blaunch Appary, one guilt stowpe with a cover.

Presented to the Queen by Mrs. Blanche Parry, a peir of brasletts of Cornelion hedds, two small perles betwixt every hed, garnished with golde.

Among "juelles geven to her Majestie at

Newyerstide, anno 15° regni sui" is one juell, being a scrippe of mother of perle, hanging at three little cheines of golde, and a small agathe pendaunte geven by Mrs. Blaunche Parrye.

A juell, being a cristal garnished with golde; Adame and Eve enamelled white, given by Mrs. Blaunche Parrye, broken.

Anno 17° a flower of golde enamuled greene, with three white roses, in either of them a sparcke of rubyes, and the midst thearof a flye, and a smale cheyne of golde to hange it by, being broken, given by Mrs. Blanch Parry. A little box of golde, and a little spoone of golde.

A paire of braceletts of golde, given by Mrs. Blanche Aparry.

Among Diverse Parsones . . . chardged with sondrie somes of readie monye . . . is Mrs. Blanch Appary . . . as given to the Queen's Majestie at the late Lorde Northe's howse at the Charter house, by the Merchant adventurers £500.

By Blanche a Parry, a litill box of golde to put in cumphetts, and a litill spone of golde,

weying all 3 oz. 1 qr. One long cushion of tawny cloth of golde, backed with taffety.

The Queen's gifts to her household seem usually to have taken the form of plain gold or silver plate, measured out to them by weight, as thus: "Given by the Quene's Maiestie at her Highnes Manor of Richmond to gentilwomen.

To Mrs. Blanche Parry in guilte plate, Keele 18 oz. qr."

Amidst these splendours comes an abrupt reminder of the end of all earthly things:

"For Her Majestie,

Mrs. Blanche Apparie for the funeral of Mr. Vaughan,"—presumably a kinsman of the Maid of Honour in the Queen's service, the money being a token of her kindness—£20.

Where are they? all these precious stuffs and glittering toys? Where is "the peir of brasletts of cornelion hedds, two small perles betwixt every hed," or "the juell of golde whearin is sette a white agathe,"—where is "the litill spone of golde"? A few yet survive among the country's treasures, but the greater part are lost. Many disappeared in their

royal owner's life-time, for she had a curious inability to keep them safely attached to her person. She returned "minus a portion of them" every time she went abroad; and among the wardrobe memoranda of Queen Elizabeth are the following entries:

"Lost from Her Majesty's back, the 14th of May, anno 21, one small acorn and one oaken leaf of gold, at Westminster. Lost by Her Majesty, in May, anno 23, two buttons of gold, like tortoises, with pearls in them, and one pearl more, lost, at the same time, from a tortoise. Lost at Richmond, the 12th of February, from Her Majesty's back, wearing the gown of purple cloth of silver, one great diamond, out of a clasp of gold, given by the Earl of Leicester."

In gathering up the scattered fragments that go to form the picture of Queen Elizabeth's chief gentlewoman, we must pause to wipe away a stain that never ought to have sullied its fairness. It has been laid there by the hand, usually so just and careful, of the historian Agnes Strickland; we are bound,

that is to say, to visit the blame on her; but as it all hangs on one little word, we will hope it is merely a printer's error.

Elizabeth, she says, in her *Lives of the Queens of England*, "gave her half-brother, Sir John Perrot, the command of a fleet to intercept a meditated invasion of Ireland by Philip II" in the year 1579. It is a pretty story that follows, and it may be told in the picturesque language of Sir John's biographer:

"Goeing from London by Barge, he had with him divers noblemen and gentlemen who did accompany hym into the shipps. As they lay in their barge agaynst Grenewich where the Queene kept hir Court, Sir John Perrot sent one of his gentlemen ashore with a Diamond in a Token, unto Mistris *Blanch Parry*, willing hym to tell hir, that a Diamond coming unlooked for, did always bring good Looke with it; which the Queene hearing of, sent Sir John Perrot a fair Jewell hanged by a white Cypresse, signifying with-all, that as longe as he wore that for hir sake she did beleve, with God's Healpe, he should have noe Harme. . . ."

In Miss Strickland's account, before the name of Mistris Blanch Parry she has inserted the mischievous pronoun "*his*." A moment's reflection must have convinced the writer that even making every allowance for Sir John's almost limitless powers of gallantry, it is yet inconceivable that Queen Elizabeth's fiery and jovial knight, at the brightest moment of his dashing prime, should have had an intrigue with an old lady of seventy-one. That there was, however, a pleasant tie of friendship between these two is shown by an entry in her will, in which she leaves "To the right honorable Sir John Perrott, Knighte one peece of plate weighinge fortie ounces."

Blanche Parry, herself unmarried, "a maid in Court and never no man's wife," served, as we have seen, the maiden Sovereign of England with loving fidelity to the end.

She was quite blind when she gave up her trust.

Some items from her will, dated the year of her death, June 21, 1589, copied from one of the great clasped books at Somerset House, may be of interest here. Generous

and great-hearted, upright and imperious, her character shines from the crabbed letters on the old mellowed page.

The document begins in the way then customary with the confession of her trust in God and hope of heaven :

I, Blaunche Parrye, one of the Gentlewomen of the Queenes Maiesties privye Chamber, whole in bodie and mynde. . . . Do make this my testamente and laste will in the name of the Eternall Lyvinge God and the father the Sonne and the holie Ghoste in whose name I was baptised and in whome only I hope and believe to be saved, Amen.

The words are simply a formality, but none the less significant of the Church's hold on her children.

"First," she continues "I bequeth . . . my bodie to be buried in the Parishe Churche of Sainte Margaret within the Cittie of Westminster . . . if yt please God to call me neare London. Item, I give to the Queenes most Excellente Maiestie my Soveraigne Ladie and Mistres my beste

Diamonde. . . . I give to the Righte honorable my very good Lord Sir Christopher Hatton Knight Lord Chauncelloure of Englande one table Diamonde. . . . I give to the righte honorable my very good Lorde the Lorde Burleighe Lorde highe treasurer of Englande my Seconde Dyamonde. . . . To . . . my very good Ladie Cobham one Rynge with a poynted Diamonde and a chayne of knobes enamyled worke . . . to my very good Lorde the Lorde Lumley one ringe with a poynted Diamonde eighte peices of hanginge beinge in my House, two short carpetts and one carpett of foure yardes longe . . . towards the amendinge and repayringe of the highewaye betwene New Court and Hampton . . . in the Countie of Hereford 20 pounde . . . to my cosen Anne Vaghan . . . one chayne of goulde and a girdle which the Queenes Maiestie gave me. . . . I will that my Executors shall bestowe the somme of five hundred poundes in purchasinge of Landes whiche shall be worthe tenne poundes by yere and to builde a conveniente allmshouse for fower poore

people to be chosen from tyme to tyme within the parishe of Backton in the Countie of Hereford: of the oldeste and pooreste within the said parishe whether they be men or women, there to be releeved of the profitts of the said Landes for ever . . . the said allmshouse to be builded as neare the parishe Churche of Backton . . . as the Land may be provided for that purpose . . . I give to my Cozen Anne Whitney One hundred pounde which one Newton and one Birde do owe me . . . to Mr. Morgan the pothicarye one ringe worthe three pounde . . . to Mr. Hewes the Queenes Masties Lynnen Draper one Ringe of Goulde worthe ffyve poundes. . . ."

There are bequests to every "woman servante," and every yeoman who should be in her service at her death, also various moneys from her landed estates, to be paid to her kinsfolk "Yerely at the ffeaste of the Annuncyacon of the blessed Virgin Marye and Sainte Michael the Archangell."

She appoints Lord Burleigh Supravisor of her will, entreating him "to see the same

performed according to the meaninge of my Desire . . . for charities sake."

In a codicil dated three days later, she takes peremptory measures to ensure that there be no wrangling and family jars over her gifts. . . . "Yf any person or persons to whome I have by my laste will given or bequeathed any somme or sommes of money or other thinge Do at any tyme after my Decease make any troble or strife or Do withstande or goe aboute to overthrowe Denye or annihilate my said will . . . or shall not houlde hym or herselfe contented and pleast with the said Legarcys . . . that then they he or she whoe shall so troble molest or incumber my Executors or shall stand to Denye or withstande the probation of the said will shall loose and forgoe the benefitt of all suche Legarcys giftes and bequests . . . so given or bequethed."

Blanche Parry was obliged to alter the provision made for building the almshouse at Bacton, as is stated in the latest codicil to her will written two months before her death, December 2, 1589. "Whereas by my will

I have appoynted fyve hundred poundes or thereabouts to be bestowed for the buildinge of an allmshouse in Bacton in the Countie of Hereford, and for the providinge of tenne pounde Lande yerelie or thereabouts for the same. I do now in Liew thereof for that I cannot provide Lande in Backton aforesaid for buildinge of the said House, assyne appoynte and will that my Executors shall purchase so much Landes as shall yealde above all chardges yerelye for ever the nomber of seven score bushells of corne viz. wheate and rye and to be stored and distributed yerelye amongste the poore people of Backton . . . and Newton . . . for ever, and that the Deane and Chapter of Hereford shall from tyme to tyme have the oversighte and distributinge of the said corne. . . ."

She lies buried as she wished, in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster,[1] and over her resting-place near the west door, her

[1] Ballard with extraordinary carelessness states in his book on the Learned Ladies that Blanche Parry was buried beneath "the South Wall of the Chancel" in

effigy wrought in stone and coloured, kneels before a Prie-Dieu. The face, with its grand simple lines, is a wonderful blend of refinement and determination; in the thin-lipped mouth there is perhaps a trace of the "crabbed austerity" that drove young Rowland Vaughan across the seas. She wears a close jewelled cap and long veil, a great upstanding ruff and double cable chain of gold; her dress falls in plain sweeping folds. The figure is perfect—only the praying hands are gone. Underneath, very hard to read in the dim light, is the inscription: "Hereunder is entombed Blanche Parrye dau: of Henry Parrye of New Courte within the County of Hereford, Esquier, Chiefe Gentlewoman of Queene Elizabeth's most honourable bed Chamber, a keper of her Majesty's juells, whome she faithfullie served from her Highnes birth: beneficiall to her kinsfolke and countryemen, charitable to the poore, insomuche that she gave to the poore of Bacton

Westminster Abbey, a statement that has, as anyone who has been inside the abbey can tell, no sense at all. One or two later writers, without taking the trouble of verifying it, have simply copied his mistake.

*Photo by J. Russell & Sons*

TOMB OF BLANCHE PARRY IN ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, WESTMINSTER

and Newton in Herefordeshiere seavenscore bushells of wheate and rye yerelie for ever with divers somes of money to Westmynster and other places for good uses. She died a maide in the Eightie Two yeres of her age the Twelfe Februarye (O.S.) 1589."[1]

In Atcham Church, near Shrewsbury, are two lovely windows which, placed originally in Bacton Church, were removed thence a hundred years ago by the then vicar's wife of Atcham, who was related to the Parrys. She found the windows much injured and neglected, and has placed their history on record in the glass below the east window, but it is a pity that the inscription itself is much broken away and illegible. This window represents Milo Ap Harry, who built New Court, and died in 1488, with his lady, and his sons and daughters on either side;

[1] In the churchwarden's account of St. Margaret's under the heading of Foraine Receiptes is the following entry relating to this tomb: Item receyved of Mr. Powell one of the executors of Mrs. Blanch Parry for license and composition with the parish to erect and sette up a monument for the said Mrs. Blanch Parry in the parish Church.—(Quoted by Rev. H. F. Westlake in his recent work on the church.)

their garments are rich and stately, with beautiful embroidered borders. Above their kneeling figures are the Virgin and Child, with saint and angel. The other window shows Blanche Parry herself, kneeling before Queen Elizabeth enthroned with orb and sceptre. She offers her a book; and above are four angels holding lyres. The two windows shine in a soft brightness of golden light.

It remains for us yet to visit the true shrine of the Parrys, the little ancient church of Bacton in Herefordshire, which stands in its peaceful meadows above the Golden Valley. In the porch an old notice-board records her bequests to the poor; and within the church on the north wall hangs framed a large piece of embroidery worked by Blanche Parry's own hand, and worn by her, tradition says, as part of one of her Court dresses. The description of this beautiful relic has been kindly sent me by the Rector of Bacton. "It is of white corded silk, shot with silver and powdered over with bunches of flowers, very beautifully embroidered in silk . . . amongst the posies

may be seen daffodils, roses, honeysuckle, oak leaves and acorns, mistletoe, and other flowers. Scattered between these is a strange assembly of animals, men in boats, creeping things, birds, and butterflies. In later times, shameful to say, this beautiful piece of work was remorselessly cut up to fit a very small Communion Table, which accounts for its present shape."

Left of the altar on the chancel wall is a stone memorial, bearing the figures of Blanche Parry and her mistress. It is a beautiful and touching work, a love-offering from that simple countryside to the memory of the great and good lady of Bacton. She kneels beside the figure of the Queen seated in state, who wears a farthingale sewn and starred with gems and a heavy jewelled chain. The maid of honour is simply dressed, and wears like the lady in Eworth's picture, a cap with a square flat top, of a type that recalls the period of Lady Jane Grey and Mary Tudor rather than the Elizabethan. Like many old ladies, Mistress Parry was faithful, it seems, to bygone fashions in her dress. She wears

long hanging sleeves, a kirtle, and overdress. In her left hand she holds a little book; and something that looks like a jewel in her right.

On a tablet above the figures are the following verses, which were surely written by herself. A few of the lines are unusually obscure for Elizabethan poetry, but one and all they breathe her steadfast and loving spirit:

I Parrye hys doughter Blaenche of Newe Covrte Borne
That traenyd was in Pryncys covrts wythe gorgious Wyghts
Wheare Fleetynge honor sovnds wythe Blaste of Horne
Eache of Accovnte too Place of Worlds Delyghts.

Am lodgyd Heere wyth in thys Stonye Toombe
My Harpynger ys Paede i owghte of Dve
My frynds of Speeche heere in doo fynde me Doombe
The whiche in Vaene they doo so greatlye Rhve,

For so mooche as hyt ys bvt Thende of all
Thys Worldlye Rowte of State what so they Be
The whiche vntoo the Reste heereafter shall
Assemble thus eache Wyghte in hys Degree.

## GENTLEWOMAN

I lyvde allweys as Handmaede too a Qvene
In Chamber Chief my Tyme dyd overpasse
Vncarefvll of my Wellthe ther was i seen
Whyllst i abode the Ronnynge of my Glasse.

Not dovbtynge wante whyllste that my Mystres lyvde
In Womans State whose Cradell saw i Rockte
Her Servante then as when Shee her Crovne attcheeved
And so remaened tyll Deathe my Doore had knockte.

Prefferrynge styll the Cavsys of eache Wyghte
As farre as i doorste move Her Grace hys Eare
For too rewarde Decerts by covrse of Ryghte
As needs Resytte of Sarvys doone eache wheare.

So that my Tyme i thus did passe awaye
A Maede in Covrte and never no mans Wyffe
Sworne of Qvene Ellsbeths Hedd Chamber allwaye
Wythe Maeden Qvene a Maede did ende my Lyffe.

"On Thursday last," wrote Thomas Markham to his cousin the Earl of Shrewsbury, "Mrs. Blanche a Parry departed; blynd she was here on earth, but I hope the joyes in heven she shall see!"

# SOME HEROES OF LIPPE

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THE first invader of Northern Germany, thirteen years before Christ, was Drusus the Roman. There is a legend that when he was encamped with his host on the banks of the Elbe, at the moment of his highest success, he saw in a vision the menacing figure of a woman. She pointed towards the South whence he came, and spoke to him in Latin, one word, "*Retro!*" Shortly after, Drusus died through a fall from his horse, and his body was taken back for burial in Rome.

Twenty-four years later, in the year A.D. 9, another Roman General, Quintilius Varus, prepared to subdue the wild tribes of the North, and he again was bidden defiance, not this time by a veiled apparition, but by a young hero of flesh and blood, Arminius or Hermann, chief of the Cherusci. His name

is usually given in its Latin form by historians because he had been a Roman citizen and had fought in the Roman army, but it is better to keep to the name by which his own country knew him, Hermann—Man of the Host—for he was heart and soul a Saxon.

Five of the leading races of the North and several of the lesser tribes went to form his mighty host, that far outnumbered the invaders. The earliest fires of the great rising flickered almost in sight of the Roman leader—warnings actually reached him in his camp at Aliso; but yet he took no heed. He was in truth unequal to the task before him. Indolent and weak, incapable of rapid action, a lover of riches and ease, his powers were ill-matched against a race, of barbarians it is true, but barbarians exquisitely cunning, passionate, and brave. He fancied them peace-loving, simple, easy to win; and he trusted their leader, Hermann, who had been well known to him in Rome, as a probably ally against the West German princes. But Hermann deceived Varus, and led him to his destruction by a trick. From the

several boundaries of the widespread Roman encampment, full of false hope, Varus drew his men together; on they came over the valleys of Ems and Weser and the low hills of Osning, from the gates of Minden on the North and the Westphalian borders on the South, through the heavy autumn rains, till they were within range of the German archers somewhere in the trackless depths of the Teutoburgian Forest.

The exact locality of the field is not known; it is a problem that has puzzled the experts for hundreds of years; but the majority are in favour of the region lying east of the plains of Westphalia, that forms the present principality of Lippe-Detmold.

Where the forest shades were densest appeared before Varus a crowd of his allies, an auxiliary contingent of Saxons; but their menacing looks soon showed him they were traitors, and the flower of his cavalry deserted with them. Thus fortune forsook the Roman leader at the very outset of the three days' fight; his men lost all heart in the pitiless rains that checked and hampered them at

every turn and ruined their arms; and so the legions of Augustus perished miserably. Two of the eagles were captured by the enemy: the bearer of the third, who at least showed himself worthy of his trust, tore it down from its pole and died where he fell, clasping it in his arms. "Varus showed some spirit in dying," says the old Roman writer in the bitterness of his heart, "though none in fighting," for seeing all was lost he fell on his sword.

Thus ended all hope of Roman supremacy between Rhine and Elbe—the dream of the Cæsars. True, the struggle was yet to break out afresh. For eight long years Hermann remained at the head of his wild tribes, while all Germany looked to him; for she had to fear a greater than Varus, his successor in the Roman command, Drusus, surnamed Germanicus in honour of his valour shown on German soil, nephew of Tiberius the Emperor.

From his base on the Rhine Germanicus set out for the scene of Rome's humiliation. He recaptured two of the three lost

eagles; he found the bones of his fallen countrymen lying dishonoured on the battle-field and gave them reverent burial, raising over them, it is said, though no trace of it can now be found, a stone memorial. He returned in triumph to Rome, Thusnelda, the wife of Hermann, with her infant son whom his father never saw, being led exile in his train. Both mother and child were to die in exile in Rome. Germanicus, however, was not destined to finish his campaign on the Rhine. Either Tiberius had lost heart over the long strife, or, more probably, he grudged his great captain his rising fame; and so, from a mean and spiteful motive, he ordered the recall of the forces.

The life of the Saxon leader closed in tragedy, sacrificed to the jealous hate of a few base spirits among his own people; but for nigh two thousand years he has been honoured in story and song . . . and in our own day, on the summit of the Grotenburg, one of the principal heights in the Teutoburgian range of forest-clad hills, the

genius of the sculptor Ernst von Bandel has raised to him a mighty bronze memorial.

The first beginning of Lippe's history as an independent state carries us on eleven centuries from the defeat of Varus. Her rulers were Counts of the dynasty of Westphalia; but the word Graf—Count—being then a general term for an imperial official, the Counts of Lippe adopted a distinctive signature, and wrote the words *Liberi et Nobiles* after their names, in token that they were free men, and held their heads high among the Edelherren of Germany.

Bernhard II, born in 1146, stands at the head of Lippe's roll of fame; he springs, a glorious figure, from the darkness of the buried years.[1] Behind him, dimly descried, are others of his kin; the first Bernhard and his daughter the Abbess Hildegunde, and Hermann, father of our hero, who went with

[1] I would refer my readers—only I fear it is long out of print—to *Die Lippischen Edelherren im Mittelalter*, a charming little history by A. Piderit, published in 1860, and Von Meysenbug's account of Bernhard II in the Lippe number of *Niedersachsen*.

STATUE OF HERMANN ON THE GROTENBURG

the conquering army of Friederich Barbarossa to Rome and died there. He is among the *famosiores* of the Roman Chronicles, but he is outshone by his greater son.

Shades of the heroes of Lippe! Simon the First, Bernhard the Seventh, Simon the Sixth, will you think yourselves slighted if we give the old twelfth-century warrior, your mighty ancestor, the place of honour above you all? . . . They send no answer back; they are resting from a hundred battles; so we can only hope there is the proper feeling amongst them.

