



The Family Circle.

THROUGH THE DOOR.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

The Angel opened the door
A little way;
And she vanished, as melts a star,
Into the day.
And, for just a second's space,
Ere the bar he drew,
The pitying Angel paused,
And we looked through.

What did we see within?
Ah! who can tell?
What glory and glow of light—
Ineffable;
What peace in the very air;
What hush and calm,
Soothing each tired soul
Like healing balm!

Was it a dream we dreamed?
Or did we hear
The harping of silver harps,
Divinely clear?
A murmur of that "new song,"
Which, soft and low
The happy angels sing—
Sing as they go?

And, as in the legend old,
The good monk heard,
As he paced his cloister dim,
A heavenly bird,
And, rapt and lost in the joy
Of the wondrous song,
Listened a hundred years,
Nor deemed them long;

So chained in sense and limb
All blind with sun,
We stood and tasted the joy
Of our vanished one;
And we took no note of time,
Till soon or late
The gentle Angel sighed
And shut the gate.

The vision is closed and sealed,
We are come back
To the old, accustomed earth,
The well-worn track—
Back to the daily toil,
The daily pain;
But we never can be the same,
Never again.

We that have bathed in noon
All radiant white,
Shall we come back content
To sit in night?
Content with self and sin
The stain, the blot?
To have stood so near the gate
And enter not?

Oh! glimpse so swift, so sweet,
So soon withdrawn!
Stay with us; light our dusks
Till day shall dawn;
Until the shadows flee
And to our view
Again the gate unbars
And we pass through.

—N. Y. Independent.

THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF THE PRINCE CONSORT.

(Rev. Wm. Dorling "in unday Magazine.")

The royal home has from the earliest years of the Queen's marriage been regarded as one of the happiest in England. We are now enabled to form an estimate of the extent to which this is to be attributed to the character of the late lamented Prince Consort, and to the influence which he exerted in stimulating and directing its life. The different volumes which have appeared since his death give to us a clear conception of the place which he held there, and furnish a picture of its inner life which must be interesting to us all. Her Majesty has conferred a favor upon her people in giving, whether directly or indirectly, the history of her husband's life, so that they may share as far as possible her good opinion of its worth, and become acquainted with the sources of that happy influence which she has ever borne as the Sovereign of these Realms.

We get many a glimpse of a dear grandmother, whose love for Albert and his brother Ernest was very touching. In June, 1822, when the two little boys returned to Coburg from Gotha, whither they had gone for a stay during the absence of their parents, she

wrote, "Yesterday morning my dear little boys came back from Gotha, and I was overjoyed. Ernest is very much grown. . . . Albert is very much smaller than his brother, and lovely as a little angel, with his fair curls." Much testimony is borne as to the purity of the Prince's heart in those early years. His cousin, Count Arthur Mensdorff, attributed his admirable sweetness of disposition to a perfect moral purity both in word and deed. The Prince and his brother were hardly ever separated in their early years, and they seem to have cherished a devoted affection for each other.

For a moment we come away from the small German principality in which these little boys were being trained with much care, and glance at a little maiden in an English home, who was being watched over with unusual interest by her mother, the Duchess of Kent, and her uncle Prince Leopold—the Princess Victoria, who was likely to be Queen of England. Away in Germany the Prince's nurse used to prattle to him of his little cousin Victoria as his destined bride.

Circumstances eventually seemed to suggest in earnest the question as to whether Prince Albert was a suitable consort for the young Princess. Leopold, now King of the Belgians, was the principal adviser in the matter; but he sought the aid of his old friend, Baron Stockmar, with whom he had been in intimate friendship for very many years. This man had entered the service of the Prince Leopold as private physician in 1816, and the poor Princess Charlotte with her hand in his. The baron had known the Princess Victoria rather intimately, and cared intensely for her welfare. He formed a very high conception of the requirements which he laid down as necessary qualities in her consort, and was unwilling to give his sanction, or even opinion, as to the fitness of the Prince for such a position until he had fuller opportunities of knowing him. With this view he travelled with him and his brother, and in all possible ways cultivated his society, and gave the benefit of his guidance in the training of his young friend.

On the 20th of June, 1837, the Princess Victoria, then only eighteen years of age, acceded to the throne of England. Six days afterwards the Prince congratulated his "dearest cousin" on the event, saying, "You are Queen of the mightiest land of Europe; in your hand lies the happiness of millions. May Heaven assist you, and strengthen you with its strength in that high, but difficult task." In the autumn of that year a flower from the Right found its way from the Prince to the Queen. On February 10th of the following year, as all the world knows, their love was ratified, and Albert and Victoria were man and wife.