For the fame of Bernhard II spread far beyond his little country. East and West the lands were illumined by the splendour of his fighting days, and the fiery torch he lighted in his old age for God.

The source of nearly all we know of him is a great Latin epic written in his honour forty years after his death, by one Justinius, a learned doctor of Lippstadt, the city founded and fortified by Bernhard on the fertile banks of the river Lippe.

In this poem we read that the future ruler

learnt his first lessons at his father's knee. Then, being a younger son, and destined for the cloister, he was sent to pursue his studies at the monastery of Hildesheim, where his gifts of heart and mind delighted all his teachers. He had already been advanced to the dignity of Canon (*Domherr*), for promotion in all the walks of life was rapid in those days, when suddenly the course of his life was changed. The elder brother died and Bernhard was recalled home, to exchange bell, book, and candle for the saddle and the sword.

The boy threw himself into his new apprenticeship with his habitual ardour. He left nothing undone to fit himself for his life's task, and he went to learn the arts of war in many lands.

Bernhard was twenty-six years old when he became reigning Count of Lippe. The clouds hung heavy over his little country; it was racked with fears and surrounded with enemies. More than once he was to win it back by hard fighting from their grasp, lose it and win it again. He decided at the out-

set to seek some powerful aid, and found it in his father's old comrade, Henry called the Lion, Duke of Saxony and Bavaria.

This man, insatiable fighter and arch-rebel, took the stripling to his heart. It was a fierce kind of friendship that linked these two together. They were kindred spirits, it must be owned, in certain qualities of violence and greed. The Lion, however, went further than Bernhard in open revolt against his liege-lord the Emperor, for it was not in Bernhard's nature to be a traitor.

He quickly rose to the supreme command of Henry's forces, and was faithful to him till his downfall.

The young Edelherr of Lippe was of beautiful and stately presence, a perfect knight. Everywhere he went the people cheered him. We can almost fancy we hear the trumpets herald his coming and catch the greeting of the crowd. Thus he appeared before the Emperor at a meeting of the Reichstag at Würzburg in 1168, riding at the head of a brilliant train to the sound of martial music. The Emperor asked in as-

tonishment what gallant knight it was. Then when he knew, he received him with especial honour, which was kind of Barbarossa, considering the young free-lance had already twice disobeyed the summons to his sovereign's presence. When the company were gathered round the daïs it was found there were not seats for all. So the Count of Lippe and his nobles took off their beautiful mantles and sat upon them; but at the close of the day they rose and left them on the ground. The bystanders drawing his attention to what they took for forgetfulness, Bernhard replied that it was not customary in this country for a man to carry his seat away with him. This remark was thought extraordinarily witty by the assembled nobles, who greeted it with a shout of merriment.

Bernhard chose his bride from the ancient race of Are and Hochstaden. The ruins of their ancestral home still look down from the rocky heights above the valley of the Ahr, fourteen kilometers from its junction with the Rhine; and it was a lovely flower the fiery chieftain gathered there eight hundred years

ago. Justinius praises her beauty and her homely virtues, and says she was ever kind to all in poverty or distress.

She bore her husband six daughters and five sons, who all grew up and prospered.

Like all her countrywomen, the Lady of Lippe must have been an admirable housewife, to have successfully reared eleven children in circumstances of quite exceptional difficulty. For through all those years she never can have known one moment's peace, left to guard her people from thronging dangers, her spouse incessantly under arms on distant fields—for the Lion's campaigns took him into many lands—save for brief periods when he returned to fight his foes at home. We know not how she bore her trials, or even whether she stayed or fled. The old Latin scholar did not reflect perhaps that women too can be brave; for he tells us nothing, or almost nothing, of the sorrows of Heilwig von Are.

Bernhard had but little time for the pleasures of his domestic hearth. For years past Duke Henry had cast covetous eyes on the

See of Cologne and the fair lands bordering the Lower Rhine. He now prepared for a conquering expedition against the Archbishop —for the great Churchmen were all soldiers in those days—who for his part intended to grab the Dukedom of Westphalia. There were thus two great divisions among the princes, and between them the land was torn asunder.

The Count of Lippe threw in his lot afresh with Duke Henry, and went plundering and destroying through the West.

Judged by the correct standards of the twentieth century, the character of Bernhard the Robber, we confess, leaves something to be desired. The twelfth century thought otherwise. There was nothing at all remarkable in destroying one's neighbour's property; it was the ordinary occupation of a gentleman, although Bernhard's nickname points to his having done it with exceptional thoroughness, even for those days. But there was a greatness in his actions, in the worst as in the best of them, which took the imagination of men; and, even while they feared,

they loved him. Certain it is that, when the storms broke over his own little country, there were not failing hands stretched out to help him.

There came a day when the Archbishop of Magdeburg, whose territories Bernhard had plundered, laid siege to him in Haldensleben. The Lipper defied him to do his worst; the Archbishop's fury spent itself for many days in vain. At last he resolved on a cruel and desperate act—he would flood him out. Two rivers flowed round the town; the besiegers actually forced the waters out of their course, so that they overflowed into the streets. Bernhard had to put his whole strength into the work of saving lives. He tore down the ruined houses, and on rafts made of the beams he had the living, as many as they would hold, carried away to safety, and the dead to burial.

Still the danger rose with the rising waters, and he began to feel his spirit fail. He contrived to send messengers to his old friend and comrade imploring his aid, but in vain. Henry the Lion was fallen! broken at last

on the vengeance of his sovereign lord whom he had deserted and wronged. Then the brave defender gave way. He saw there was no other means of saving the townspeople, and, still cheering them on, he made a noble surrender.

Bernhard went home. Great in peace as in war, he set himself to the work of restoring prosperity to his country; he sowed the desolate fields once more and built up the ruined dwellings. Thirty years later he was to succeed afresh in the same work in the newly conquered lands of the East, for in all things relating to worldly affairs of those rough times this extraordinary man was supreme. Neighbouring Courts sought his advice on matters of legal procedure and business, and the cities that he founded were the glory of his country.

In the midst of these admirable tasks he sets out, alas! in search of fresh plunder; he robs the Church of Minden; and we are grieved to find him seizing the property of a lady, the Abbess of Freckenhorst, in so much that she brought an action against him. But

it was the end. He was to make his expiation; and the time was nearly come.

Physically Bernhard of Lippe must have been a man of iron. Now, however, the *strapazen* — hardships — of five and thirty years of fighting began to tell on him; symptoms of illness showed themselves and increased with dreadful rapidity; he became crippled in all his limbs. When he could no longer stand upright, he was carried in a litter made of osiers, drawn by two horses; and in this way he led many a campaign, the magic of his presence still cheering on his men.

But in time the strain became too hard, even for him; he drew back altogether from the active life and spent some years in retirement.

During his fighting days, at least once at the outset and once towards the close, he had been mindful of the things of God: witness his foundation and endowment of the Augustinian Monastery which still stands at Lippstadt, and the Cistercian Monastery of Marienfeld. Now in the enforced inaction

of physical weakness his thoughts gradually turned away from the world; and he made a solemn resolve that should he recover he would devote his life to God's service. Then a marvellous thing happened. As his spirit thus broke through his fetters, suddenly the body too was freed. The burden of his disease fell from him like a severed chain, and he was healed.

The story was far-famed as a miracle. We should rather, perhaps, call it an instance—a very wonderful instance — of spiritual healing.

Bernhard was over fifty years of age when he entered on the immense labours of his remaining thirty years of life.

Far to the north-east of Germany, on the shores of the Baltic, there was a wild region called Livland, inhabited by the heathen tribe of the Aestii. A band of Christians, among whom were not a few Westphalians, were fighting there for the Cross; and Bernhard went to join them, with the desire of later becoming a missionary.

We know nothing of this his first crusade. On his return home, he gathered his children round him, and told them of his resolve. Heilwig clung to him with pleading and tears—to give Justinius his due, he does mention those tears—but all in vain. Bernhard drew up a charter of certain rights and privileges for his capital city, which is still preserved in the Archives of Detmold, and made over the government to his eldest son Hermann. Then he went his way, and as Brother Bernhard, a simple monk, he entered the Monastery of Marienfeld in Westphalia.

Years passed. Bernhard spent them in prayer and repentance, and in learning many things. Patiently he went all over the ground of his forgotten studies at Hildesheim, till he reached an extraordinary pre-eminence in many kinds of knowledge. At last he was ready for the task he had set himself to do, and, returning to Livland, he offered his services to the Bishop of Riga. Shortly after, he was chosen Abbot of the Cistercian Monastery of Dünamünde on the sea-coast. But his mission was not to be

fulfilled by peaceful means. The pilgrim army of the Christians soon called on the great soldier to help them; and he set out for the heathen stronghold of Fellin.

It was a moment of triumph for the Cross. The fortress had fallen and the enemy was making in full flight for the River Aa. Bernhard intercepted them. He threw a bridge and wooden fortification across the stream, shattering the fugitives with lances and arrows; and a great hymn of rejoicing went up from the church in Livland;—but already her skies were clouding over.

Foremost in the Christian army was an order of soldier-monks, called Brethren of the Sword. They were known by their white habit, bearing a sword and cross worked in red. Covered with glory in the field, they became grasping and unruly. They rose against the bishop to the extent of disputing with him his own episcopal seat of Riga. He had to journey to Rome and obtain fresh authority from the Pope before some measure of order was restored. Dissensions and delays such as these were the

breath of life to the heathen, and the cause of Christ was in serious jeopardy, when its great champion rose again in his might. He set out westward, preaching and winning fresh soldiers for the Cross. "In journeying often, in perils by the heathen, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness," he kept his torch burning, "an old man full of the spirit of the apostles."

Now we find him under arms again in Livland winning a great fight with three thousand men against six thousand. Now he is in Rome, asking the Pope to permit his acceptance of the dignity lately conferred on him by the Bishop of Riga—the See of Felburg in the newly conquered district of Selonia. He travels back through Germany to Oldenzaal in Guelderland, where his son Otto, Bishop of Utrecht, consecrates his white-haired father as bishop—a sight, says a contemporary writer, that moved the world to admiration.

Bernhard's closing years were saddened by the sorrows of the pilgrim army in the East. In an unfortunate moment the Bishop of Riga

had asked the aid of the King of Denmark, and, all unknowingly, had brought a serpent into their midst. Madly jealous of the advance of the Germans in Livland, the King actually encouraged the heathen tribes against them, and won over the fickle Brethren of the Sword to his side.

Bernhard, wearied and out of heart, resolved to entrust his flock awhile to younger hands. During the spring of 1220 he went home to his own country, and, to his joy, he shared in the consecration of the newly completed Church of St. Mary at Lippstadt. In various works of mercy three years passed by, and then he went back to the distant battlefield.

It was for the last time. Soon his hands became too weak to hold the sword, but still so long as his strength lasted he went with his soldiers weaponless, leading them on with words of comfort and hope.

Bernhard had prayed that he might die in action; but his wish was not fulfilled. He closed his eyes peacefully in his home at Selburg, in the eighty-fifth year of his age.

But a strange and tragic occurrence marked his passing. The monks of Dünamünde begged for the saint's body, and somewhat reluctantly the Church of Selburg gave consent. Abbot Robert his successor, and friend of many years, went himself to receive it and brought it home by boat down the Düna. When in sight of the monastery a sudden storm arose, the boat capsized, and the good abbot was drowned. Both the bodies were recovered and buried in the same grave; so in death the two friends were reunited.

There are few parallels in history to the character of Bernhard of Lippe. A true child of those stirring times, in the scope of his achievement he was far in advance of them. Supreme in everything he undertook, going ever straight to his goal, his glory shines down the long track of his little country's annals, her great soldier and saint.

A few miles west of the borders of Hanover, on a commanding eminence stands the town

of Blomberg, the home of the Counts of Lippe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, until it was transferred to Detmold, the present capital. There is a legend regarding the foundation of Blomberg, that one day when the people of the countryside had chosen the site of their town, they marked out a great square on the ground, with spaces representing the position of the principal buildings. Then in the evening stillness God visited the place and sowed flowers all over it, that sprang up during the night. When the people saw the wonderful sight at dawn, they knew that He had blessed their choice, and they called the town Blumenberg —City of Flowers.

Here lived and fought and died Bernhard, seventh of his name, called Bellicosus, famous adversary of the cruel soldier-priest Dietrich, Archbishop of Cologne. For many years Dietrich had been engaged in a quarrel with Soest, a town that was ever coveted by the Counts of Lippe, and had two centuries before withstood a siege by Bernhard the Second.

Bellicosus took the part of Soest against the Archbishop, and attempted to win over

the town for his own ends, but the citizens of Soest would have none of him. They preferred another man, and they sent the Lipper a written message which as a snub is unsurpassed, I think, in the history of the world. It runs thus :—

"Wettet, dat wy den vesten junker Johann van Cleve lever hebbet als juwe, unde werd juwe hiemit abgesagt. Dat Soest, 1494."[1]

Dietrich stood even a poorer chance with Soest than did Bernhard. Furious with the Lipper's interference, he gathered together a great force of Bohemians and Saxons, and went burning and plundering through his lands. Finally, throwing himself on Blomberg, the Archbishop sacked the towns and massacred the inhabitants.

Hard-pressed in his fortress, their brave leader was powerless to save them. Like his great ancestor at Haldensleben, he stood his ground till the last possible moment, and then he had to fly, making his way through a secret

[1] "Know, that we like the valiant knight, John of Cleve, better than you, and therefore you are hereby refused. From Soest, 1494."

passage underground to a little wood hard by. Near the great arched entrance to the castle is shown to this day a door with massive iron hinges, and behind the door a rough opening half concealed by some loose stones. There is believed to be the passage down which the hero of Blomberg fled to safety. The spot is dreaded by the children, who believe that a white-robed lady haunts it.

Bernhard was only eighteen. Sixty years of fighting were yet before him ere he was to lay down his sword—for his life was one long chain of battles. But we have seen him though so young in years, yet at his best and bravest, and we will not disturb him further in his hard-won rest, asleep beside his lady beneath the beautiful Gothic tomb in the Abbey Church of Blomberg. Yet we are loth to leave him. They were a great race, the Edelherren of Lippe. It needed but a turn of Fortune's wheel, says the biographer of Simon the First, to raise them to a foremost place among the sovereigns of Germany. Perhaps one day some English writer with a vein of romance will tell their story. We should

like to watch the stern life they led in their fortress homes, and pass in their train through the old towns, quiet places now full of brave memories, that echoed to their horses' feet long ago.

# FÜRSTIN PAULINE

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Among the rulers of Lippe, whose portraits from earliest, half-legendary ages to the twentieth century hang in the Hall of Ancestors in the Castle of Detmold, the greatest and best loved of all in these latter days was a woman. She was Pauline, born Princess of Anhalt Bernburg in 1769, and wife of Leopold I, the first reigning Prince of Lippe.

Her splendid gifts were brought to perfection through an exceptionally severe training; for all her young days were passed in grave intellectual pursuits, and in transacting affairs of state for her infirm and crotchety father, Prince Frederick. She corresponded with many of the most distinguished men of her time; she was a remarkable linguist, and deeply read in classical literature; but in her letters to her cousin and chief confidant, the

young Duke of Augustenburg, another side of her nature peeps out, and she pities herself half whimsically for the unnatural austerities of her life. "In two years I have not danced a step," she writes in 1793, "but I have read an extraordinary number of books and written an immense quantity of manuscript." She was just then completing a large collection of poems, and also a volume entitled *Morals for Women*, part of which was afterwards published. But with touching self-forgetfulness she is glad to be of use: "With pleasure I have read nothing for several weeks past but a pile of documents taller than myself, and worked late at night at my writing-table; but it does me good to be useful in any way to my family, for my excellent health allows of iron industry (*eisernen Fleiss*), and I hope that much business is clearing my brains. To be sure," she adds, "the Muses and the Graces are coming off badly." Then she gives a glance to the outer world and the political horizon, and hazards a word of prophecy: "It seems clear enough to me that some day perhaps

the lesser German princes will be swallowed up by their mightier neighbours, and the smaller states of Europe will be the prey of the greater. It would not cost me one tear if I ceased being a princess. I have very few, very trifling needs, and, as I flatter myself, resources enough . . . I should not be out of place, I think, no matter whither fate should lead me."

But about this time circumstances arose that unsettled and distressed Pauline. Her brother married; the sisters-in-law did not understand each other, and for some reason her father became estranged from her. At this juncture a former lover renewed his suit; and she was well content to leave her home as the bride of the Prince of Lippe Detmold on January 2, 1796.

Pauline was delighted with the welcome that the people of Detmold gave her. "Never was any Princess more kindly, more heartily, more joyfully received," she wrote; "all these festivities breathe the people's happy child-like trust in their new mother. The situation of Detmold is unspeakably lovely;

whoever first used the word 'smiling' of a landscape stood assuredly on this side of Westphalia."

The marriage, which was entirely happy, was of very short duration. Leopold died in 1802, leaving his widow with two little boys; and thenceforth for eighteen years, until the heir attained his majority, she reigned alone.

Pauline took over the government of Lippe at a perilous time. Between Prussia on the one hand and Napoleon on the other, each playing for the leadership of Germany, the smaller states, as she in her youthful wisdom had foreseen, stood in danger of being swept out of existence. Hesse was already making overtures to Lippe and Waldeck, intending to force them into the North German league with Prussia. To Pauline in this crisis it was clear that her country could not stand alone; some protection it must have; but above all things she dreaded and mistrusted Prussia. The hated alliance with Napoleon appeared to her the lesser evil of the two. She turned from the

advice of all her ministers, and in April 1807 she joined the Confederation of the Rhine.

Those who most bitterly blamed her for this step knew least, perhaps, how dear it cost her. She gave her reasons for it at the time in an eloquent *mémoire justificatif*. Then she set herself to work to save for her country some measure of independence.

Through the charm of her personality and her shining gifts as a hostess, she had made a valuable friend in Louis, King of Holland, brother of Napoleon, when he had lately passed through Detmold and been entertained by her at the Castle. Thenceforth she could reckon on his good offices with Bonaparte. Already, too, she was known to Dalberg, Primate of the Confederation, for she had travelled in the depth of the preceding winter, over almost impassable roads, with a small suite and her two boys, to confer with him at Aschaffenburg. She was greatly attracted by the Primate, and formed a close friendship with him. From Aschaffenburg she had gone to Mainz, where she had been most warmly received by the Empress Josephine and Queen

Hortense. Thus the outlook on the whole was favourable, the way was prepared; and she now resolved to plead with the Conqueror himself at Paris.

She did it for her country's and her children's sake. "Je ne devais aller à Paris," she wrote to Louis, who had attempted to dissuade her from her intention, "qu'avec beaucoup de regrets et à contre cœur, et assurément si je n'etais mère et Tutrice, s'il ne s'agissait que de mon propre sort, le projet même n'aurait pas existé. Mais j'ai juré de remplir mes devoirs, et aussi longtemps que je pouvais espérer seulement qu'un voyage à Paris me serait utile ou plutôt à mes enfants, il me semble que ni ma santé ne les désagréments personnels n'osaient m'empêcher. . . . Je ne voulais point passer à Vos yeux pour frivole et trop prompte."

The autumn of that year saw her in the French capital, where her sojourn proved happy and successful beyond her hopes. She has left in her diary minute and lively descriptions of the sights of Paris, and of a tremendous ovation given to Napoleon at a

sitting of the Institut de France. She writes of the gay magnificence of the Court and her friendly relations with one and all there; with King Jérome of Westphalia and his Queen—a specially fortunate circumstance for her, as they were her next door neighbours at home—with Madame Mère and Cardinal Fesch, with the Murats, and also with various German princes and envoys who had come on the same errand as herself. She was kept waiting three weeks, however, before she was granted her momentous audience of the Emperor.

Napoleon received her graciously. His idea of the political relationship between the lesser German states was probably extremely hazy, but he took some personal interest in Pauline through the connection of the Prince of Anhalt her father with Catherine II. of Russia. The Princess of Lippe was moreover an attractive woman with a fine spirit, and these advantages did not go for nothing with Napoleon. He granted certain concessions she asked for, and ever after, he, the despiser of princes, spoke of the Fürstin Pauline with respect.

But for her part she held her head high, and refused the tyrant that flattery and subservience that princes of a tamer spirit paid him. Detmold took no heed whatever of his triumphs, and obeyed none of his regulations; in the churches his name was never heard. Scarcely a Frenchman was seen in the town; the Fürstin, however, strictly enjoined on her subjects to treat any who should pass through with kindness and consideration. But the soldiers of Lippe did their duty. They fought under the Corsican's flag in Tyrol and in Spain, and many died on the road to Moscow.