The Queen's *Journal*, in recording her feelings shortly after the marriage, and referring to the leave-taking between the Prince and his father and brother, observes, "Father, brother, friends, country—all has he left, and all for me! God grant that I may be the happy person—the most happy person—to make this dearest, blessed being happy and contented. What is in my power to make him happy I will do." And there is every proof in the world that the young Queen's fervent and truly womanly resolve was maintained to the end. Difficulties were not slow to arise within a home which, as most people might imagine, could not be securely protected from them. The position of the Prince in relation to the other members of the Royal Family was very difficult to determine; nor was his authority in his own home very easily defined in view of the practices and customs which had become so strong as to be almost impossible of alteration. The Prince wrote, "In my home life I am very happy and contented; but the difficulty in filling my place with the proper dignity is, that I am only the husband, and not the master in the house." It was not long before the Queen asserted for her husband and herself the claims which her love and respect inspired. It is clear that the Prince was not actuated by envious motives, and that he was not unbecomingly self-assertive; but he was too much in earnest, and too anxious to be helpful to the Queen, to rest satisfied with a mere honor that brought no obligations to usefulness.

In no respect is this more apparent than in the efforts which the Prince made from the very first period of his marriage to render to the Queen every assistance which was possible in the transaction of duties which devolved upon her as the head of her own government. The Prince thought that the Queen should not be merely an ornamental personage, but as the Sovereign the real head of affairs. He had not in earlier years shown much interest in politics; the politics of the newspapers especially. He had been roused from this indifference by Stockmar; and now that circumstances called forth his energy in this direction, he gave himself heart and soul to the work which lay before him. He became in reality the private adviser and secretary of the Queen. The toil which this involved was very great. All foreign despatches were read,

as well as the drafts of answers which were prepared by the ministers for the time being. He prepared memoranda concerning home matters; in which he expressed the views which were taken of them by the Queen and himself. As he said in a letter written ten years later to the Duke of Wellington, his principle was: "to sink his own individual existence in that of his wife. . . . to place all his time and powers at her command as the natural head of her family, superintendent of her household, manager of her private affairs, her sole confidential adviser in politics, and only assistant in her communications with the officers of the government, her private secretary, and permanent minister." The Prince had his ideal clearly in view, and was not likely to swerve from it.

As far as possible, nothing was allowed to interfere with the dearer joys of life, which this royal pair found as precious as any of the humbler subjects in the kingdom. They had cares which needed relief, and burdens which could alone be lightened by the tender amenities which are the strength of every home. The Queen testifies that in times of weakness "his care of her was like that of a mother; nor could there be a kinder, wiser, or more judicious nurse." No wonder that before a twelvemonth of married life had elapsed, the Queen wrote thus in her *Journal*,—"I told Albert that formerly I was too happy to go to London, and too wretched to leave it; and how, since the blessed hour of my marriage, and still more since the summer, I dislike and am unhappy to leave the country, and could be content and happy never to go to town. This pleased him." We come upon many pretty pictures of home life; as simple as any which meet our eye when we look in cottages where love holds sway. Writing a fortnight after the birth of the Prince of Wales in her *Journal*, the Queen describes a scene which occurred on the 21st of November, 1841:—"Albert brought in dearest little Puss (the Princess Royal) in such a smart white merino dress, trimmed with blue, which Mamma had given her, and a pretty cap, and placed her on my bed, seating himself next to her, and she was very dear and good. And as my precious invaluable Albert sat there, and our little love between us, I felt quite moved with happiness and gratitude to God." That they depended very lovingly upon one another for support in times of sorrow is often revealed to us. It was a deep grief to the Prince when he lost his father suddenly in 1844. The Queen did her best to cheer him under this heavy trial. He wrote in the following way to Baron Stockmar:—"Here we sit together—poor Mamma, Victoria, and myself; and weep, with a great cold public around us, insensible as stone." We can easily imagine that those whose lot it is to live in that "fierce light which beats upon a throne," must often yearn for the simpler ways which are common to ordinary people; and that when private griefs weigh heavily upon them, they are often compelled to mourn the distance which separates them from those whom they govern. In a letter written to Baron Stockmar years after marriage, we find briefly expressed what was his constant feeling towards the Queen and his ruling desire for the children. "She is the treasure on which my whole existence rests. The relation in which we stand to one another leaves nothing to desire. It is a union of heart and soul, and is therefore noble; and in it the poor children shall find their cradle, so as to be able one day to insure a like happiness for themselves." Of not less service was the Prince to the Queen. We find her acknowledging it over and over again in the course of the correspondence which is published. In 1846, the Queen said to King Leopold in a letter:—"Albert's use to me, and I may say to the country, by his firmness and sagacity in these moments of trial, is beyond all belief." Periods of absence were always endured with much anxiety for re-union; and letters were very loving and frequent. The earlier correspondence is especially marked by tender references to mutual suffering arising from this cause.