Throughout those stormy times the Fürstin guided her children's training with anxious care, leaving nothing undone that might fit the heir for his life's work, even though the thought was ever present to her mind that her descendants might yet be robbed of their ancient place among the sovereigns of Germany. "The princes must be brought up in the right way," she said, "though indeed it is almost likely that our grandchildren will live as private citizens. Yet if their eyes are opened to the light of

truth, the loss of the ermine will not greatly distress them."

She watched meanwhile over her people's home interests with unflagging devotion. For many years she worked at much-needed reforms in the constitution and representation of the country; these, to her great disappointment, were not put on the statute-book in her lifetime, but on the day they were first made known the Detmolders showed their gratitude in a burst of loyalty, and illuminated the town in her honour. Certain malcontents, however, remained of the old régime. As the Fürstin passed through the brilliant streets that night her attention was drawn to two houses which stood in darkness. "I think that is quite as it should be," she answered; "where there is light, there must be shadow too."

Pauline was gifted with an unwearying sense of duty and a capacity of close attention to business for hours at a stretch. During the protracted meetings of her Council she never showed the slightest fatigue or a moment's confusion of thought. She

was before her time in the wisdom and good sense of all her works of mercy, and in her discouragement of indiscriminate almsgiving.

With the help and advice of one of the greatest authorities of her day, General Superintendent Weerth, she brought the educational system of Lippe to a state of perfection unsurpassed in her time by any other state in Germany. She spared herself no pains, no effort, but was always at her post. In fifteen years she only paid two short visits to her old home at Anhalt.

Doubtless the times were many when her burden borne so long alone, weighed on her heavily, for we find their traces in her written thoughts, and we know they left their mark on her daily life; but she would take heart again in her own way, finding ever fresh paths of work and service:

"It seems to me," she wrote to a friend who had lost her hold on life's happiness, "that in useful activity, in the peaceful conciousness that we are of use and at work, we have the best hope of winning God's approval and the fulfilment of our wishes and prayers. . . .

Forgive me when I entreat you to look up like a child, not merely in selfishness and despondency drawing the distance near in dreams, but seeking out the love and goodness that are close at hand, and creating them anew out of your inmost being. I live the stern life of duty, I have lost those whom I loved . . . my future is shadowed, sorrow leads me on to fresh work, so little prospers with me, and everything that was once my delight has vanished; and yet I am not cast down. . . . I read the great authors with the highest enjoyment, but I only allow myself that pleasure when my day's work is done; and even though I may have Matthison's newest book of poems by me, or Goethe's latest work—should a pile of criminal cases lie beside it, my hand will reach out mechanically to them.

"If then I have fulfilled my trust, if I have been true to my calling, yet, though one more sorrow come, I fold my hands and am resigned."

The allusion to the cases in criminal law that came before the Fürstin is significant of the

earnest thought she gave to these matters, of which in common with many of the rulers of Lippe, but to a degree remarkable in a woman, she possessed expert knowledge. According to the custom of the country all sentences on offenders were drawn up in her name, and her decisions were distinguished by strict justice and shrewd perception, but also by mercy and pity. A few sentences may be given here:

". . . Inasmuch as a son who illtreats his parents is always worthy of being held in abhorrence, the severity of his sentence must not be relaxed. . . . Too much forbearance in such cases is sin against virtue, religion, and morality."

To a magistrate who had asked whether one who had died by his own hand should be buried without the rites of the Church—*Eselsbegräbniss*—she gives this fiery rejoinder:

"God defend us from such antiquated abuses, that only distress the sorely afflicted survivors still further."

Again: "Opening letters is an unlawful proceeding. In times of war it is indeed permitted, but then it must be made known before-

hand that the letters must be closed again with an official seal. Now to break open letters and seal them up again in secret is extremely wrong; even though the intention may be good, no object can justify unlawful means. Under my rule such things will never be; I shall entertain no further proposals so contrary to my moral sense."

And, lastly, in the following decision we can trace her minute care for her people, not least for the erring ones. A prisoner had been taken seriously ill, and the question arose as to what to do with him: "Economy and humanity alike dictate the postponement of his sentence"; but the man's relations being miserably poor—*bettelarm*—to release him and leave him entirely in their charge would mean, though a saving for the prison authorities, a still harder punishment for him:

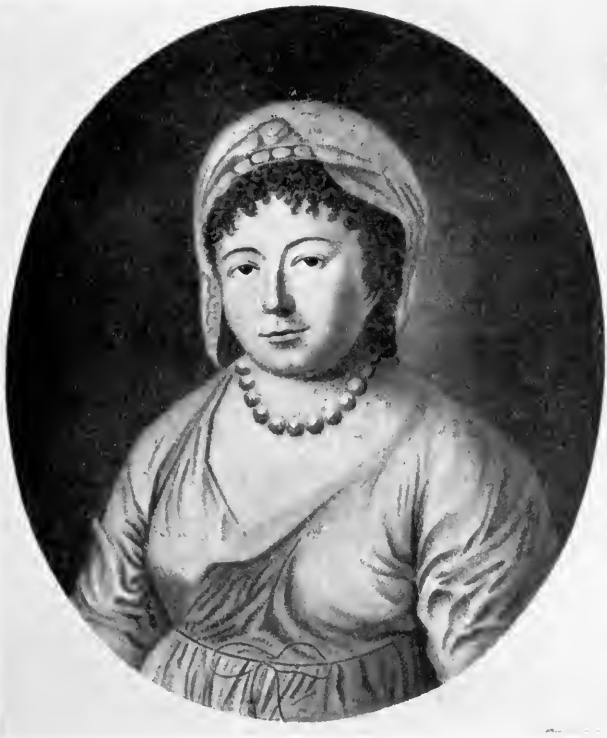
"I see no way out of it for the wretched man who, though he is a criminal, is a human being as well, than to transport him out of prison to his own sick-room, and have him nursed there. The doctor can report on his condition every week to the Court, and the

rest can be decided later. I send herewith ten soup tablets; each of them will make a good wholesome bowl of soup for a sick person; they only have to be melted down and salted, with a few slices of bread added to them."

One who was well acquainted with the Fürstin Pauline in her vigorous prime has left us the following pen-portrait:

"Her figure was short rather than tall, and for her height she was fairly stout. In her splendid eyes shone the spirit that dwelt within her, and kindness also, tempered with gravity. There was nothing feminine in her conversation; on the contrary, it was that of an intellectual and highly cultivated man. She spoke with much decision, and I firmly believe that on important matters of business she very rarely deferred to the opinion of others. With all her tenderness her whole appearance was queenly and commanding."

The description is a little formidable perhaps, but the writer adds a graceful touch: "Despite this truly masculine temperament she was by no means indifferent to personal



FÜRSTIN PAULINE OF LIPPE

adornment. She dressed with exquisite taste, and a splendid tiara often sparkled on her head."

To know the Fürstin's inmost heart, however, we must read her correspondence with her friends, for in those homely and affectionate letters we find the woman outshining the princess—a woman whose home life was blessed by the happiest intercourse with those dear to her, and by her own thoughtful kindness and power of sympathy.

The following extracts are taken from her correspondence with her closest friend in Detmold, the wife of her Chancellor, König.[1]

On one occasion when he had been ill she writes:

"Dear Frau Canzlerin,—I come to you with the earnest entreaty that if the Chancellor has the least pain still, you will prevent his doing himself harm by coming to

[1] Published in 1860 in a memoir entitled: *Erinnerungen aus dem Leben der Fürstin Pauline zur Lippe-Detmold, aus den nachgelassen Papieren eines ehemaligen Staatsdieners.*

the Council, and to arrange that he would allow us all to come to him instead. You, dear, will be glad, I am sure, to give us a table and inkstand, and room to dispose of ourselves and the papers as well; then the Chancellor need not put himself out, but will feel much better if he stays in his easy clothes; while, on the other hand, it would distress me greatly if he were to overtire himself."

On another day we find the Fürstin making a bet with her lady-in-waiting, Fraulein von Biedersee, as to the colour most becoming to Frau Canzlerin's pretty young *dame de compagnie:*

"We were saying on Sunday evening how bright Fraulein von G. is looking, and *die Biedersee* thought white suited the young lady the best, but I maintained that *hortensia* (hydrangea) takes the place of honour with her. I should greatly like my choice to be approved, but that can only be if you, my dear, will slip the accompanying sarsenet into the young

lady's wardrobe for me. With this request I bid you farewell very affectionately,

"P.

"The trimming is enclosed with it."

In a letter to the Chancellor, dated New Year's Day, 1809, we read:

"I write to you for the first time in this new year, my dear and valued friend, according to old-fashioned custom, with my heartfelt wish that you will yet enjoy many years in the best of health and undiminished strength; a wish for this country's sake as well as for my own. . . . The year just gone by was not pleasant, it brought many trials, but it closes with clearer horizons, and God will help us on! The little violet-blue note is for Frau Canzlerin. Keep me in friendly remembrance, and be ever assured of my especial esteem and friendship.

"PAULINA."

It is sad to relate that the excellent Chancellor died a year after the date of this letter. The Fürstin arranged for his widow to remain

on for eighteen months in the home of her married life so as to lessen, as far as possible, the shock of parting: "I wished," she wrote, "to let the first sorrow abate somewhat. I thought it would comfort you to keep the rooms . . . that our dear one occupied, to yourself for the present, and to go on living for a year in the house which was dear to you through him. . . ." Then she explains why she is now obliged to let his successor take possession, with a thoughtful regard for the poor lady's feelings which might teach a lesson to many who have to turn out their old dependants; and she adds, "I repeat my entreaty that you will not misunderstand me, but rest assured that I shall gladly take every opportunity of showing you my true goodwill.—Your most sincere friend,

"PAULINA."

"DETMOLD, *June 25th*, 1811."

She writes to Frau Canzlerin for her birthday:

"You will allow me, dear friend, to send you my best wishes for the 29th of Septem-

ber; though late, they are none the less sincere. May many joyous and happy days be yet in store for you, and your gentle life be like a clear streamlet flowing through fields of flowers.

"In token that, though absent, I was not unmindful of your birthday, permit me to send an everyday dress for you and a coverlet for your sofa, and so I commend myself as ever to your friendship."

The letters continue to the closing days of the Fürstin's life. In January, 1820, she writes:

"My Revered Friend, — Accept my warmest thanks for your charming little letter, filled with such kindly true and fervent wishes for me. Plainly they came from your heart, and have deeply touched my own. God bless and keep you, honoured lady, through many years to come, for you are to me the living impersonation of goodness, kindness and charity. May you never lack true happiness; may good health and spirits be ever yours, and sweet contentment

in the welfare of Fraulein von G. I entreat for a continuance of your friendship, assuring you sincerely that mine will only end with life."

That end was not far distant when she wrote the words. In her latest letters sounds now and again a note of weariness, for her sands were running low—Pauline did not live to be old.

In her last birthday greeting to her friend she regrets her inability to attend the festival —the Germans make much more of such anniversaries than we do—and she adds:

"May the little dinner service give you pleasure; I hoped it might. When I was choosing it a week ago I was confidently hoping to come, if only for a few minutes, but a very bad relapse has prevented it. . . .

"I stand in God's Almighty Hand and am content to live on if He wills, but glad and thankful if He soon calls me to Himself."

A few almost illegible lines of farewell, written two days before she died, ends the

long correspondence with Frau Canzlerin, who survived her dear princess for nineteen years.

The highest gratification of the Fürstin's public life, and the greatest proof, perhaps, of her people's trust in her, came through the citizens of the grand old town of Lemgo, sister foundation with Lippstadt in the eleventh century, who, finding themselves in financial straits, appealed to her to be their burgomaster. She accepted the office, and despite her failing strength she put the affairs of the town to rights and carried out her duties faithfully.

That was in 1819, near the close of her life. About this time she began her preparations for handing over the government of Lippe to her son Leopold; and as she did so she prayed this prayer:

"Grant me three great experiences not generally given to dying sovereigns:

"To resign in the undiminished fullness of my powers: not to survive them in my Office of Regent. To reap in my lifetime

the love that usually blooms only after death; to see many things grow and ripen, that my hand has planted."

She had only a few months to live when, on July 4, 1820, she assembled her ministers around her in the Throne Room of the Castle of Detmold and rendered up her trust.

She spoke to them as follows:

"When eighteen years ago I solemnly took over the government of this country . . . how different were all things, how narrow, how sad! a widow's veil, a deep-mourning dress, now, festive robes; fatherless weeping children, five and six years old at my side, now, my strong grown-up sons . . . then, want and scarcity in the land . . . now, cheapness and plenty and shouts of rejoicing! . . . I promised at my accession to devote myself entirely to my country and my children, and how many soever my failures have been, my conscience is witness that I have been faithful. . . ."

She appeals for her people's loyalty to

their young prince, and then she turns to the boy at her side:

"I trust your heart has never yet failed to respond to the call of duty, so that you may ever feel how beautiful, great, and holy a trust it is to be the comfort, the hope, and the father of thousands. I charge you never to condemn anyone unheard, never to give way to favourites, to lead your household well and carefully in great things as in small, that you may never shrink from the Christian practice of benevolence and the princely prerogative of generosity. I entreat you to be swift in action; if a man never delays, except under urgent necessity, he has time for everything; and a sovereign must never allow himself pleasures or distractions before his work is done. . . . If you wish to assure me happiness for my remaining years, I entreat you to act according to my admonition; then my motherly blessing will be your share and, what is infinitely more, God's approval your reward."

The words were not spoken in vain.

Leopold II. has gone down to history as a wise and peace-loving ruler.

Had Pauline of Lippe been destined to a larger sphere among the sovereigns of Europe she would assuredly have held a foremost place. It may truly be said of her that she combined the best of both worlds here below. With her genius for administration and the leadership of men, she was a woman of deep and simple piety, brightened by a touch of poetic imagination. With her clear eyes she saw the truth of things, the meaning of life and duty:—

"No one," she wrote, "who truly thinks and feels wanders through his days in a fairy world of glowing pictures; they may renew the roses for him when his path is winding through thorns . . . but then their part is done; they fall away and fade, when his real life begins. . . . We dream and dream, but never *live* our dreams! in life's realities the magic colours break apart, the prism changes to common glass: it can keep no rainbow brightness for its own. . . . And then, all the more loyal, all the more excellent souls

belong to the higher life. Every cloud on earth's horizon seems close to their human clasp, but over all the returning Saturn reigns supreme. It is a familiar consolation that we are but pilgrims here, that our home is above: I know, however, of none so many-sided, so all-embracing; for on a journey how willingly do we endure hardship; we teach and talk, and gather the wayside fruits, keeping the goal ever in sight, while we say to ourselves 'At home there is rest!' Now and again we miss our way, but the true child of God looks ever steadfastly to the Father, and the less he feels at ease here below, the nearer comes the day of the unveiling, and sounds the call of his true home!"

# YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY IN DETMOLD

# YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY IN DETMOLD

It is late in the afternoon of a summer's day, 1913. The scene is the pathway that leads up the Grotenburg, a mile or two out of Detmold, through deep shadows of beech and pine and undergrowth of heather and reddening bilberry, to the statue of Arminius, the Hermanns-Denkmal, on the summit. A great concourse of people of all ages and degrees are climbing up the narrow road; it is really a heroic venture for the old ladies in the procession, all of whom are carrying wraps and waterproofs, for we are going to sit for three hours under a threatening sky, where umbrellas will be strictly forbidden. We are further encumbered with a number of crackling paper bags filled with light refreshments. But the ladies of Detmold

think nothing of climbing, no matter what the difficulties may be, on foot up their beloved hills.

Our destination to-day is not the Denkmal however, but about half-way up the hill, a kind of circular clearing in the forest—a place anciently fortified, of mysterious origin called the "Hünenring." The word "Hünen" in early Saxon times stood for the dead; a winding-sheet was a Hünenkleid. Men called their forefathers simply Hünen, and when any ancient stonework or fragment of buried buildings came to light they said the Hünen had made them. These relics of a remote past were often in the shape of tombs and resting-places of extraordinary dimensions, hewn out of great blocks of stone; these were called graves of the Hünen, and became associated in the imagination of the people with a race of giants. The Hünenring on the Grotenburg is thought to have served them as a place of solemn assembly, but in these days it is sometimes put to gayer uses, for in itself it forms a perfect natural theatre for the *alfresco* plays

given every second year in commemoration of Hermann's victory over the legions of Augustus. One of these, *Die Hermann schlacht*, a work of the great writer Heinrich von Kleist, is about to be performed on the evening of which I write.

The main part of the theatre slopes upward from the stage in a way admirably adapted for all the spectators to see alike. The back of the stage is screened by a grove of beeches; others stand sentinel around the upper levels, giving the place an air of mystery and peace.

Now we have reached our places; and await the opening scene with breathless expectation.

From the forest shades appears a group of Saxon chiefs in very low spirits, lamenting the certain ruin of their country. Germany, they are saying, lies already in the dust at the mercy of conquering Rome. The young Prince of the Cherusci joins them; they gather in a circle at the door of a keeper's hut in the wood, and discuss the blow they yet hope to strike for freedom.

The play runs with admirable vividness and simplicity through the three days' fight that ensues to the final tragedy and triumph. There is no scene-shifting, no delay to break the thread of the story; only once, on a former occasion, was there an unlooked-for interruption, when a wild boar of the forest, taking her family for an airing, crossed the stage with nine little ones. There is no music but the chorus of grey-haired bards heartening their hero to his task:

"Du wirst nicht wanken und nicht weichen
Vom Amt, das du dir kühn erhöht.
Die Regung wird dich nicht beschleichen
Die dein getreues Volk verräth;
Du bist so mild, o Sohn der Götter,
Der Frühling kann nicht milder sein:
Sei schrecklich heut, ein Schlossenwetter,
Und Blitze lass dein Antlitz spein!"[1]

[1] "From thy great duty none shall move thee,
Thou wilt not shrink, thou wilt not quail;
Undaunted thou: though those who love thee,
Thine own true people, faint and fail.
Gentle and kind, O Son of Heaven,
As Spring's first Zephyrs mild art thou;
Dart from thine eyes the flashing levin,
And whelm thy foes in tempest now!

One lurid incident occurs when Thusnelda, the wife of Hermann, a lady of terrific determination, throws Ventidius the Roman legate alive to a bear. The catastrophe is mercifully represented unseen, by means of groans and a dragging chain.

Tacitus has recorded that Varus, broken-hearted, died by his own hand. In the play, however, at the close, he falls in single fight with Hermann, whom the princes hail as king of free Germany.

The skies have cleared; the play ends in a burst of sunshine. The audience begins to disperse and vanish down the way they came; but we have still time before night-fall to see that other Hermann on his quiet hill top.

It is a colossal figure in copper standing on a beautiful sandstone *Unterbau*. With one foot he crushes the eagle, his left arm leans on his spear, his right lifts the sword on high. His eyes gaze over the far horizons of the wooded hills.

It is hard to describe the fascination of the Hermann. It is not that he is perhaps the

grandest expression in modern plastic art of the spirit of hero-worship; it is not that he is stained by the years a glorious colour like the green of his own pine-trees in the sunlight; it is not even that the sight of him standing there makes two thousand years seem as nothing, so living a thing he is; some magic beyond all this draws us up the Grotenburg's familiar pathways to his feet.

In bright starlight we go home to Detmold, through the meadows watered by the Werre, its gay little river, between high, solemn beechwood groves. To-morrow we will turn a deaf ear to the call of the hills and remain to *flâner* in the Lange Strasse.

The Castle of Detmold, the ancient home of her princes, stands in the heart of the town, a little way back from the principal street, amid its own beautiful gardens. Quiet and dreamy they lie, bounded on two sides by remains of mediæval fortifications. No one actually knows who laid the first stone of the Castle, but there is a tradition that it was Bernhard VII; and surely it can have been none other than he, the heroic defender

THE CASTLE OF DETMOLD

of Blomberg, who saved the great tower of Detmold from the same destroyer, and in defiance of Dietrich of Cologne and his wild men, raised up around it a splendid new home for himself and his heirs.

Time and the builders have wrought many changes in the Castle of Detmold, but it keeps the spirit of the Edelherren. It has four great wings, with four corner towers enclosing a central courtyard, and in this courtyard the gem of the whole building, a roofed-in gallery hangs, a lovely thing of lightness and grace, on the stern old wall. Within this gallery are a few curious portraits: here a Cistercian monk, an imaginary likeness perhaps of Bernhard II, there a king of Denmark, of peculiarly sinister aspect: on the back of his picture is inscribed his name in Latin: "The Very Illustrious Frederick, anno 1539." "Nice faces all," said my guide with a comprehensive gesture, "ancestors of our Princely House." I cannot trace any connection of the dynasty of Lippe with that of Denmark, but no matter.

The Castle contains a treasure chamber

richly stocked with rare specimens of mediæval goldsmiths' art, also some famous tapestries in beautiful preservation; and the bright little state rooms are like a miniature Windsor.

Opposite the Castle entrance in the Lange Strasse is the Hotel Stadt Frankfurt, once the principal inn of the town. Its front is bright with long strands of petunia, a favourite decoration of Detmold houses in the flower season, which hangs over the balconies and has white and purple blossoms as large as clematis. This house has memorable association with Brahms, who came to Detmold with Frau Schumann in the summer of 1855, and became a great favourite of the music-loving prince Leopold III. In his reign, which covered the stirring events of 1864, '66, and '70, Detmold became one of the chief musical centres in Germany. He established his own private orchestra of forty-five players and a series of Court concerts, he took great interest in the new school of Wagner and Berlioz, and sought out and encouraged promising young talent. The

theatre of Detmold saw thus the rising of many a star.

When Frau Schumann came to Detmold she was nearing the end of the long agony of her husband's insanity. He died the following year, and she did not visit the town again, but her playing with the young Joachim of Beethoven's violin concerto at a public concert lived long in the memory of music-lovers there. Brahms stayed on, throwing himself into the life of the little capital; he conducted an amateur Choral Society, he gave music lessons to the Prince's clever young sister, the Princess Frederike, and his wonderful gifts became the talk of the town. All day long through the windows of the Stadt Frankfurt floated heavenly strains; and he would practice extraordinary feats in transposition and reading at sight with his friend Bargheer, a distinguished musician and conductor of the Court Orchestra. Brahms' piano was a worn, shrill old grand, kindly given him by the wife of his earliest patron in Detmold, Frau Hofmarschall zu Meysenbug. On his arrival

there had been no piano available for him in all the town; fortunately the Hofmarschall's family found they could let him have their old one, as they were just then moving into a smart new house. From his window in the Stadt Frankfurt young Brahms could see the Dowager Princess and her daughters driving down the street from the beautiful eighteenth-century palace on the banks of the Werre; and the young ladies as they passed, perhaps, looked up at him.

We may follow yet other footprints in Detmold's quiet streets. Some of the happiest days of the composer Lortzing's broken and disappointed life were passed here; he appeared in the theatre both as actor and singer, and his earlier operas were performed with great success. Detmold is the mother of two poets; of the greater, Freiligrath, she is justly proud—strange child of hers though he was, with his love of far-off things, of Eastern colour and brightness, and his weird and awful imagination. The British nation should be grateful to him for his ardent love of our poets, for he translated many English

ballads, and even attempted some songs of Burns. His muse's gentler moods are shown in a few simple and lovely lyrics such as "The Picture Bible," the worn brown book seen in his old age that brings back to the poet his childhood's days :—

"O Zeit, du bist vergangen !
Ein Mährchen scheinst du mir!
Der Bilderbibel Prangen
Das gläub'ge Aug' dafür,
Die theuren Eltern beide,
Der stillzufriedne Sinn,
Der Kindheit Lust und Freude,
Alles dahin, dahin !"[1]

or he bids us listen to spirit-voices in forest and flowering fields and deep still water; or he sees as in a vision the dying leader of

---

[1] "O Childhood, lost for ever !
Gone, like a vision by,
The pictured Bible's splendour,
The young, believing eye,
The father and the mother,
The still contented mind,
The love and joy of childhood,
All, all are left behind !"
—GOSTWICK.

Israel on the lonely mountain top with God, content now his eyes have once looked on the Promised Land afar :—

> " Ich habe dich gesehen !
> Jetzt ist der Tod mir recht !
> Säuselnd, mit leisem Wehen
> Herr, hole deinen Knecht ! "

Christian Grabbe, " whose life was as wild as his dramas," lived and died in Detmold. He was madly jealous of all the poets of the world, and fancied himself born to strike out an entirely untrodden path to fame. His life's fitful flame burnt itself out in five and thirty years, but he has left one little fairy play called " Aschenbrödel "—Cinderella—which is full of fancy and grace. Freiligrath has made him immortal in a great poem called " Bei Grabbe's Tod."

Our reminiscences have taken us a few hundred yards up the street, beyond the lively Market Place lying in the shadow of the fine old Church of Calvin, to the first turning on our right, the Krumme Strasse, or the Crooked Street. It was originally

THE KRUMME STRASSE, DETMOLD

so-called because each of the inhabitants—they were the old aristocracy of Detmold—wished to see a little farther across the way than his neighbour. So he built his house jutting out a few feet beyond the one beside it, and the street has therefore an irregular crescent shape. This is a common occurrence in North German towns. Were I but a poet, how I could sing of the Krumme Strasse! What a theme for her poet-children to have missed! The crimson-tiled roofs hang deep-shadowed eaves over the lovely white walls that have mellowed into ivory hues with the years; many are decorated with a coloured frieze of fans in wood-carving and pious proverbs in old black letter over the doorways. A double flight of stone steps leads to the front entrances of the more important houses here, with wide-flung balustrades of wrought-iron work that gives them a pathetic air of grandeur and dignity. High overhead on the roof of an ancient inn was fixed in years gone by its sign, a chariot and four white horses in painted metal; it was very conspicuous seen against the sky,

and the children of the Krumme Strasse used to sing :—

"Es war ein Postreiter von siebendzig Jahren
Der wollte zum Himmel mit vier Schimmel fahren.
Die Schimmel die gingen trab trab, trab trab,
And warfen den alten Postreiter ab."[1]

Two fragments of twisted iron are all that is left of the chariot and its audacious driver, and the children of to-day have never learnt the little song.

The Krumme Strasse stands in the heart of old Detmold, surrounded with clusters of ancient dwellings so recklessly out of the perpendicular that a stranger passing by might really fear for the safety of the golden-haired children playing on the doorsteps. One vanished relic of past life in Detmold will always be treasured in my remembrance, namely, the old Lutheran Church in the Schüler Strasse. It was a small octagon building with the pews grouped round the

[1] "There was a postilion of seventy-seven,
Who wanted to drive four white horses to heaven ;
Trot, trot went the horses; alas for their load!
The poor old postilion fell off in the road!"
C. A. A.

altar in the middle. I can see myself there, a little child, balanced, with complete decorum but much difficulty and resultant cramp, on my narrow and slippery seat through long, drowsy summer mornings. It was always twilight in the little church; what light there was came through diamond panes, and lingered in blue, wavering lines on the backs of the old black pews. I can hear Pastor Engel's majestic tones read the great opening words of the service, "Im Namen des Vaters, und des Sohnes, und des heiligen Geistes," and then the slow chanting of the beautiful Chorales, and the prayers; then the long, stately discourse, always extempore: no Lutheran preacher would dream of reading from a manuscript; finally the curious progress which always fascinated me, of the almsbag at the end of a long pole, travelling among the congregation. The almsbag used on festival occasions was a very handsome object, I remember, of crimson velvet with heavy silver clasps and lid. To this day I can hear it tinkling as it passed out of sight among the distant pews.

Pastor Engel was a very handsome man, grave and kind, with a beautiful voice and presence. In the fine new church that stands on the old site a modest tablet beside the pulpit records his faithful ministry.

Thirty years ago, before the spirit of modern improvement had made any headway in the little town—now, it has laid its clumsy fingers even on the Lange Strasse and the Krumme Strasse—Detmold was a paradise. To-day, in its sweet setting of wooded hills, with its shining waterways and air of old-time dignity, it is a paradise still. . . .[1]

[1] I must leave this chapter unfinished. It was written in May, 1914.

# A WEEK IN CHAMONIX

# A WEEK IN CHAMONIX

"SHALL I write a little account of Chamonix?"

"Chamonix! it is the most hackneyed place on earth; about as well known as Clapham Junction."

These words in their piercing veracity might well have discouraged a braver heart and checked a fleeter pen than mine. But I made bold reply that true originality is not forever seeking new paths, but finds fresh lights shining on the old; that I should certainly write the chapter in question, and put what had just been said at the beginning.

"This and Chamonix," wrote Ruskin from Geneva in 1885, "my two homes of Earth" —and often in after years he spoke of the deep quiet of Chamonix' happy valley, and the "curious sense he had there of being shut in from the noise and wickedness of the world." He knew of course that other days were

coming; he watched them already breaking over "many a sweet mountain valley and green place of shepherd solitude" that soon should give their secrets up to a throng of tourists and hotel keepers. This prophesy has been abundantly fulfilled, and it is idle to regret what is gone. One comfort remains, that though man may disfigure the plain, he cannot harm the mountains: not even though his little funiculars climb them, and his great railways pierce them to the heart; and therefore Chamonix' "holy sights" through all changes are the same.

There is a certain grey rock on the slope of the Brévent hill, which bears Ruskin's name cut on its side. There we may rest and watch the little river Arve threading its white way through the plain below. Above, stretching away eastward, is the wild range of the Aiguilles Rouges, and, guarding the opposite end of the valley, Mont Blanc and his brethren, Aiguilles du Dru, Moine, Grandes Jorasses, scarred and rent asunder by the frozen highways of the glaciers. The great scene contrasts with sight and sound of humble

life around—little school-girls in their six months' holiday-time mind the cattle in the meadows, sturdy figures with tidy pigtails, their knitting carried in a tin pail slung round their waists; a peasant comes out of his châlet with a great bowl of spaghetti for his guinea-pigs, and we laugh at the sight—a human being eating a yard of spaghetti is not seen at his best, but a guinea-pig thus engaged is supremely absurd. Silver butterflies with sapphire bodies alight on the sunny wall beside the roadway, and the grasshoppers' music never ceases through the drowsy summer day. We spent much time in studying the grasshoppers; some that appeared tired out with excess of *joie de vivre* allowed themselves to be inspected at leisure. The great green-armoured one wears, like the rest of his family, a transverse piece of his coat "cut on the cross," as a dressmaker would call it, fitted with the most exquisite precision round his neck; and he gives a shriller, harsher cry with the friction of his wing-covers than does the dusky-brown locust his cousin, who makes his strange fluttering sing-song by rubbing his ridiculous hind

legs together. He is coloured like a withered leaf, but changes into sudden glory as he spreads his rose-red wings (that before were folded away out of sight) and soars upwards; like a plain, meek person going to heaven.

Chamonix sixty years ago was merely a hamlet—a few châlets grouped round an inn or two. The village has increased perhaps tenfold since those days, and is now a great cluster of hotels, with their usual accessories of gay shops, tea-rooms, and all the paraphernalia of restless modern life. We put up at the house which is specially connected with the finest tradition of the place—Hotel Couttet et du Parc, whose windows look straight across the tree tops, only one roof intervening, to Mont Blanc. The name of Couttet is a great and honoured one in Alpine annals, and had far better stand alone in the inscription above the hotel entrance. The Parc is a neat garden, arranged around the house on a pretty piece of timbered ground, varied with *pelouses*, on which it is politely requested no visitor should walk. Every evening the tender annuals in the flower beds were sheeted in white muslin

to protect them from frost. I thought how Mont Blanc, looking down nightly on the timid things, must in his mighty heart despise a *pelouse*. There was many a day that weeping summer when he hid his head, and pale, wispy fragments of cloud, favourite messengers of the storm, hovered low over the pine crests. Then the most intrepid mountaineer had to content himself with the mild life of the plain, and the guides stood about in idle groups at the street corners. They seem a less powerful, less distinguished type of men than their fathers who climbed the Alps with Charles Hudson and De Saussure and Whymper. I saw only one bearded giant of the old stamp, and he stood boldly out among some small, wiry men, head and shoulders above them; he had a splendid physique and a face like a god.

The little town does not lack its attractions. Loppé's pictures, that are permanently exhibited here, should be seen by all; soft and brilliant and daring, they come nearer than any other artist's work to the mountain spirit, and can best render the piercing blue of the

glaciers, and the brooding sadness of the pines. Close to the poor little bare English church is an open space, where tiny boys of seven or eight play at quoits with extraordinary grace and dexterity.

Passing over the bridge into the principal street and going westward, in a few minutes we arrive at the miniature museum. It contains the usual heart-rending pictures, either entirely imaginary, or rudely put together from survivors' descriptions of Alpine disasters; battered relics of those who have perished on the mountains, chairs which carried queens over glaciers, and the little wooden gallery that once formed part of an observatory, which, with incredible pain and labour, the great scientist, Dr. Janssen, "a man so lame that he could barely walk alone on level ground," set on the crown of Mont Blanc. The interior was fitted with a huge instrument for registering altitudes and air pressure, which was to inaugurate a new era in Alpine science. We can but admire its inventor's unconquerable spirit, and his brave words spoken before the French Academy of

Sciences when he introduced his instrument to them in August 1894, and faced, even then, the possibility that his labours, when set against the destroying forces of Nature, might after all prove in vain. "I do not conceal from myself," he said, "that notwithstanding the minute precautions that have been taken, there must be some degree of uncertainty about the result." The scheme was hopeless from the very first. Before the base of the observatory was half completed on its perilous site it began to subside; yet Janssen did not lose heart, but was dragged with infinite difficulty by sledge, and by the builder's windlasses when his men's strength gave out, three times to the summit to urge on the work. It failed; through fourteen years the building remained, slowly sinking as the snow, in the warmer temperature of its shelter, sank beneath it, till at last only the wrecked timbers were visible. Then the little turret was taken down and transported to the museum at Chamonix, where it keeps alive a splendid memory of courage and hope.

Here, too, is a relic of St. François de Sales,

Bishop and Prince of Geneva, in a great crucifix found at La Roche, a village near his home in Savoie, whither a child of six, "burning with the desire to learn to read," he was sent to school.

Lately I have searched in vain for any trace of him at Geneva, for the town, throne and fortress of the reformed religion, has done its best to forget him; only the house in which he lived is still standing, opposite the bare and dreary Cathedral. But we might track his footprints over all the land of Savoie, and before this cross he may first have prayed and learnt his baby tasks.

The little parish church in Chamonix stands on the site of the old Priory, which was destroyed by fire in 1758. It contains one mediæval relic in the group of grey stone pillars within the western entrance, which once formed part of the Lady Chapel. The Priors enjoyed practically sovereign powers over the whole district and ruled their flock with a rod of iron. The peasants at their hands suffered injustice and oppression in many dreadful forms—cruel fines for petty

offences, and even death at the stake; but history has taken little account of them. It has passed almost in silence over all this region, although ancient charters connected with Chamonix and its neighbourhood date back a thousand years, till, towards the end of the nineteenth century, a learned Frenchman, M. André Perrin, published some studies based on certain documents collected by a local antiquary. But no record was found of the mountain guardians of these valleys earlier than 1741, when an Englishman, Windham of Norfolk, with eight of his countrymen, first set foot on the hills above the Arve. Mont Blanc itself is but an infant in history, its name being first found on a map published by one Peter Martel, a shoemaker's son, who took a party of young Genoese, fired by the fame of Windham's achievements, up the mountain in the following year.

Many of Chamonix' former days are thus buried to us forever out of mind; and the little grey pillars of its ancient Church keep secrets that will never be revealed.

We achieved the crossing of two glaciers—they are among the chief lions of Chamonix, the Mer de Glace and Les Bossons. I shall not try to describe the glaciers, for everyone knows what they are; or rather, it would be more true to say that no one knows, for it takes the scientists a whole lifetime to understand how God has made them. With their grim companions the deceitful moraines, in their slow unseen motion that has never ceased since first they cleft the primeval hills, they are one of Nature's most strange and awful phenomena, and yet within, down the mighty cracks and fissures, how bright and lovely they are!—even as heaven itself, for there is no earthly thing to compare with the glacier blue.

Our way homeward from Les Bossons led through the forest over rough bridges crossing mountain torrents, and past a châlet where we rested and had coffee and bread and honey. A poor woman there in the tourist season made a living for herself and her two baby boys. I said I thought them a fine little pair. "Vous croyez? mais ils

sont turbulents," she said. The most perfect harmony reigned between them, however, on that sunny evening as they played in the aimless way of little children, which has always, we may be sure, some secret plan, among the fallen pine needles, building up heaps of twigs and knocking them over. Their orange-coloured socks were darned with scarlet wool and made a vivid patch of brightness in the forest shade.

These fragmentary reminiscences shall close on the flower-sown pastures of Le Planet. They shut in the valley of Chamonix at its western end, on the boundary between Switzerland and France, above the little Church of Argentière. The uplands are strewn with great fragments of shattered stone, which form themselves into a vast rock-garden. Here are wild raspberry, scarlet bearberry, late flowering gentian, yellow violas with black markings and brave stems "upward striving," as an old German botany book describes them, like a good Christian; arbutus and veronica, thalictrum with its maidenhair foliage, and harebells with four

blossoms on one stalk, like a lady with four daughters to marry. The flower that had come out first would be already withering on the stem! All around the drifts and hollows, the grass gleamed with the stemless or "Carline" thistle. So perfect a thing it is, with its gold and purple centre, its double row of shining silver petals that close over it at nightfall, and aurole of serrated leaves, it looks like a star just fallen out of heaven. Its name comes from a legend that links this lovely plant with Charlemagne, of whom it is told that once, when his army was stricken with pestilence, an angel showed him certain healing powers of the stemless thistle; and he and all his host were saved.

The legend is half forgotten now, and the thistles have lost their magic art. Instead, they are seen trimming a lady's hat—ignoble fate! There is some way of preserving the flowers for this purpose which prevents their shrivelling. I gathered a few that day on Le Planet, and repented it too late; they curled their white petals tightly over, hiding their beautiful faces as though they grieved.

# FLOWERING SUNDAY AT PENALLT CHURCH

# FLOWERING SUNDAY AT PENALLT CHURCH

We drove there with Jimmy in the tub. Jimmy is a pretty old pony with a bright bay coat and a loving disposition; the tub is his little cart. The distance from home over the Monmouthshire hill-side was only a couple of miles perhaps; but we always allow extra time for Jimmy, as he is afflicted with an insatiable thirst; he drags his indulgent drivers, tub and all, into any by-ways he fancies, and over any obstacle, if only he can spy his favourite refreshment in a pool, or a puddle even, shining afar. So we take quite an hour on the journey.

The fields are just shimmering with spring colours, and the crests of the gorse are golden. They put me in mind of a child who was

asked what flowers he wished to have for his own little garden; and he said he did not mind what they were, so long as they were "*all lit.*" This great wild garden of the West would have partly pleased him; only here and there the flowers are lit, as yet, but they give fair promise of summer fire; and in their *al fresco* ballrooms the daffodils are dancing. All around our rocky pathway, high over the valley of the Wye, "the moors lie bare to God."

It is a wild, enchanted region where one might fancy, as over the Cornish moors, the angels' feet have trod, for in many respects this land of holy memories and legends bears affinity to Cornwall; and its inhabitants, who are neither Welsh nor English, are thought to be descendants of ancient races that are lost to history, and akin to the West Irish, Cornishmen and Basques. The spirit of prayers prayed long ago still breathes from many a site of Druid worship here. "Druid" is a convenient word that often serves to cover our general ignorance of prehistoric faiths. Yet for unnumbered years

this shadowy priesthood has been definitely linked in men's thought with various relics that still survive in this ancient land, and give life to old legend and belief. Such are the yew, abundant in Monmouthshire churchyards, under which the Druids, medicine-men and seers, dispensed justice and wisdom, and the stones at cross-roads leading to their places of burial, on which the coffin-bearers rested their burdens, chanting hymns the while—a Bardic custom that still lingers in the west in the singing at old-fashioned funerals, though this takes place no longer around the crosses. The mourners sing now at the house, before they go to the grave.

In a certain beautiful little garden in the Penallt hills is a grove of oaks which, though themselves not old, are thought to be descendants of older trees that sheltered the Druids at their times of solemn assembly; and close by the grove fragments of cross and arch have lately been unearthed that suggest sacred associations. Just beyond the garden there is an ancient holding that

still bears the old name, soft-sounding like a far away melody, of Cae-Dryllis, or Druids' Field.

Until quite recently the country people preserved the Druidical remains with a blending of fear and reverence, weaving round them many mediæval legends and ghost stories; but a prosaic and destructive age, encroaching even on this hallowed ground, has since done away with most of them. A flourishing specimen of the Glastonbury thorn, which really did flower on Christmas Eve, was lately cut down to make room for a motor garage in Monmouth; and in the same way many of the Druidical stones have been broken up to mend the roads. An old inhabitant of Penallt told me how she had persuaded her husband to save one of those that stood in the way of his plough. The stones had served in later days as bases to crosses, now mostly destroyed, and the sturdy Protestantism of the country people came to regard both base and cross as signs of the errors of Rome. So the neighbours told her that the stone was popish and must

be destroyed; but she knew that folk had set store by it in old times, and she had her way. The stone was removed to a place of safety, where it still stands.