(To be Continued.)

"HIS WAY."

BY ELEANOR KIRK.

"You must excuse him, for it's his way," or, "Don't mind that, it is her way," are expressions constantly in use, generally serving as excuses for bluntness, impoliteness, and often the most unpardonable rudeness in manners and conversation. The following incident—true in every particular—will show how "his way" in one instance, at least, was treated precisely as it deserved to be.

Mr. John Ormiston, a merchant from Chicago, instead of staying at his hotel as usual, decided to accept a warm invitation from his old college chum, the Rev. Frederic Hamilton, pastor of a large and influential Church up town in New York. Mr. Ormiston had seen his friend but once since his marriage and ordination, and that once had not left a

very pleasant impression on his mind; but, true, loving friend that he was, he would not allow himself to be prejudiced by it, believing that some annoyance or trouble was the cause of the strange preoccupation. It never entered into John Ormiston's honest head to suspect that the Rev. Frederic Hamilton could differ in the least from Fred, Hamilton, "old boy," of Harvard. However, after waiting in the drawing-room for fully fifteen minutes, anxiously awaiting his friend's arrival, and then to be greeted by his hostess with an apology for her husband, did strike him as a little strange.

"Mr. Hamilton is very much engaged at present," said the lady, "but desires you to make yourself quite at home. He will be down presently."

The vision of Fred rushing down stairs half a dozen steps at a time was suddenly dissipated. Mr. Ormiston belonged to the class who believe that ministers should not give all their enthusiasm to the Church; that it is absolutely Christian, as well as necessary, to save some for the family. He also believed that ministers should be even more cheerful than other men, and he and Fred had talked this over so often in college that he supposed his friend to be of the same opinion.

John Ormiston, in the elegant chamber on the third floor, washed the skin almost off his hands trying to make it out. According to his own statement, he "washed and washed and washed," without once thinking what he was doing. After awhile the dinner bell rang, and Mrs. Hamilton appeared at the door. She was slightly flushed, and the gentleman thought her voice trembled a little.

"I hope you will excuse my husband," she said. "He is not yet ready for dinner, and he never likes me to wait. It is his way."

"His way!" Those two words were in themselves a revelation, and John Ormiston quite forgot himself in pity for the woman who was obliged to excuse her husband on this plea. By request, Mr. Ormiston assumed the responsibility of carving, all the time wondering what his wife would do under such circumstances. "She might behave as well as this woman after she got used to it," he thought; "but wouldn't there have been a few earthquakes and tornadoes first!"

"I hope Mr. Hamilton is quite well." He started to say Fred, but the word refused to come out. The college cognomen of "Fred, old fellow," would never again pass his lips, he thought, and he had said it to himself a hundred times, at least, on his way up town. John Ormiston felt almost as badly for a moment as when he buried his first baby. Dessert came, and with it Mr. Hamilton, having evidently forgotten all about his visitor. He lounged in abstractedly, one hand in his hair, and enquired wearily, "What have you for dinner, Kitty?"

At that moment Mr. Ormiston was very forcibly reminded of his own wife, for the lady rose and with great deliberation said,—

"Mr. Hamilton, allow me to introduce to your kindly notice Mr. Ormiston, of Chicago."

"You were very good to hunt us up, very good indeed," said the minister, extending his hand with some show of cordiality. This speedily vanished, however, and after a few questions and monosyllabic answers, all attempts at conversation ended.

After dinner Mr. Hamilton said, "My wife is a capital talker, Ormiston, if you only draw her out a little. I've some committee business on hand which I must attend to; after that I am at your service," and the gentleman withdrew.

"Mr. Ormiston," began his hostess after a short pause, "I know that you must be both mortified and wounded; and if you are not also angry, it is because you are a better Christian than I am. I have heard my husband speak of you many times, and always with the warmest affection. I have but one excuse to offer, that it is 'his way.' Do you play chess, Mr. Ormiston?"

Mr. Ormiston played chess, and the evening passed after a fashion, the gentleman determined to endure anything rather than wound the feelings of his friend's wife by abruptly taking his departure.

Breakfast was almost over when Mr. Hamilton next appeared. This is what he said:—

"Do stop with us whenever you come east, Ormiston. It must be pleasanter than staying at a dismal hotel."

"I ought to be very much obliged to you, perhaps," was the quick response, "but excuse me if I don't see it quite in that light. Nothing on earth would have induced me to remain so long, had it not been for your wife, who tried so hard to make up for your lack of cordiality—yes, Fred Hamilton, for your lack of decency. If you should ever come to Chicago, I'll show you how a man entertains his friends. You may consider yourself a privileged individual, privileged to be rude, boorish, and contemptibly un-Christian; privileged to be excused for all short-comings on account of your way; but your way is the meanest of all ways, and this I would tell you if you were