Jimmy's diversions on the way to Penallt would provide time for a complete historical survey of Monmouthshire; but we have lingered too long among the Druids and have reached the lych-gate at last, disposed of pony and cart for the time, and entered the churchyard under its "pleached walk" of pollarded limes.

It is Palm Sunday, called in these parts "Flowering Sunday," and every grave is decked with flowers. This is a survival from very old days, a rite probably of the ancient British Church, which had its first beginnings in the West, in Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire. So much at least is almost certain. But there are those, learned in ancient Welsh poetry and Bardic literature, who say that flowering the graves, like the singing at the wayside crosses, was a pre-Christian custom. It never spread much farther east in England, but it is met with

in other countries of Europe; *Allerseelen Tag* (All Souls' Day) is thus honoured in Germany.

For the most part the offerings this Flowering Sunday on the Penallt graves are very humble, but not one has been forgotten; all are brightened with a nosegay of wood-anemone and primrose, or a wreath made with the rich green moss that grows in sweet luxuriance in the woods. On a baby's grave is one solitary daffodil, its broken stalk tied round and round with quite unnecessary tightness, in the way little children do, with a bit of thick black worsted.

The churchyard is very peaceful and lovely, waiting in hope and patience for the risen life. A great yew guards the church on its eastern side, "renewing its eternal youth" these thousand years and more; it has seen a thousand spring-times break over the shining river far below, and the woody heights of Kymin across the gorge; and beyond the plain of Monmouth, the beautiful Brecon Mountains. Seen from a little distance down the hill, the old church

*Photo by W. A. Call, Monmouth*

PENALLT OLD CHURCH IN MONMOUTHSHIRE

and its mighty sentinel stand alone against the sky. Yews, in the West especially, were so frequently planted in churchyards because of their legendary power of absorbing poisonous gases that were believed to rise from the graves at set of sun. The dreaded exhalations took fearsome shape in the imagination of the people, and became spirits, ghosts that appeared in the twilight.

"These gases, or will o' the wisps," says a seventeenth century writer, "divers have seen and believe them dead bodies walking abroad"; and the solemn yew stood among them as a safeguard and purifier.

The origin of Penallt Church is lost in the misty past. No one knows even to what saint it was dedicated; no doubt his blessing still rests on his church, but his very name has vanished. The present building, with its massive ivy-covered buttresses, and decorative windows in the tower, dates only from the fourteenth century; it is the site probably of an ancient shrine. An unusually wide passage in place of the narrow "squint" so often seen in mediæval churches gives an added

dignity to the single aisle, and commands the entire chancel.

The old pews, now replaced by uninteresting modern benches, were very curious, being all jumbled together anyhow, and so narrow that it was practically impossible to sit in them; it was a point of honour in Penallt to possess a pew, so they had to be divided when families increased; one was even hung on the wall, like a bird-cage. The owners retained them in a kind of dog-in-the-manger spirit; they seldom occupied them, but allowed no one else to do so, and so they remained empty, the few attendants at service sitting in the galleries invisible to all except the parson in his three-decker. The western gallery was filled by a great table with desks, round which the choir sat and sang without accompaniment. Towards the east end the floor inclines downward, following the fall of the ground. The altar has been raised in recent times, but originally it stood much lower than the level of the nave. We stand awhile before the bell begins to toll in the deep quiet of the chancel. An in-

scription, quaintly worded over a little boy's grave in the vault below, speaks to one's heart with childlike serenity across the years:—

"WILLIAM, the Son of Thomas and Jane Evans, aged six years.

"Mourn not dear Parence,
Nor lament for me;
Childeren with God
Canot unhapy Bee."

It is good to think that the Parence have joined him long ago.

The service that Sunday evening began late, and as the church has no lights, save two candles on the pulpit and two at the harmonium, it was almost dark before the end; only the great chained unicorn in a huge Queen Anne coat-of-arms over the chancel arch gleamed white in the gloom. We all knew the hymns by heart, so we needed no books:

"Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near. . . ."

the children's voices rang bravely through

the shadows; then the little congregation streamed out under the arching limes, and Jimmy, mindful of his comfortable stable, cut his customary digressions short as he went home over the steep hillside.

# TRAVELLING COMPANIONS

# TRAVELLING COMPANIONS

LOOKING back from the flats of middle age over life's varied experiences, we often find that among the figures standing out most vividly from the background of the past are those of travelling companions.

Friendships lost as soon as made in "journeyings oft"; scenes lived through in sudden intimacy with strangers, some swift glimpse of beauty or comedy or sorrow, these keep their bright colours undimmed through many years from the very fact of their having been thus fleeting, rung down on life's stage, passing shows without beginning or end.

Yet it is difficult at times to explain the curious hold they have on us, chance comrades who follow us all through after years out of the shadows, keeping a semblance of life to the last. Why can I recall so plainly for

instance, as though it were yesterday I had seen them, two well-dressed ordinary women, mother and married daughter evidently, whom I once met in a London train bound for the Sussex coast, and remember their trivial talk, their comfortable impedimenta and pair of overfed Pekinese? "I miss my excellent Sarah," the younger lady is saying; "she was a maid after my own heart; never said anything but 'Yes m'm' and 'No m'm' ever since I first had her, ten long years ago! Then on a certain black Monday she announces her departure! Going to be married to a dairyman, and wishing to spend a few weeks with her mother first. The young fellow was above reproach, all promised well, so I pulled myself together and was *most* generous—set her up with the whole of her crockery and linen for the future home. Then, what should the bridegroom do but drive his cart into a motor lorry a week before the wedding day, and break his neck! She is inconsolable of course. . . ."

"Oh do you think those sort of people *really* take it so much to heart?" said the

other lady; "in that rank of life, you know. . . ."

"Oh yes, she does," rejoined her daughter; "she minds more than you would think. . . . But the question for *me* is, what will she do with the crockery and linen? Will she send it all back to me? and what on earth shall *I* do with it? with the man's initials so neatly put on the linen in those little red letters. . . . really it is annoying. . . ."

They were nearing their destination; the old lady had been gathering up her belongings, and her attention had wandered from the story.

"Oh! well we will hope it will be better," she answered vaguely. The two got out at Three Bridges and I was left with a respectable old working woman, the only other occupant of the second-class carriage. She had been crying, and was plainly in some great trouble. I ventured to speak to her and asked her what it was. She would not be offended I thought; to certain people it is very difficult to offer sympathy, it only seems to make matters worse, but the poor nearly always meet one

half way. I was little prepared for the story she told; even now after long years, it passes by me at times like a black mark suddenly drawn over some fair tranquil page of life, a thing awful in its primitive tragedy, a catastrophe such as now and again, so long as the world lasts, will close on the old, old story:—

"Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen,
Die hat einen Andern erwählt."

The old woman was a caretaker in some offices at London Bridge Station, and so I imagine she had a free pass on the line. Her daughter was in service on a Sussex farm, and a young fellow there had tried to win her for years, but in vain, for she cared for another man, and this persistent lover wearied her; so that lately she had avoided him, and refused even to let him see her face. At last he gave up hope; but she had broken his heart, and he sent her a strange message saying he would not be shut out any longer, but one day he was coming right across her way, where she could not choose but find him. The girl

wrote all this to her mother at the time, making light of it, however, for she had never really taken him seriously. Then—it had happened that very day—she had gone out at sunrise into the drying ground with the washing, and there she saw his body hanging on the line. The girl was found an hour later lying unconscious on the ground; and they had sent for her mother.

> "Es ist eine alte Geschichte,
> Doch bleibt sie immer neu;
> Und wem sie just passieret
> Dem bricht das Herz entzwei."

"Do you think they *really* take it so much to heart?" the lady's words came back to me —"in that rank of life, you know. . . ."

Many of the poor spend half their lives in moving from place to place; for when one has next to nothing to spoil, and one's earthly goods travel safely in sacks and red cotton handkerchiefs, the attractions of a little lower rent, a healthier house, a better prospect of work, must no doubt be all-important. I was telling a working woman one day that I was "moving," and what a trouble I found

it all. I learnt that she was moving too, for the dismal reason that there was a sink out of order in the kitchen, which had given all the children blood-poisoning. Failing, alas! Miss Octavia Hill, where was the sanitary inspector? "Well I do feel with you ma'am," she said, with the ready sympathy of her class, "it *is* a set-out," but I daresay she has changed house several times since that day. Usually of course the poor can only travel within a very small radius, and catlike, they often come back to the place whence they originally started. I remember, however, meeting one day on the platform at Nottingham a man with his wife, and a family like the tail of a comet; there were seven boys and four girls, all plainly on the verge of starvation; but they were travelling from a remote hamlet in the Midlands to seek their fortune in Exeter. It is a marvel how a poor mother in a family removal of such magnitude ever gets under weigh at all; often she loses half her belongings on the journey; but I have only once known a woman's "tender care" actually cease to-

wards the child she bare to the length of leaving it behind on the platform. It was holiday time; the scene was King's Cross; our destination I have forgotten. In the confusion near the booking office the mother, bewildered, had put the baby down and picked up a portmanteau instead. Just as the train was moving off she realised what had happened, and there ensued what the newspapers call a painful scene as she hung half crazy out of the carriage window, with four older children crying and frightened, clinging to her skirts. These mishaps have a way of just stopping short of actual disaster; so it was in this instance. A porter came running up with the baby, and threw it into its mother's arms; and we breathed freely once more. Suddenly it choked and went black in the face. "He's got whooping-cough," she explained. Beside her sat a young woman with a still smaller and very fragile infant; she was a neighbour from home, and they were all travelling together, with the reckless indifference of the working-classes about infection. Two kind old north-

country farmers were in the carriage with us, and it was beautiful to watch their self-denying efforts to be of use to this helpless party. One gave up his seat to two of the children —for we were packed as tight as herrings in a barrel—and stood during the greater part of the journey in a violent draught in the corridor; the other, when the window strap, that time-honoured resource of the travelling baby, failed at last to divert the whooping-cough child, made a paper fleet for it out of his *Financial Times*. Of such high qualities are heroes made.

On the whole the poor spoil their children every bit as much as we do, but with far more excuse than we, who get nurses and governesses to do all the difficult work. The poor mother, weary and worried, simply takes the short cut to peace; it serves for the moment. An illustration of this system, an extreme case, perhaps, was given me in a little scene one day at Oxford station. We were travelling to Birmingham, I think. Into the carriage a woman, hurrying and flustered, thrust a baby boy in charge of an

older brother, along with a Japanese basket crammed to bursting, and a bag of buns. She begged one of the ladies present, a very unsuitable, severe looking person who sat knitting in the further corner of the carriage, to give an eye to the children. "Their grandmother and aunts are coming in from the country to meet them at Birmingham," she explained. The baby suddenly rebelled against this prospect; it kicked over the bag of buns, scattering them in all directions, and set up a loud and dismal wail. There were still a few minutes before the train was timed to start; the mother came to a hasty resolve. "Well, there now, he *shan't* go to Birmingham," she said, and out she bundled baby, brother, Japanese basket, and as many buns as were within reach, and what the grandmother and aunts said when they got to Birmingham I shall never know!

We all have watched with interest, or laughter, or pity, some such scenes as these, wishing at times that we might trace them to the end—footprints lost in the snows of time, wandering lights in the dark. . . .

There was once a little French governess with whom I travelled to Lyons one day, and she told me her story, being too happy at the time, I think, to keep it to herself. She was an orphan, alone in the world, and for ten years she and her lover had been separated, he at home, she in America, both with the thrifty foresight of their nation earning money to be married on, and now she was going home to him. I can see the light shining in her eyes as she said he would surely meet her at the station, though he had not written of late—she wondered why. In due time we arrived. . . . What had happened? Had some evil befallen him, or had he simply tired of waiting for her all those years? I cannot tell, but he was not there; just as my train steamed out of the station I saw her go through the barrier alone.

As these memories come crowding in before me, some clear, some fainter, some shifting and confused, I pass again over ground that I have lately trod, and compare new days with old. Nowhere, I think, has the luxury of

railway travelling further advanced than on the convenient restaurant cars now run on every main line at home and abroad. Time was when all the food we could depend on through many empty hours had to be scrambled for at a buffet in a few desperate moments when the train halted at some intermediate station. Yet this lively interlude had its advantages; it unstiffened our limbs and shook up our spirits, adding zest to the long monotony of the journey; we have lost where we have gained, I think. There is a grim and sooty hideousness, a certain terror even, in the long and difficult walk we must take nowadays from our well-appointed compartment to the restaurant car, over those quaking little bridges and down the mean, draughty corridors. I am forever haunted by a story I once heard of the stout old lady on an express train, who was passing over a bridge when the shivering plates gave way beneath her weight and she fell through on to the line. . . . The form of a little waiter on a journey from Paris to Basle one stormy winter evening comes back to me; he was

following me past a hundred *coupé lits*, all exactly alike, their blinds already fast drawn for the night, with the object of obtaining a franc I owed him on my supper bill. It had to be extracted from my husband, who was at that moment disposing himself to slumber; and the difficulty of finding him under the circumstances was great. With all possible discretion, I attempted to peer through window after veiled window, going, though I knew it not, far beyond my goal. At length we stood before a fast-closed door that barred our way. We made a squalid picture in that unlovely place—myself, touzled and worn and travel-stained—for only certain very rare forms of female beauty are proof against a twelve-hours' railway journey—and the waiter, a petty figure in his absurd white jacket and brass buttons and semi-military trousers, his little soul entirely absorbed in that impossible quest of tenpence, while all the time the train went rushing through the storm; pale, torn shreds of light ever and anon fled past the windows, and the wind shrieked like some wild thing in pain. I

tried the door; it was fast as Newgate prison. "Ouvrez," I shouted through the din, with as much dignity as I could command. The waiter eyed me with sudden alarm; I believe he thought me a desperate character meditating a peculiarly dreadful form of suicide. "*Mais je ne puis pas, Madame*," he said, "*nous sommes au bout du train.*"

Once more the scene shifts; we are on a Channel steamer nearing Folkestone; and again it is evening, but a peaceful sunset one. There is a pageant in the sky—a chain of dark clouds stretches all along the flaming horizon, as if it were a mighty army of the hosts of God. A baby boy sits on deck on his mother's lap; he holds a key, which he has mistaken for a watch, to his ear. "Tick, tick, tock," he says hopefully. His brother, two or three years older, has been enjoying himself after his own fashion during the entire crossing—dragging his sea-sick attendant about, doing all the little mischief he can find; his oft-repeated query—"Why *soodn't* I?" the same that every infant has been asking since the world began, rings all over the

deck. He is holding his nurse's hand now, and stands as near as he dares to the rails, trying to look over the ship's awful sides into the sea. The engines are stopping; the water eddies and seethes around the great posts of the landing stage, and it frightens him. "How are we going to get off the boat, Nanny? the sea is coming so close! how are we going to get off the boat?"

# TOYS

# TOYS [1]

An article that appeared a year ago in a weekly paper, called *Ugliness in the Nursery*, struck so true a note that it is a pity it should have perished in the flood of ephemeral literature. It was an earnest indictment against certain grotesque and hideous toys that are sold every Christmas in the great bazaars, and are bound to produce an influence that is more or less bad on their little owners. In some Continental countries mothers choose pretty nurses and beautiful toys for their babies, believing beauty and its reverse to be alike capable of transmission; and Lafcadio Hearn somewhere in his writings tells a story of a Japanese father who carried the dead body of his two-days'-old child through some of the temples and

[1] Reprinted by kind permission from *Mothers in Council*.

gardens of the city where he lived, so that even in death it might not be quite untouched by the beauty of earth.

It may be that such thoughts are merely fanciful. Yet in these days of elaborate child-study, when so much heed is paid to the influence of early surroundings, and immense importance is given to environment as a means of training, it is surely an extraordinary fact that we are content to put ugly and vulgar objects, to be its playthings and constant companions, into a baby's hand.

I saw a lady recently buying presents for her small children in a famous London toy-shop. She chose, among other things, a horrible little figure called "the mechanical advocate," a creature in a lawyer's gown with a ghastly white face and a red blob for a nose, which, when wound up, went through a series of violent gesticulations. It is difficult to see what can possibly be gained by giving a child such a plaything as that. I disliked the whole army of golliwogs, now, I think, happily defunct, because they were ugly and impossible; and I would avoid

nearly everything that has its head too big for its body. For some old friends of this peculiar construction, such as Punch and Humpty-Dumpty, we keep, young and old, a friendly feeling; yet it remains something of a mystery why a figure is supposed to be funny simply because one of its members is disproportionately large. It would be interesting to trace the origin of this idea. I would banish from every nursery the terrifying masks with which big boys like to frighten their little sisters, and all things that are hideous and unnatural.

There are many ways in which our modern toys are found wanting. In England we have never yet attained to the skill and imagination of the French and German inventors, their touch of fancy and grace. The Christmas shops here are festooned with hundreds of transparent net stockings, displaying all their contents at once, that are intended for the "hanging up" ceremony on Christmas Eve. These seem to me to defeat their own object, for the whole charm and excitement of the stocking surely lies in

its mystery, in the sense it imparts of the unknown, the dive into its dark depths when we wake on Christmas morning. Our own stocking is far the best for this purpose, so there is no need for an imitation one at all. There is, indeed, a sad waste of trouble in the huge efforts made nowadays to amuse little children. In these realistic times imagination is crowded more and more out of their world; the most wonderful skill is spent in reproducing the things of actual life for them, and the result is failure.

I saw a five-year-old boy playing in a garden close by the door of his home. Around him were several toys—a motor car, a few ninepins, and a new box of soldiers—of these he took no notice at all. He had got a stick, on which a leaf was neatly impaled; and he held it motionless before an iron scraper. Every few minutes he took off the leaf, laid it carefully edgewise between the prongs of a rake lying on the grass, and put on a fresh one. So absorbed was he in this game, if game it could be called, that I had to ask him twice what he was

doing before he answered, "Making toast." Nothing that ever was invented can equal the delight of imagining something that is not there; for a child's mind lives and grows by the unseen. Still, we can all remember certain toys that formed the very fabric of our lives, though they only attained that beautiful eminence after long, hard service; for the toy that is decrepit and infirm is the one we really love. I saw a little girl clasping tenderly in her arms an unspeakably dreadful object. It was a doll that had lost its face, and had only the back of its skull left. She sang a little song to the doll, wrapping it tenderly round with a piece of flannel, and trying to balance a small knitted bonnet on the slippery fragment of its head; they made together a tiny travesty of death and life.

To return to our toy-shop. "This way for Cinderella!" proclaimed a live walking Father Christmas—"unique performance for the little ones!" I beheld a rough representation of a stage with a painted Cinderella fleeing up the stairs in the background to the sound of a gong striking twelve with

wearisome reiteration. A mechanical waiter rattled to and fro over the boards, bearing a tray of peppermints. That was all; it was not a play, it was not Cinderella, it was not anything. The children, in unending procession, passed gravely before it.

In a show-case was displayed an array of snow-men, faithfully copied from the original article, with boot-button eyes and the usual sketchy features. They were solid all through, made of some thick white woollen material, and they would live for ever, through winter and summer alike, in defiance of the very nature and being of a snow-man, that most fugitive of all childhood's joys, which changes in a moment and dies in the sunlight.

Through a crowd of toy carts of every description there passed a lady with a dismally undecided little boy. Milk carts failed to please him, exact miniatures of the real thing, with drivers driving dashing ponies, and great brass cans shining brilliantly. Taxi-cabs whizzed past him, motor omnibuses, Lord Mayor's coaches, Irish cars.

He turned away from them all, grimly attracted by a dying goldfish in a tank a little farther on—the only real thing he could find in all that world of shams. The mother drew him back again, and they stopped before a coal waggon. At last his eye brightened. "I should like one of those little black sacks," he said. The poor lady's face fell. "Oh, they wouldn't sell it out of the cart," she answered; "and it wouldn't be worth buying either. Nannie can make you a sack at home." "I should like one of those little black sacks," he said.

It is open to question, I think, whether small children should be taken to these huge emporiums at all. They are usually quite unable to choose out of the host of things before them, and they get fretful and bewildered. Certain primitive feelings, the good old rule of "Me First," the refusal to share, the desire to obliterate one's brothers and sisters, gradually win the day; peace and goodwill are banished from the scene, to be too often restored, alas! by mistaken means. A mother was explaining to her three little

sons that she could not afford three toy summer-houses; they might have one between them; which should it be? The discussion took up an immense time; and, as all such discussions will do, it "ended in tears." "I want the 'ouse with the wailings," sobbed the youngest infant, "but I *don't want* to 'ave it between us." The fruitless moments passed, louder grew the voices, more tears were shed. At last the mother said something, too low for me to catch, which had an instant and magic effect. Smiles shone out, and peace reigned once more. A short time after, as I was leaving the shop, the trio with their exhausted parent passed out before me. In his arms each little boy carried a toy summer-house.

Among the distractions of the toy-shop I have wandered from my original point, for the subject takes us far afield, and is less simple than we should believe at first sight. "Let us entertain primarily with grace," says Ruskin; "I insist much on this word—with grace assuredly." We must put grace into the children then as best we may, and no doubt we shall succeed in the end; but they

will not care a pin about it to begin with. Trailing clouds of glory they come; but their hearts are set on the little black sacks. And we say, "How odd children are! They are a bundle of contradictions; you never know what will please them." The real truth is, that no one yet, not the wisdom—least of all the wisdom—of all the ages, has altogether understood a child. With his little fellows he is shut into his own wonderful world; their feet are set in ways that we have forgotten how to tread. Only we can at least make sure, as far as possible, that the thoughts suggested to them through their play are not entirely idle or unlovely. For children are quick to grasp the symbolism of things; they are ever trying to find the truth that underlies all make-believe. But in that world of theirs the two are so closely interwoven that sometimes the children confuse one with the other, and then they come and ask us to explain. "I have got a toy bunny," said a little girl to her mother, "and I know there are real bunnies; and I have a toy train, and I know there are real trains; and I have got a toy hoop, but what is a real hoop?"

# FROM OLD DAYS TO NEW

# FROM OLD DAYS TO NEW

"WHEN do you move?"

"Have you *actually moved already?*"

"When are you REALLY GOING to move?"

The question was asked me up and down the town, in varying forms, with every gradation of civil interest, of friendly banter, finally of mild incredulity, as people are wont to ask when a thing has been pending some considerable time. We shall never hear it again; for we have made—at least I trust we have made—our last move in this world.

It was done of our own free will; we were not obliged to go; yet now that the parting is actually over, on looking back it seems strangely sad, as it were the close to a long sunny day that can never dawn again; others may follow just as bright, but they will not be the same. The feeling springs somehow from the finality of the thing; in our incon-

sequent way we resent the ending of one of life's chapters, even when we ourselves have written the final word. For we who are grown up and have even passed *il mezzo del cammin*, still remain at heart like little children who say to their mothers time after time "Again!" after some game that has pleased them.

"Tous les départs attristent."

In the deserted home the familiar rooms stand wide and empty now; the walls with all their stored-up memories are vacant and bare, showing here and there a patch of brighter colour on the faded paper where pictures or furniture have kept off the sunlight. The house has passed with extraordinary swiftness from the comfort and homeliness begotten of the long years that are gone, to utter desolation. One of that solitary and depressing race known as caretakers, till the joyful advent of a new tenant, is carrying on a shadowed career in the basement.

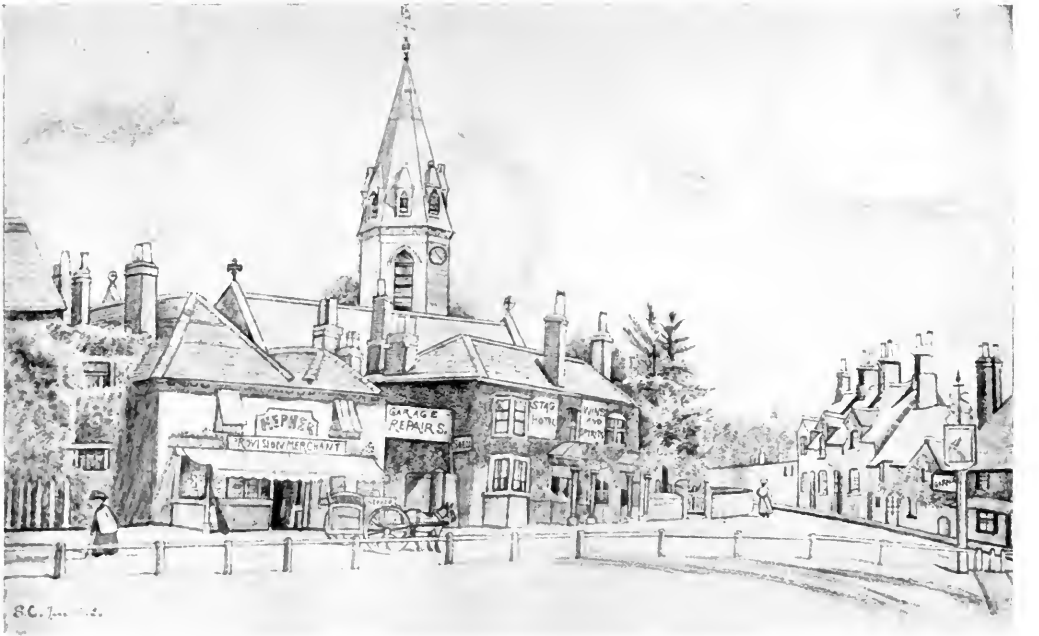
I know that the little town garden will do its best to show a brave front as of old,

to the spring; yellow faces of aconite inside their green ruffs will look up again to greet it, bluebells will sing in an impoverished, but still cheerful chorus. The back yard, however, so many years the home of my diligent hens, is empty and silent now, reverting little by little to what it originally was, a grass-grown orchard. It became a back-yard, despite the presence of three venerable apple trees, when we set up the chicken runs; and the ground was soon hard as brick, every scrap of vegetation disappearing under the busy feet. The pullets are pursuing their honourable calling on a neighbour's premises, but a few aged cocks, beaux of a past generation, their brave plumage but little the worse for a hundred fights, were offered up, indignant, on the culinary altar and "came in" for mince; a petty exit, I grieve to think, for warriors so valiant.

On the very eve of our farewell to the Crescent, Pat, our dear Irish terrier, closed a blameless life in peace. We mourn him truly, but we do not wish him back; for he never could bear a change. . . . The last van has

rounded the corner, the moments have all run out, and the little house stands forlorn, an empty shell, a still form whence the spirit has fled.

Skirting a reach of the main road between Windsor and London, a stone's throw from a little village green, runs a high red-brick ivied wall that hides from view a wide lawn and an old-fashioned kitchen garden, with meadows and a little copse beyond. Here in the shade of ilex and copper beeches stands our new home, a plain Georgian building of red brick, hidden under a coat of yellow paint stained drab and grey by time and weather. Here and there beautiful old crimson colours shine through where the paint is very slowly perishing, but it is good for yet a hundred years. The front of the house is extremely simple, almost childish in design, pierced by fifteen windows all alike. Alongside the front a row of little semi-circular flower-beds bordered with box edging, the prettiest evergreen edging of all, was always bright in past spring-times with primrose and scillas, and in summer with stocks and other




"A LITTLE VILLAGE GREEN"

homely annuals. "No such things," says Miss Jekyll in *Some English Gardens*, "look well or at all in place against a building; the transition from the permanent structure to the transient vegetation is too abrupt," and she advises instead the planting of "something more enduring. . . . mostly evergreen." But why? It is an arrangement after Nature's own heart; one of those contrasts that she loves. For so the frail wild flowers find out the crevices of the mighty rocks and deck the everlasting hills, like little children playing at an old man's feet.

Many of the principal living rooms of the house look north, for the sunlight, slayer of microbes, that we rightly deem essential to our health and homes in these enlightened days, was a matter of indifference to our hardier forbears. To them the window tax was a far weightier consideration, and out of respect to it a great part of the west side of the house was closed up and blind; only in recent years one of the occupants bethought her of opening two windows to the sun.

The interior of the house in olden days

was melancholy and severe. A squat black stove, naked and unashamed, stood in the entrance hall, and made an ineffective attempt to warm the whole of the echoing corridors. The bedrooms upstairs were deadly cold, and their occupants entrenched themselves behind strong baize doors to keep out the draughts. Very little light came through the tall north windows, for a wilderness of scrubby undergrowth without, topped by tall laurels and great brooding yews, obscured the garden spaces. A graceful, tall acacia stood much too near the house, with its infant descendants cropping up in hundreds all over the lawn; it fell in a recent October gale.

The walls of the "reception" rooms were hung with a crimson "flock" paper of a sticky, fluffy texture that would not be tolerated now; the pictures had all been sold when we took possession, but their ghosts were still there, irregular patches and squares at many different levels, with red triangles above them showing where the cords had hung. In the drawing-room a few shreds of a very curious old Japanese paper, that

must have been a great rarity in its time, clung to the woodwork of the wainscoting.

The appointments of the house were solid and dignified. Such was the great two-storied kitchen table, of a kind rarely seen nowadays, with a platform beneath, capable of holding six months' stores. It disappeared in the sale held when the house changed hands, being bought for four shillings by some itinerant dealer. The fastenings of the window shutters are of a most elaborate and burglar-defying mechanism. Through the long winter evenings the tranquil ladies who lived and died in the house must have enjoyed unbroken peace and safety behind those powerful barriers.

How many stories of old days the shrill, cracked bells could have told that hung in the cold outer corridors on the ground floor! Their name-plates were saved from destruction when we came into the house, and though the gilt lettering is faded almost out of recognition, the words have a charm for me still—The White Room, The North Room, Lady Alicia's Bedroom, Lady Selina's

Bedroom. At times I fancy I can hear voices calling from those rooms above, and the answering footsteps of the prim, old-world dependants.

The owners of the place for nearly two centuries were ladies of noble ancestry and quiet ways of life; they were all blessed with exceptional length of days, and the latest generation spent theirs in looking for the new reign of Christ on earth, which was to begin in 1882, and herald the Millennium. They were led to those conclusions through Piazzi Smyth's monumental researches into the mysteries of the great Pyramid. Last year we saved from the sale of the old ladies' little treasures their copy of this extraordinary work —*Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid*, a faded brown book, with four stars engraved on the cover, and the graceful delicate signature of one of the owners on the fly-leaf. The author's abstruse and elaborate reasoning, based on an immense system of measurements and investigation, speaks from these dead pages with weighty assurance and confident hope. "The Great Pyramid system," he

says, "is full of benevolence and compassion for the poor and needy, besides teaching that their anguish and woes will last but a few years longer; for then, agreeably with the Scriptures, Christ himself will again descend from Heaven, this time with angels and archangels accompanying, and will give to man at last that perfect and righteous government which man alone is incapable of; so shall the Saviour reign over all nations brought under his one heavenly sceptre, until that millennial termination arrives, when Time shall be no more. . . ."

Lady Georgiana has drawn a faint pencil line beside this passage, in token of her approval. Someone, greatly daring, once ventured to take her to task for trying to read the future, and quoted to her the words of Scripture: "Ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." She was a lively and resolute old lady, not easily crossed on any subject, and this one of all others lay near her heart. She sent a winged shaft at the speaker. "We are *not* told we shall not know the year," she said.

Lady Georgiana and her sister, Lady Alicia, discussed this tremendous theme on many a Sunday afternoon with a great-nephew of theirs, a little Eton boy, who often came over in the Half to spend an hour with them. The young visitor was just at the age when life looks its brightest, and he viewed the near approach of its end thus presented to him, with much disfavour. He would marshal before the old aunts all the arguments he could muster that might tell against Mr. Smyth's conclusions. Occasionally the afternoon's entertainment would be enlivened by the strains of Moody and Sankey's hymns, played by the boy on the little cottage piano that stood in the corner of the long, low drawing-room. I saw the piano once or twice in later days, when it had long been silent; it had a beautiful front of gathered crimson silk, the folds simulating rays issuing forth from a brass luminary resplendent in the centre.

The little Etonian scored in the end, for the year so confidently awaited came and passed with no sign from heaven; no trumpet

sounded in the skies, and the old watchers lived on, "still ascending towards the snows," until the summons, but not in the way they had looked for, came at last. They have left a fragrant memory behind them in the little village clustering round their home, a memory of unnumbered kindnesses. Yet they ever retained that vast conception of a great gulf fixed between themselves and their "inferiors," which was part of an ancient order of things, now happily well-nigh passed away. It was characteristic of the Ladies Bountiful of that bygone day, and blended strangely with their ways of gentle courtesy and their true goodness of heart. Lady Georgiana, who became rather blind towards the end of her life, was in the garden one day when she heard carriage wheels approaching. "Tell me who it is," she said to her sister, "for I do not wish to bow to rubbish."

A relic of the old ladies' closing days still exists in the garden path that skirts the shrubberies around their home, made extra wide to admit of three invalid chairs abreast. The last survivor of those successive genera-

tions of sisters was a gentle old lady whom I remember seeing one day standing in the beautiful Adam doorway, framed in magnolia and wistaria, the one graceful feature of the plain, grave building. Lady Selina was very small and slender, and indeed what she lived upon would have barely supported a robin. "A little chicken, my dear," she said to a hungry young cousin in her teens, who was sitting at luncheon with her one day, as she lifted the cover before her, and there reposing in its meek white sauce lay one merry-thought. No wonder that Lady Selina dwindled and almost vanished out of sight as her ninetieth year drew on, but yet her hold on life remained extraordinarily strong. She lived four years longer still, and then she too was laid to rest in the churchyard close at hand.

The house was left tenantless and gradually fell into disrepair, almost decay. "The solemn sequence of the seasons" passed over it in silence; the dust of the dead years lay thick in the empty rooms. So it long remained; and now and again a local con-

tractor would intrude within the gates and run his cold, speculative eye over the grey building standing desolate in the beautiful garden, and talk of pulling down the house, cutting up the property into lines of convenient villas. These things were not to be. Better days have dawned at last, and the old place is renewing its youth once more. New life is springing up within it and around; snowdrops are weaving their white wreaths afresh at the feet of the beech-trees.

# A LITTLE EXPERIENCE OF FURNISHING

# A LITTLE EXPERIENCE OF FURNISHING

Some weeks before that first new spring-time the house was refurnished and ready. There is often a greater charm and a deeper interest in revivifying an old place than in creating a new one; so we found it here, but there was one drawback to this advantage, in that we had not an entirely free hand. It was certainly fortunate that no structural alterations were needed; so we did not have to adopt the headlong course of "throwing the dining-room into the hall," or the like. But in various respects we were obliged to adapt our own ideas to old and often difficult conditions. I like square landings on every floor, and in our new-old house there are none; I like a drawing-room level with the garden instead of being put away upstairs, and

windows which open at the top instead of only at the bottom. These let in a searching and peculiar draught which is a radically different thing from "fresh air"; but they were practically never opened at all in the easy old days when no one worried about microbes. I have gone so far as to put little wheel ventilators into one or two window panes; but they cost fourteen shillings each, so that it is cheaper to remain stuffy.

We have installed a radiator system, the house without such aid in winter being perishingly cold; the great wide chimney stacks are mostly built for better security against outside walls, an arrangement which wastes a good third of the heat. The fire-places were quite worn through and useless; the pretty old grates, their thin plates adorned with delicate wreaths and garlands, were sold as old iron, and carted off by the rag and bone man. I was quite sorry to see them go; they had a pathetic look of still quenchless welcome, with memories of bright wood fires behind their

bent and ruined bars. They have gone, and Teale grates with red, some with grey-blue tiles, have taken their place, and save an infinity of blacking.

From the bowels of the earth arise strange, hoarse sounds when the great slow-combustion furnace is fed in its cellar-home under the pantry floor. Day and night at work, the thing's hunger is never satisfied; but we live in hope that it is really a great economy, as coke is cheap and fewer coal fires are needed. The radiators—industrious offspring of the slow-combustion—are all discreetly concealed in little white houses, with lattice sides and perforated tops. We have installed electric light, but with all its transcendent merits I shall never care for it in living rooms as I do for the homely domesticated lamp—such a one, with its great cheery sun-face, and gentle sound ever and anon of oil dropping in the receiver, as stood on our schoolroom table long ago. I remember, too, with affection the candlesticks furnished with black funereal shades made of stout, almost impenetrable wirework, specially contrived as

precaution against fire, with which we nightly groped our way to bed. Electric light in bedrooms is indeed a boon, and saves that tapping all over the place in the dark, and many a painful collision with the furniture, in the search for a match-box. Luminous match-boxes were a useful invention in their day, but they could not light our way to them, and proved most disappointing when laid by chance the wrong side up. Where there is no electric light in a bedroom the match-box should always reside on its own little bracket by the door; but I have never met with that simple device, save in one house, in the whole course of my life. The great drawback to electric light is that the modern housemaid forgets the humble match-box altogether, although we need it just as much as before for sealing our letters and curling our hair. How wonderful is electricity! as familiar to us now as daily bread, and yet how few of us can say what it is, this mysterious, captive, mighty force, that obeys a baby's hand, and springs into magic life at our will! In the ever-widening fields on which it shines no

service is too splendid, none too humble, for it to render; it lights St. Paul's Cathedral, and boils the kettle for our tea. On the common ground of every-day life it is encroaching ever further; one day it will be everywhere used for cooking, and we shall wonder how we put up so long with the cumbrous, smutty, wasteful kitchen range. To the eye of the thrifty housewife there is no more exasperating sight than the kitchen fire roaring away with nothing on it; a gas stove, where it can be had, is a useful compromise. As a rule, we all make a perfect fetish of switching off the light in passages and rooms temporarily unoccupied. This form of thrift is all very well when we have only ourselves to consider, but should not be practised at the expense of our guests. Well I remember charging into a wardrobe on a pitch dark landing when on a visit to a friend. I saw "stars" and got a black eye, and did not forgive her for a month. If we cannot afford to keep a few extra lights burning while their visit lasts, we should take our guests round the house on their arrival, and

show them where the switches are. These I prefer made in gun metal, which I think prettier than the common fluted brass knobs, and it saves labour in cleaning. Best of all, however, is the sunk box with its neat plate flush with the wall; this can only be contrived where the wall is of a certain thickness. I chose very pretty plates for my house, perfectly flat and plain, with a little design of reed and ribbon round the margin to match the decoration on the old-fashioned door furniture. When they were fixed I found they were further ornamented with senseless bumps and excrescences. The electrician said they would be a dead loss to him if I insisted on changing them, so I must bear with them to the end.

For every bedroom a collapsible stand for dress-boxes should be kept handy. This simple convenience, found in every continental hotel, is rarely seen in English houses; yet its use saves us from an infinity of fatigue, and that feeling of blood to the head and general irritability peculiar to the process of packing in the ordinary way on the floor.

I have not yet solved the question of casement curtains as against blinds, for with curtains, if we want only slightly to shade the sunlight, we have to darken the whole window, or else we find two pairs of inner curtains necessary, one for each sash, an arrangement that I always think unsuited to a dignified old window. Blinds, on the other hand, are one of the failures of civilisation. The Venetian blinds are heavy and awkward in working, with a habit of descending violently to the ground, and the ordinary sort on the smallest provocation come off the roller and refuse to go up straight when replaced; once crumpled and untidy they remain so till the end. They are wedded, moreover, either to the dust-collecting tassel, or to the hard, ridiculous acorn, admirably adapted for smashing the glass. If we must have tassels, let us at least remember to renew them as soon as their skirts drop off, a misfortune which invariably attends them after a certain period of hard wear, leaving a few rags and tatters clinging to the head. They cost but two-

pence each, or threepence with trimmed petticoats, while nothing looks more neglected and untidy than the mutilated half of a tassel, a sight to which most people are strangely indifferent. While on the subject of windows, let me plead that our dressing tables be placed anywhere but in their usual position, where the looking-glass obscures the greater part of the light within, and entirely disfigures the window without. However pleasing the picture presented to the beholder in the *front* of a looking-glass, the back is one of the plainest objects in the whole range of household furniture. Our curtains in general are now cut on far less extravagant lines than formerly; for it is no longer the custom to have them trailing a yard or more on the ground, and looped up by day in an immense mass over the cord. They are still chained like wild beasts to the wall; no other means has yet been invented of keeping those tidy that are made to reach the ground, but they are cut just the requisite length and no more. The sumptuous heavy draperies, however, such as make the splendid

setting to a Vandyck portrait, were in keeping with the spacious days gone by. As to choice of materials there should be very little difficulty, now that we have such endless variety to select from, reproductions too of beautiful old designs. Birds, perhaps the most lovely *motif* in all decoration, are unsuitable for seats of chairs I think, for I never like the idea of sitting on a bird. Various "fadeless" dyes are on the market now, but their claim has yet to be proved, and even if it is they will forfeit a certain charm. Some colours that time has faded are more beautiful than any yet produced by human skill.

Fashion, as we have seen, is retracing her steps in many directions, and looking in quest of fresh ideas to the fancies and inventions of byegone days, but these of course are not all capable of adaptation now, though time has lent them a certain enchantment. I have not yet noticed, for instance, any revival of the bead cushions (always pronounced "cushin") beloved of our grandmothers. Some of these survive to this day,

heavy and cumbersome, their crude brightness undimmed by a hundred years—for it is I believe impossible, short of total annihilation, for anything to happen to a bead—and the touch of them as cold as a winter's day. Vanished too, and I trust for ever, are the hideously named antimacassars that were painfully worked with blood and tears and stout red cotton, by our infant fingers. Traced upon them were the ghosts of nursery rhymes, cows jumping, a remarkable feat at any time, but doubly so with four crippled legs, over the moon; John Gilpin, not in the least degree

> "Like an arrow swift
> Shot by an archer strong,"

but pottering on the sorriest of nags through merry Islington; blurred and bedraggled swains paying court to maidens whose faces had never made their fortunes. They bore not the faintest resemblance to Nature, the smaller outlines being simply impossible to reproduce with our big, awkward stitches. Those were the darkest days of schoolroom

needlework, before the art in general had been revived and properly taught as it is now. Our pathetic little failures were duly presented to our mothers on their birthdays, and adorned the drawing-room till after many a long day the laundry and the kindly sunlight between them finally succeeded in obliterating the design; but the sun's action was often indefinitely retarded because its rays were never allowed to enter Victorian drawing-rooms save through drawn blinds, for fear of fading the carpet and "springing" the marqueterie. Our grand-mothers sat patiently through their glorious summers behind windows veiled in impenetrable linen. We may laugh over the anxious carefulness of those leisured days, but we must admit that it has preserved for our enjoyment many a treasure. Indeed our best chairs and tables receive scant respect now that our children are free to run in and out of every room in the house; whereas their grand-parents, when *they* were children, save in certain grave and solemn periods of the day were kept severely out of sight and hearing of the elders. Our

modern furniture, moreover, is less capable than the old of withstanding hard usage; but I fancy we are right in discarding the curious custom of drawing every stick of furniture into the middle of the room, which was thought to preserve it when the family were away from home. Carpets in those days were always laid up to the wainscoting, a fusty and unnecessary arrangement still prevailing in many houses, which undoubtedly produces an accumulation of dust along the walls; but the wear and tear of dragging heavy objects so frequently to and fro must surely have outweighed the increased facilities of cleaning. Among the recent advances of civilisation can be reckoned a more intelligent warfare against dust; but the modern housemaid has yet to learn that all her efforts are in vain unless she first damps her materials. Watch her trying to sweep a floor with a dry broom; the dust simply gets up and dances about, to settle down again when her back is turned. Valuable furniture requires, of course, special treatment.

At this point I am brought face to face

with the gigantic bogey of spring cleaning; and even at the risk of digression I must here pause and lay it low. Surely it is an extraordinary fact that so many intelligent people should be content to pass several of the most delightful weeks in every year in discomfort which, so long as our houses are kept in decent order through the seasons, is wholly unnecessary. I have known one lady actually forced to keep her bed because no room in her house during this miserable process was habitable.

What though the infinite labours of spring cleaning, "its tragic passions and desperate energies, inspired first the broom and then the pen of Jane Welsh Carlyle;" what though a late distinguished writer has written a prose epic on the theme—it remains that in this oft recurring and terrific upheaval we have a bogey that never should have been suffered to rise from dead winter's shroud to stalk through the fairest hours of spring.

We may well be thankful for the invention of the vacuum cleaner, which does away with the wearisome business of taking up and

relaying carpets, and the childish and violent process of beating them; also for the greatly extended use of matting, which needs very little attention, either when used as what is called in the hideous jargon of the trade a "surround," or in place of a carpet altogether. Matting has one drawback in that the rougher kinds play havoc with the hem of our skirts, and also it is cruel stuff to work, prickly and awkward for the poor sempstresses' fingers. When laid, however, it proves greatly superior to stained boards, which have to be rubbed and bees'-waxed twice a day if we object to seeing grey marks on them. Parquet is the prettiest flooring—also the dearest—for a smart modern house, but it is out of place, of course, in an old-fashioned setting.

Every labour-saving device is of special value when we consider the present tendency to overcrowd our rooms. With its jumble of photographs, silver tables, knick-knacks, flowers—even of flowers we can have too many—it is almost impossible to move in a modern drawing-room. Let us call back

some of the spaciousness and dignity of home life a hundred years ago, and adopt, to a certain extent at least, our grandmothers' ideal of having in every room a table large enough to spread a map out on; with its suggestion of leisureliness and useful information, this would be a relief to the eye among a great part of our spindley, meaningless furniture. Tea-tables, dressing-tables, and writing-desks are nearly always too small. I admit, however, that dining-tables in old days were usually made so large as to inflict misery and silence on a shy young visitor. I well remember in my childhood going to luncheon with an old lady over ninety, and trying with some timid remark to bridge the vast stretch of years and napery that lay between us.

Our present need for a little more space and restfulness in home furnishing shows itself even in the pictures on our walls. It is impossible to describe the medley of startling incident that "*saute aux yeux*" as we enter many a modern sitting-room. The Muses in Parnassus look down astonished on

a crowd of Japanese figures hurrying under red and orange umbrellas through the rain; Paolo and Francesca, clasped in their eternal embrace, are floating through nothingness close to Queen Victoria in her nightgown, receiving the news of her accession from the Archbishop of Canterbury. What matter is it if we even leave a few spaces bare on walls and floor; they are better than a hundred jarring objects. With the violent over-emphasis affected by certain journalists, we were recently advised in the "Ladies Page" of a daily paper to "avoid a monotonous house like the plague." Well, so we can; and yet preserve some measure of order and kinship among our household gods. There is, on the other hand, one apartment in many ordinary houses which does, I think, cry aloud for a little variety and brightness; I mean the Entrance Hall. This suggestion applies to country houses principally; for in the confined space of town houses a narrow passage, capable of very little adornment, has usually to do duty for a hall. Why is this feature of our home so seldom pleasing to

behold? Why, when every other room in the house smiles a welcome, are we content with an austere and frowning hall?—an apartment given over to the unlovely comradeship of hat rack and umbrella stand, goloshes and waterproofs? The hall is the first room that greets the stranger as he enters, and the last on which he looks back in parting; it ought, in common with every greeting and every farewell, to have a heart in it.

# THOUGHTS IN A GARDEN

# THOUGHTS IN A GARDEN

I AM writing in "holy December"; the procession of the months has almost passed away, and I watch their closing days, lit with a blaze of Christmas candles, vanish into the dark.

For a few of us, not for many, the year has gone by with the shifting splendour of a pageant; for some it has been simply like a chain hung with small plain beads, or a slow train travelling through flat, uninteresting country; and for others, like a forest track that winds through lonely and shadowed ways towards the light.

We used to play as children with an old toy called the Wheel of Time. It was a revolving circular cage containing a narrow strip of paper, on which a number of little dancing figures representing the seasons were seen in

silhouette. We looked through the interstices and made the mannikins go faster and faster, tripping over one another, whirling round and round, till they became a somewhat violent allegory of the fleeting years. The little sermon in the Wheel of Time fell on unheeding ears, however; it would have seemed to us indeed, if we had ever thought about it, extremely untrue to life, which, with its distant shining goal of "growing up" appeared to us then interminably long. There would be time for everything, we thought; we know better now! Yet to us all, young and old, there come December days, real, not dream days I mean, when Time seems not to fly at all, but to potter by with halting feet as he drives his slow team, the dull grey hours, along the winter furrows. Then because we talk without thinking, we say that Nature is asleep; when we well know that she is never less asleep than now, her watching time: holding fast the charge that is given her, she is keeping her treasures safe till the long days call them. Nature is never idle, never really out of heart; she is

always looking forward and beginning all over again; and those who read her aright need but lift their eyes to see the desolate fields white already to harvest.

Moreover, there is a beauty in winter, an appeal in its shy, pensive woods and fleeting lights, that speaks more closely to our heart than all the *fanfare* of Spring. "Les clairs soirs d'hiver, quand la neige s'échauffe au couchant et prend des tons de fleurs d'amandier, ce spectacle caresse le regard de teintes plus douces que tous les témoignages du printemps."

There is true philosophy in these thoughts, and yet there are days, mournful days of the dying year, when, we know not how, its consolations fail. Then I turn with hope renewed to a kind of chart of the spring which I came across one day. It is, I think, worth giving here in full, for it sends a shaft of brightness down the long vista of the months with the thought that there have been years, and will be again, when the loveliest of all Spring's voices have been heard so early as December

## Mr. Marsham's Indications of Spring.

### Lord Suffield's Remarks on them.

| | Earliest. | Latest. |
|---|---|---|
| Snowdrop appears | Dec. 24 | Feb. 10 |
| The Thrush sings | Dec. 4 | Feb. 13 |
| Hawthorn Leaf | Feb. 11 | April 22 |
| Hawthorn Flowers | April 13 | June 2 |
| Frogs and Toads croak | Feb. 20 | May 4 |
| Sycamore Leaf | Feb. 22 | May 4 |
| Birch Leaf | Feb. 21 | May 4 |
| Elm Leaf | March 4 | May 6 |
| Mountain Ash Leaf | March 5 | May 2 |
| Oak Leaf | March 31 | May 20 |
| Beech Leaf | April 5 | May 10 |
| Horse Chestnut Leaf | March 10 | May 2 |
| Chestnut Leaf | March 28 | May 12 |
| Hornbeam Leaf | March 7 | May 7 |
| Ash Leaf | April 2 | May 26 |
| Ringdoves coo | Dec. 27 | March 20 |
| Rooks build | Feb. 2 | March 14 |
| Swallows | March 30 | April 26 |
| Cuckoo sings | April 9 | May 7 |
| Nightingale sings | April 7 | May 19 |
| Churn Owl sings | April 29 | June 26 |
| Young Rooks | March 26 | April 24 |
| Turnip Flowers | Jan. 10 | June 18 |
| Lime Leaf | March 19 | May 7 |
| Maple Leaf | March 15 | May 7 |
| Wood Anemone blows | March 16 | April 22 |
| Yellow Butterfly appears | Jan. 14 | April 17 |

Earliest year mentioned, 1735. Latest, 1800.

Some of these indications were observed in 62 years. Some in 30 years.

4th, that a yellow butterfly has been seen amid the January snows, and that the rooks, were they so piously minded, might lay their foundation-twigs on the Feast of the Purification.

Lord Suffield's Remarks have been, I fear, omitted from the original of my chart, unless they be all contained in the simple, yet speaking, testimony to his friend's wonderful gift of observation and lifelong watchfulness which is inscribed beneath. We will hope that Mr. Marsham looked his last on the world in the season whose earliest and latest tokens he had waited for, year after year, through so many days, and that Spring shed its full radiance on his passing hence.

I read a curious fact about rooks lately, which was received, I am sorry to say, with derision by all to whom I have since related it, namely, that they love to disperse themselves about the tree-tops down the whole length of an avenue and "caw," as it were, in perspective. I recommend the idea to the designer of the next new concert hall in

London. Avenues are gradually ceasing to exist in our parks and gardens, being no longer in fashion, and have begun a different and petty existence in the suburbs; so the poor rooks are driven to resort in small groups to single trees, sacrificing the *diminuendo* effects in music that they love.

The robins are singing. I was annoyed in reading some novel lately by an allusion to the robin's "scarlet coat:" when only his breast of course is red. Probably the writer had never taken the trouble of looking at a robin. In a recent essay by an eminent naturalist it was suggested that the robin's red breast, like other bright patches of colour in the plumage of certain birds, is given him by a thoughtful Providence as an aid to his wooing. But the robin's breast is not bright at all, it is a dull orange-red. True, it takes on a soft and lovely sheen in sunlight; still, it would hardly *dazzle* the lady of his choice, though it might certainly please her. Sometimes, though rarely, she is just as well turned out herself, for instances are not unknown of a hen robin being quite indistinguishable

from her mate. There is a variety native in the East that is ruddier than the European robin, whose breast is almost the colour of dried blood; and the origin of the well-known legend is plain which tells that a robin alighted on the head of the Saviour as He hung on the Cross, and drew therefrom the deepest driven nail; and blood springing from the wound, just tinged the robin's breast with red.

From a short distance this bright, cold morning, the kitchen-garden paths appear with a white border instead of a green, the shiny leaves of the low box edging being decorated each with a rim of hoar-frost, finely gradated according to the shelter the upper leaves can give to those beneath them. The lowest leaves have no ornament at all. From the great bare trees that guard the old red walls of the garden the winds have lately torn away crowds of small boughs and dead, brittle twigs, letting in more and more of the sky through the tree-tops, brightening the winter day overhead. We notice this brightening perhaps scarcely at all, but it is there,

increasing all the winter through after any stormy spell. For the most part we are not half enough aware of light; we forget to look for it; and so, in more senses than one the long "winters of our discontent" seem darker than they really are. Often it needs a poet's eye to see light shining in unexpected places; and recently in a beautiful essay on Colour in Autumn I read of an effect of light that all the poets, save one, have missed:—"the mock sunshine of the faded woods." It follows hard on the pageant of the dying year, but only Tennyson, I believe, has noted it. Yet any autumn day after the brilliant colours have all burnt themselves away, on some woodland walk by thicket and hedge, we may see what looks at first sight like a sudden drift of sunlight; and we shall find that it is only a patch of oak or beech underwood, lingering sheltered in a kind of brightness long after the winds have stripped the lofty trees; or sprays of golden bramble, or tangled fronds of bracken, pale and dead. We speak of "autumn tints," but in its usual connection it is the feeblest expression in the

language, for, strange to say, it is his mighty fires we mean by "tints," not the little lights that burn unnoticed long after those have died.

To return to the garden. In a large bed in a sunny corner, though they ask for no special indulgence, being content with any fairly open position, are planted my Mrs. Sinkins pinks. It is a pity their beauty is so short-lived, for after a few days they invariably burst their sides and let their petals fall about, a weakness shared by others of the carnation family. Little wire waistbands have been invented for greenhouse carnations, which can be put round the opening buds to keep their shape intact; but it would take too long to do this to ten thousand Mrs. Sinkins. The real original Mrs. Sinkins, who was formerly matron of the Slough Workhouse, lives two miles from my home; I saw her and Mr. Sinkins recently. She told me—and I have her permission to write the story down—that one day she saw some of the pinks on a market stall, and remarked to the salesman how universally they are now grown, and he

agreed and said : " Do you know Mrs. Sinkins herself was a very poor woman before she grew rich on her pinks? Now she drives in a carriage and pair." But Mrs. Sinkins replied : " You are not quite right in either of those statements, young man. Mrs. Sinkins never was a *very* poor woman, and she is certainly not rich now; she never drives in a carriage and pair; and I ought to know, for my name is Mrs. Sinkins." Indeed she has made no money with her pink; she gave it to a great nurseryman, who has made it famous for her. Another day she was standing on the platform at Slough Station with her brother; two gentlemen came by, and one said to the other: " O I do love Mrs. Sinkins ! "

" Do you hear what they are saying ? " asked her brother, a little shocked.

" It's my flower they mean, not me ! " she said.

Mr. and Mrs. Sinkins, in their old age, are enjoying the reflection of the happiness they have given to the world; for theirs is a loved name in every garden.

I got bulbs for indoor decoration this winter from Scilly; but by inadvertence several of these, when potted, were stored in too dry and warm a place, and I fear they will fail; others were placed on a concrete floor and they caught cold. They are far better simply plunged in the open ground. I am, however, hoping for great things from some amaryllis bulbs, that a friend has lately brought me from Cape Town, although she truly observes that finding the seasons transposed on its arrival here must be very confusing to a bulb. Still, these South African lilies often succeed in this country. In place of my lost narcissi and tulips I must fall back on dried boughs of chestnut and beech, and the ever useful, if somewhat lugubrious aspidistras. It always surprises me to see people writing to the gardening papers that their aspidistras have failed, for I find it impossible to harm these simple plants; they have nine lives. Given too much water, their leaves grow luxuriantly of a rich deep green; given too little, the foliage is scantier, but beautifully variegated with canary yellow.

In either case they show the Christian grace of contentment.

Many of our disappointments in gardening (I speak as a humble amateur) are of course of our own making; but I have not yet probed the mystery of an extraordinary reverse I lately experienced. In the spring I sowed seeds from a hundred packets, each differently named, and most carefully selected as to colour and height in the open borders, and in due time they all came up foxgloves. Now few sights of early summer are more beautiful than the foxgloves' graceful spires, but these were too ridiculous; there were hundreds and thousands of foxgloves; the garden was the laughing stock of all beholders. I had many carted away in wheel-barrows to the wild garden, and moved others to the rear of the borders, and I wrote to the firm that had supplied me the seeds, relating the occurrence. I received a polite reply, saying they were utterly at a loss to explain the curious circumstance I had kindly communicated to them. Where it is possible, let our own flowers supply the

seed, though some may need great care to ensure its "coming true"; for it is always well to begin at the beginning: we gain the sense of real achievement then; and our best rewards in life have their birth in the workshop :—

"For where the old thick laurels grow along the thin red wall,
You'll find the tool and potting sheds, which are the heart of all."

Mr. Phillips, the foreman who superintended the alterations to the house, came back in the following autumn to build our new potting sheds. We had missed him greatly in the interval, and felt like children who lose an old nurse and are left to look after their toys themselves. Across the road is a small *annexe* to the garden, which sheltered a curious and melancholy structure of unknown origin, decorated with leaded windows and a rough kind of painted tracery that gave it a half-hearted ecclesiastical air. It stood in a corner, partly concealed by tall rank stems of the Jerusalem artichoke, one of the few entirely unattractive plants in existence. This building was called by Mr. Phillips simply "The

Gothic." One day he and his men attacked it with destroying implements, and its dubious and useless existence ended with a clatter and a groan. But the wood that composed The Gothic was found to be heart of oak, and seasoned as wood is rarely seasoned now; so it went to build the sheds, and two pieces of rough ornament from the old doorway adorn their homely entrance. Ruggy, a little grey dog, with a soft white ruff like foam of the sea round his neck, spends half his valuable time grubbing inside the sheds. During the other half he trots about, a concentrated *bouquet* of potting shed. The ingredients are easily recognised—leaf mould, common soil, string, tar, boxes of seedling tomatoes, mouse-trap and mouse, sacks, and many a nameless plaything of his own, hidden away in dusky corners. In all the growing time of the year he is to be seen in the neighbouring farmer's field, with a friend entirely of his own making —a mild old man, whose calling is known in Buckinghamshire as "bird-starver." This apparently inhuman title merely means that he frightens the birds away from the young

crops. Sometimes he carries a gun, but I think no bird can be really afraid of him. A certain air of poetry hangs over the bird-starver as he and his little comrade roam the fields together, and the whirring of wings before him makes music as he goes.

The gardener likewise must protect his growing things from their natural enemies; but his fight is often a squalid and uninteresting one, and the means he is obliged to use are merciless. He gets quite indifferent to them through long habit; so the green fly that smother the roses are flooded out with soapy water; well, we need not mourn for them, perhaps, they have not much individuality; but what of the earwigs, which are justly famed as the best mothers in creation? They are deceived and lured to death by means of bamboo stems and inverted flower-pots; rats and mice are trapped and hunted and poisoned; snails, pursued in summer after nightfall with a candle, and doomed to a fearful end next morning in the chicken yard. The great brown owl in the yew tree kindly helps the blackbirds to

dispatch some of the fat grey slugs; for others we set ready a little fortress made of green tin, containing a mound of bran which attracts them with cruel guile, and lets them fall through to drown in a salt water moat below.

And so the strife goes on that sees no ending—Nature's pitiless laws forever at variance, it seems, with her kindness; while the gardener watches and remembers, ever hopeful; sowing always in joy, even though he sometimes reap in tears.

BRYANSTON SQUARE

# BRYANSTON SQUARE

THERE are certain regions of London that never lose for those who once lived in them the feeling of home. Whole streets and districts have been transformed beyond recognition, and many actually swept away by the changed conditions of twentieth-century life; while others remain as they used to be when those now middle-aged were children, and keep the mellow brightness of old days.

I wandered round Bryanston Square, which lies north of Hyde Park at the farther end of Great Cumberland Place, one autumn afternoon, and looked through a window of my heart at three little sisters who lived there thirty years ago. The lofty dignified lines of mid-Victorian houses are the same now as then: here a bow window or extra storey has been added, there are new marble steps and a trellis and creeper; but the

character of the whole is unchanged. At each corner of the Square is a larger, statelier mansion than its neighbours; these are of brick and lead up again to another *crescendo* in the middle, of superior grandeur and stone facing. We lived in one of the brick houses on the sunny side.

The palings round the Square through which the little slum children peep are black of course, as of yore; so too are the bushes: I can recall the sticky feel of those evergreen leaves bravely struggling through the fogs to greet the coming spring-time. The husky, cross voice of the much-tried old gardener calls to me down the ages to keep off the grass, and in one corner still stands his tool-house, pyramid-roofed, which remained for us a forbidden place of vaguely imagined delights to the last. The same mounds at each end of the garden, adorned with laurel and privet and intersected with little winding paths, break the monotony of the landscape—and of old those always held a certain air of mystery. We fancied that sprites and wizards had their haunts among

the bushes there; but they were a languid race, and suffered from the prosaic nature of their surroundings. Real, live fairy stories demand for their setting some measure of privacy; whereas it was impossible to protect ours from the tall watching windows of the houses on either side of the Square, and the inquisitive hansom cabman sitting idle on his perch outside the gates. The fairies, too, were sadly cramped in Bryanston Square; for no sooner had you got to the top of one scrubby little hill than you were at the bottom again, in the every-day world that knew them not, the dull, wide pathway which formed a promenade for old ladies and nursery maids. Just outside the railings, at the southern end of the Square, stands a dingy fountain which has long run dry, and bears a faded inscription to a certain respected inhabitant of Marylebone, a distinguished journalist who died fifty years ago. The long list of his once shining virtues is vanished nearly out of sight, but I could just read that "this refreshing fountain"—poor, dusty, silent thing—was erected to keep his memory

green. Beside the fountain, a stern iron placard, new since our day, threatens with instant prosecution all performers of music in the Square. Banished then is the Monday German band, and the daily organ-grinder, with his tiny monkey dressed in a particularly well-cut coat; it fitted him without a wrinkle, and gleams yet, a bobbing speck of cheerful red, through the misty past. But I am forgetting that the monkey and his poor master would both he dead by this time, even if they had not been driven from the Square; it is so many years since last we knew them there. Down the long road paces slow the great yellow watering cart, the little excitement of its appearance breaking in on quiet, dusty summer days. I remember the awestruck respect with which I regarded its semi-sacred calling, for was not "MARYLEBONE VESTRY" writ large on its amber sides? and I wondered what happened to it on Sundays, when Canon Fremantle and the white-robed choir of St. Mary's took up all the available space. In those days we were not aware that Mary-

lebone contained any other place of worship, or I might have concluded that there was a more capacious vestry somewhere else. "Where is the water cart stood on Sundays?" I once asked our old nurse, but I do not think she gave me any satisfactory reply.

St. Mary's Church, the sombre Georgian building with its deep-toned bells that seemed to shame the shrill voices of common life around, gave the due note of gravity to our days. Through the deep shadows of its classical portico, Sunday by Sunday, we passed, cheerily greeted by the kind old beadle, resplendent in his triple-caped, gold-trimmed coat and three-cornered hat, at his post beside the red baize door. I miss the beadle at many a London church to-day; he has passed with the tide of old-fashioned things.

We are inside St. Mary's now, and the discreet melancholy figure of the pew-opener is there, with her worn, welcoming face, her neat black dress with its prim adornment of gimp down the front, and the bonnet strings that came undone and floated out behind when a large congregation assembled and she

got a little flustered. To this day I can see the two narrow shiny places in the ribbon where it was wont to be tied: children notice such things. It is hard on the pew-openers of England, a humble, harmless race, that Dickens should have set among them forever the unlovely form of Mrs. Miff, her of the "vinegary face" and grasping soul; for a meek and quiet spirit was the ornament of our old friend of St. Mary's. But they have climbed the social ladder since her day, for since the old-fashioned pews with doors have disappeared, the office of pew-opener has risen to that of Church Attendant.

The interior of the great building is dimly lighted and severe. During the Litany, when I grew tired with kneeling and sat up furtively against the hard straight back of the pew, or when my thoughts, despite all efforts to steady them, *would* wander from the sermon, I had recourse to various pastimes. I would count the little bits of glass in the side windows, arranged in a symmetrical design of squares and lozenges, and again in squares, faint colour-echoes of a

kaleidoscope we loved at home; or looking up to the circle of little gas jets that twinkled like stars in the lofty roof, I wondered how anyone could climb up so high to reach them; or my little sister and I, shocking to relate, would start a race with our hymn books, turning over the pages as quickly as we could till we should reach the end; but this game made a dangerous swishing noise, and was usually checked before we had got very far. When these several distractions became exhausted, we were reduced to shutting our eyes and rubbing them round and round with our fingers, when a bright and beautiful object, like the eye of a peacock's feather, immediately appeared in the farther corners. I have never yet understood how one can see this lovely thing in the dark. For many years I have searched the *Daily Telegraph* to see if Sir Ray Lankester would explain the mystery From his Easy Chair, but so far it does not seem to have occurred to him.

The service is ended at last, and I follow the three little sisters out again into the daylight.

At No. 1 in the Square lived in solitary state the Turkish Ambassador, a gentle, mild old man with a passionate fondness for small cage birds. The glass window case built out of his great bare reception room was fitted up as an aviary, and the little specks of gay colour brightened the darkest days without. One morning as we came home from our walk in the Park, and chanced to look up at the corner house, we saw the cages still and empty, that so lately had been full of "fluttering love." The servants in a few days' absence of their master had forgotten to feed the birds, and they had starved to death!

The old ambassador never recovered his tragic loss, I believe; it was not long before he followed his little songsters out of this life, and the Embassy was transferred to a different part of London.

We kept a canary of our own, a bird with very little character,—and a dormouse. There was also a cat called Frank, a spirited animal, although of unwieldy size and fabulous age; but he despised the tame

pleasures of schoolroom life, and preferred a career of brave adventure in the basement.

The dormouse belonged to my little sister and me, and was the light of our lives. Our elder sister was of a serious and literary disposition; she did not care for animals, but devoted herself to improving her own mind and ours in various branches of study. I should add that she was always most kind to us, the two "little ones," and from our extremely humble position on the ladder of learning we looked up to her with admiring affection. She would come into the nursery with Dr. Brewer's *Guide to Science* in her hand, a fat blue book that imparted much useful information in catechism form. I remember one such occasion, especially, when she wore a frock of the colour we called "crushed strawberry" then—it has become Rose du Barri since—and a very pretty sprigged muslin pinafore threaded with black velvet ribbon. My memory of that frock and pinafore is unusually bright, for looking back on them now I am afraid our clothes were mostly hideous. For our walks abroad

we wore in winter blue coats of an extraordinarily stout material which were called Pea-jackets, soberly braided down the front; and in change with those we had "Norfolk" coats, a type of garment that has unfortunately survived all these years, though it now, I think, shows signs of extinction; it ought never to be seen out of Norfolk, if it must be seen anywhere. Ours were in grey tweed, with a "duster" pattern in squares of red on it. Children thirty years ago were seldom nicely dressed. Our sister kept her forefinger in the first page of Dr. Brewer's *Guide.* "What is Heat?" she asked. Answer came there none; and she had to supply it herself. "That which produces a sensation of Warmth." . . . "Do you know what a Second is? . . . Every time I wink, that is a Second."

We were busy putting a fresh cotton-wool lining into the dormouse's sleeping apartment, and for once we did not attend to her. It was a Herefordshire mouse from the meadows near Foye, above the valley of the Wye. I grieve now to think how cruel it

was to take his freedom from him, as he played over the summer fields, and shut him up for life in an incredibly stuffy little box, five inches square, with a "wheel" by way of exercise, a circular wire frame-work like the hoops of a barrel, which he worked for hours together with his feet. He reached a marvellous speed in the wheel, flying round and round till his little form was entirely lost, and he appeared a mere wraith, a disembodied spirit, a tiny symbol of perpetual motion. But the idea of any injustice on our part towards the mouse never entered our heads; and we surrounded him with an amount of love and attention that he must have felt positively oppressive at times. His career is surely a record among his fellows; for he travelled twice to Italy and back, through the St. Gothard tunnel and home by diligence over the Simplon, spending the winters in Florence and Rome; and all that time he was completely unconscious, rolled up into a tight cold ball, wrapped in sleep. Every spring-time, after the long rest, we watched for his unfolding tail with a joy of expecta-

tion that nothing in life has ever equalled since.[1]

There came a season at last—it was in London—when the awakening of the dormouse lacked its usual *éclat;* we grew very anxious about him, and consulted a celebrated bird-fancier, who was also experienced in mice; he gave his serious attention to the case, but all in vain. One summer evening the little thing fell asleep out of due time, and then we knew he would not wake again. Late that night we crept out of bed, unknown to Nannie, to watch beside him till he died at sunrise. His limbs and tail arranged themselves differently from the way they had in natural sleep, and grew stiff as they had never done before; so then we knew he was dead, and we buried him in the quietest spot we could find in the quiet square.

We never got another mouse; but replaced

[1] My sister says that I am mistaken about the dormouse's winter sleep; that the schoolroom in which he lived being never really cold, he kept constantly waking up, and that this artificial activity hastened his end. Yet I remember his habits exactly as I have described them above. We shall never agree on the subject now.

our favourite after an extended period of bereavement by two bright green frogs that our grandmother's maid brought for us from the south of France. They were named Tim and Toddy. We planted a miniature rock garden as a home for them, in a dish with pebbles, sand, and water. Looking back now I think the frogs' rock and water garden was very ingeniously contrived, and actually anticipated the miniature Japanese gardens shown years after at the White City. This one was covered with an immense wire meat safe, and we fed the frogs with blue-bottle flies. The sight of a blue-bottle fly on the window-pane was one of joy to us, instead of horror as in these hygienic days; certainly the frogs swallowed daily a few million microbes, and flourished on them.

It was a thrilling study in animal magnetism to watch the frogs transfix their victims with their gleaming eyes before devouring them; the flies would remain motionless, hypnotised, and then the frogs would spring, often both of them at one and the same fly, when a terrible collision ensued.

That autumn we went to Germany and took the frogs with us; they had to travel of course in the traditional glass jar half full of water, with a step-ladder for them to perch on. Through the long hours in the night train my sister and I took charge of our pets by turns, keeping awake with immense difficulty that we might not topple over and upset them. We had not reckoned, however, on the inevitable dearth of flies in winter, and were forced for several seasons to induce the frogs to eat meat instead, suspending minute pieces on a hair deftly inserted through the top of the meat safe, which we "danced" before them in imitation of a fly. The deception was highly successful, my little sister cheerfully sacrificing one long bright red hair, a new one of course, every day. I forget why I never offered up any of mine; being of no particular colour, it would have served the purpose far better.

One incident of Tim's blameless career was of an alarming and melancholy nature at the time, though fortunately it had a happy ending. After lessons were over on winter

evenings in the hotel at Dresden, our favourite amusement was giving the frogs an outing on the schoolroom table, and letting them disport themselves with their usual grace round the lamp. Suddenly in the midst of his tiny diversions Tim stretched out all his legs, closed his eyes, and lay to all appearance dead. First Aid in various forms was requisitioned, but in vain; we resigned ourselves to this sudden and unlooked for grief, and laid him in readiness for decent interment the next day, in a pail. When we removed the covering the following morning, behold Tim alive and kicking; and he was spared for several months to come, in sound and vigorous health. We diagnosed this curious case as Lampstroke, an ailment fortunately I think unknown to the British pharmacopeia.

The following autumn we again went abroad, and were making our final preparations for the start when my mother suddenly struck at the thought of taking the frogs, the jar, the meatsafe, and the Japanese garden a second time across Europe, and said

they must all be left at home. We were in despair over this decision, when, in the very nick of time, a famous Oxford naturalist appeared on the scene, and offered to board and lodge the frogs, free of all charge till our return. This generous proposal we accepted thankfully.

One spring day soon after we came back to our country home in England, my sister and I were sitting on a bank in the garden when the servant came out to us, bearing in his hand a beautifully perforated tin box, "Live frogs, with Great Care," being inscribed on the label. I remember thinking then that we had reached the topmost summit of earthly joy. We opened the box, and out jumped first our own familiar Tim; then . . . Another frog. We looked at each other in silent dismay, then both spoke at once, three fateful words: "It's *not Toddy*." Toddy had died from natural causes during the winter; the kind professor, with immense trouble, had procured another mate for Tim, never thinking we should know the difference. . . .

Yet another reminiscence—a very different

one from any of the above—comes back to me from those finished years: it is that of a lame street singer, an old woman who used to come limping round the Square with a crutch, singing some miserable ditty. It was always evening when she came, just as the sun sank behind the tall roofs opposite our windows, and the lamplighter hurried past. I was afraid of this woman, how or why I cannot exactly tell; but there was something about her far more dreadful than mere poverty such as I vaguely pictured it, and connected in my mind, rather happily than otherwise, with Christmas trees and school feasts in the country, and the well-behaved, tidy infants who came with their teachers to the children's service at St. Mary's. This lame beggar tugged at my heart, and her poor little song told of things undreamt of in our untroubled lives—injustice, and misery, and want. She opened my eyes to the existence of those things, though they lay somewhere far beyond my ken; and the first dawning knowledge that all is *not* right with the world is often terrifying to a child. When the shrill,

quavering voice came nearer and nearer out of the shadows in the Square, and no one saw me, I used to hide in the box room. . . . I think some of our neighbours took pity on the old woman and fed her; I am sure my mother did, and it is good to think that she is now at rest.

A brighter memory is that of our dear nursery maid, Ann. In these pompous days the good old word nurserymaid is despised, and laid aside in favour of the grand and unattractive title of "second nurse." Ann alone it was who had the nerve to convey us all three with an immense wooden hoop each, across Oxford Street by the Marble Arch, on our way to the Park. "Take care of your hoops, Miss Sybil and Miss Hester!" I can hear so plainly still her kind, anxious voice as she landed us all safely on an "island" before we plunged afresh into the stream. We loved the hoop expeditions, and once we even induced Nannie to come with us instead of Ann. But the proportions of Nannie's figure were very different from those of her slender satellite, and on arriving at the island we found that "what

with one thing and another" (a favourite expression of Nannie's that did duty for all kinds of emergencies) there was not enough room for us all. We brimmed over into the road, with a glorious sensation of adventure; but the incident remained a somewhat sore subject with Nannie ever after.

Those were happy times we spent in the pleasant old roomy house. The least attractive feature, as usual I think in Victorian houses, was the great stately dining-room. It was sombrely furnished with chestnut-wood chairs of an extraordinary solidity, and was presided over by a vast haunting picture of the Dead Sea, with mysterious veiled figures in the foreground, who came to me often in my dreams, hovering amid the desolation of the shore. The lower window panes, being of ground glass engraved with a firmament of stars, completely obscured the view of the outer world and gave to the apartment an air of profound retirement and stillness. Our nurseries, however, were delightful. I remember the strange yet familiar feel of the rooms when we arrived from the country

and the caretaker had got our tea ready, and everything was a little exciting and unusual. Brightest of all the scenes I recall were perhaps those just before bedtime, most vivid moments of a child's day, when after glorious romps we were undressed "before the fire."

Alas for the homes of England! now suffering invasion in ever greater numbers by the gas-stove—that mean product of modern ingenuity, a heartless lifeless thing that lacks all charm, and all poetry, and all romance:

"Now in the falling of the gloom
The red fire paints the empty room;
And warmly on the roof it looks,
And flickers on the backs of books.

Armies march by tower and spire
Of cities blazing, in the fire;—
Till as I gaze with staring eyes,
The armies fade, the lustre dies.

Then once again the glow returns;
Again the phantom city burns;
And down the red-hot valley, lo!
The phantom armies marching go!"

What poet could make anything of a gas-stove? Happily there is many a nursery yet which would think scorn of any such device, where the children can still see "cities blazing in the fire," and fall asleep on winter nights to the little crackling sound ever and anon repeated, of the red coals dropping lower in the grate, while the light throws on the ceiling a huge quivering silhouette of the guard. . . .

In our day nursery an immense box covered with carpet stuff and made to hold all our toys, stood in the recess of one of the windows, and was called by us simply "The Step," as it served that purpose when we wanted to look out on the Square. Foraging in the Step, which survives to this day, and still shelters some ancient treasures, I lately found a small green note-book in which my little sister in a large laborious hand had made out a list of all her belongings. I give it here just as it stands, written apparently in a kind of blank verse, with her own corrections and curious spelling. It seems to me not without interest as representing

a child's complete toy equipment thirty years ago, with a few more serious items included. They come to life again before me as I read the entries; but the toys would look very trifling and simple now beside the elaborate and splendid playthings that are showered on the children of to-day. On the fly-leaf of the book is inscribed "Hester from Dear Fräu,"[1] and the list is as follows:

I have got a jumping frog. Pump.
Small cradell.
Japanese box for cards.
Kaleidoscop; little wide
Awake; paint box,
little doll in her bath; writting
desk; little
basket, a welp [?]
tea urn, tea
kettle, little
perrambulator,
Throstle's Nest.

[1] "Fräu" stands for Fräulein Auguste Gieseler, our governess and our dearest friend.

## BRYANSTON SQUARE

Sunday
Evenings with my children (this
was the name of a book we
used to read on Sundays after
tea),
New maps of
England, and a
little man with a
dark blue umberrella
a very preety
little wire basket which
the blind made
Kate Greenaway plate
little Red Riding
Hood, box with
beeds on it, lotto.
~~Children busy~~
~~Children glad~~
~~Children nauty~~
~~Children sad.~~

A pencil line, as shown above, is carefully drawn through the last four lines, which represent the title of a story apparently, but the continuation reads:

## BRYANSTON SQUARE

I did not mean
to stratch out
Children busy
Children glad
Children nauty
Children sad
for I have one,
little pussies
playing on instruments,
two little houses,
a small cabin
et, a beautiful
peacock blue
plush box
doll Evangeline,
beartrice.
a doll " dorathry "
a blue vase—there,
was another, but
Pussy broke it,
little cat look-
ing into a vase
little box which dwindle
into quite small,
a little doll in

a creadle.

*Dolls.*

Beartrice.
Dory.

*Books.*

"The Boys and I."

And the last entry of all has a sacred air about it, and a whole page to itself.

"An Angle."

Our house was called in the agents' lists a "mansion," a term which implies a back stairs. The steps of these were, and are still I suppose, extraordinarily high and steep, and were covered with crackling linoleum; and up from the kitchen every drop of water was carried by our uncomplaining housemaids to the top storey. No servant in these days would dream of doing such a thing. Towards the end of our tenancy my mother installed a "geyser" on one of the upper floors, an article we had dimly heard of in the schoolroom in connection with

volcanoes. I have never met another tame geyser before or since. The front staircase was roofed by a large skylight, which was very cold in winter. Radiators, hot water pipes, and such luxuries were unheard of in our time. I remember one day, as Nannie stood on the landing, a bit of loosened woodwork from above came down on the top of her, and she wore two bumps on her dear old forehead ever after. This disaster, which was indeed a rather serious one, made a most solemn impression on our minds at the time; and we came to reckon the events of life as before, or after, the skylight fell upon Nannie.

To this day I have a chilly remembrance of the iron banisters, with my face pressed against them, as my little sister and I watched the ladies and gentlemen on dinner-party nights pass up the stairs below to the drawing-room. We perched ourselves midway on the upper flight. To the right of the landing, just beneath our vantage point, was a tall glass before which the guests finally "tidied," turning themselves about,

adding little finishing touches before the door was opened, all-unconscious of four eyes fixed upon them with delighted interest. We had to "skew round" through the bars somehow, with a most painful effort, for this particular scene; but it was well worth it. There was one lady whose coming was always heralded by the unusually elaborate rustling of her stiff expensive skirts; the clinging soft chiffons and crêpe de chines of to-day were not then in fashion. I really think she must have been the Auntie of whom Stevenson sang :—

> "Whenever Auntie moves around,
> Her dresses make a curious sound;
> They trail behind her up the floor,
> And trundle after through the door."

We never failed to guess that lady; and I can yet see before me a certain pink train as it swept along the passage, and hear the voice of my mother's maid from the distant top landing, saying as her practised eye surveyed its every fold, "That gown is dyed."

Our eldest sister did not share those thrilling vigils. She played a more refined

and distinguished part, and was "found" in the drawing-room when the ladies came up after dinner.

Scraps of conversation come floating down to me from those long-dead festivities, overheard as the couples went down the stairs to dinner, and we used to make rapid guesses as to whether the gentleman or lady would "begin" first. . . .

"I was in the House to-day. Never heard the Grand Old Man in finer form. An amazing bit of oratory! Still, it's perfectly clear that the Government is riding for a fall. . . ."

"What a charming girl that is of yours, Sir Henry! *Will* you lend her to me for the Foreign Office on Monday? I hear she wins all hearts, and now that all my own birds are flown. . . ."

"Wasn't it a *lovely* cotillon last night?—I must show you my presents some time. Did you see those two girls sitting out by themselves? They never got anything. Somehow I didn't think they would. . . . I was so sorry for them. . . ."

The voices grow fainter, and run together into a confused medley of cheerful sound; the procession vanishes with one last gleam of a satin skirt, the doors are shut below;—and two little girls go up to bed.

THE END

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