

reign has been an eventful one abroad, and there is plenty of glory to think about, plenty of blood-bought victories have been won, plenty of foreign possessions added to the British crown. But the cost has been great, and the wise citizen is sighing for peace, knowing that there is much to be done at home.

"I will be good," was the childlike resolution of the little Princess Victoria, when she first learned that she was to inherit the throne of the greatest kingdom on earth. That earnest purpose has been the key-note of the Queen's life and aims. Need it be said that it has been fraught with even greater good to the people of England than George the Third's resolution to be a king was attended with evil? Seldom in the history of England has there been more urgent need of good example in high places than when Victoria came to the throne. Two drunken debauchees had just preceded her in that high station. Their companions were congenial, and their courts were largely formed after their tastes. Good people there were coming and going among the companions of royalty; but they were good under difficulties. We in this respectable age can scarcely imagine the coarseness, the extravagance, the low buffoonery, which centred in the palace and resorts of our sovereigns. Still less can we understand the easy indulgence shown to the royal vices by people who were themselves virtuous. Gamblers, prize fighters, jockeys, all whose occupations were supposed to require a low type of manliness, were esteemed the proper companions of princes. People smiled to see the King of England drive up to the prize-ring in company with one of the pugilists. The coarse practical jokes which the meagre wit of a drunken prince was capable of perpetrating were the admiration of his subjects. But the young Princess Victoria had been kept almost entirely away from the atmosphere of her uncle's court. Shortly after her accession, Greville wrote of her:—"It is, in fact, the remarkable union of *naïveté*, kindness, nature, good nature, with propriety and dignity, which makes her so admirable and so endearing to those about her as she certainly is. I have been repeatedly told that they are all warmly attached to her, but that all feel the impossibility of for a moment losing sight of the respect which they owe her." The influence of her strictly-ordered life began at a critical time in the history of the country. People were growing disgusted with royal debauchery. A change was taking place in public sentiment. Certain indications had set hopeful men thinking of a new and better era. The Reform Bill of 1832 had at length struck at the root of the great defects in the franchise. The effects of the reform of the criminal law in 1818 were becoming apparent in the steady diminution of crime. In 1833, a further philanthropic triumph was achieved in the abolition of slavery throughout the British dominions. The Catholic Emancipation Bill of 1829 had induced a more tolerant spirit among different religious bodies. About one hundred miles of railway were then in operation, and a few large steamers had already given ground for hopeful speculation as to the future modes of travel.

With the exception of a temporary depression of trade, all omens were favorable. In how far have the high expectations formed at the commencement of the reign been fulfilled? Speaking generally, the history of Victoria's reign has been a striking illustration of the truth that peace has its victories as well as war; nay more, that the bloodless victories of peace are infinitely greater, more lasting, more beneficent than the triumphs of war. During this period the whole system of national education has been built up. Even in 1851 the amount expended by government upon education was only £150,000; now the London school board alone expends seven times that amount on elementary education. In the colonies, too, the advance in popular instruction has been even greater. When we add to the influence of the schools the increased facilities for travel and for postal communication, the phenomenal growth and widening of the sphere of journalism, the founding of technological institutions, the establishment of telegraphic communication between nation and nation, between continent and continent, we can in some slight measure realize the improvement that has been made in the condition of the people. At the beginning of the Queen's reign the cost of sending a letter from London to Brighton was eightpence; to Aberdeen, one shilling threepence halfpenny; to Belfast, one and fourpence. Higher rates were charged if the letter was written on more than one side—a golden opportunity for the inquisitive official. Owing to the cheapness of the penny post, introduced by Sir Rowland Hill in 1839, the number of letters carried in 1875 was twelve times that of any year under the old system; and the increase continues. A writer in the *Family Herald* calls to mind an English village where, in 1852, the people did not know who the Duke of Wellington was; where such a thing as a newspaper had not been seen within the memory of man; where there were only one or two inhabitants who had ever seen a railway-engine! Now the latest events in American, European, or Asiatic affairs are known in all corners of England the day after they have occurred. When the first feeble, timid experiment with the electric telegraph was made in 1827 between Euston Square and Camden Town, the onlookers little dreamt that, in their own lifetime, the uttermost parts of the earth would be as the different wards of one city.

Any attempt at completeness in enumerating the triumphs of the present age would easily grow tedious. The direction of scientific research and the character of literary effort have been as distinctive of the times as the steam printing-press or the electric telegraph. The Victorian age is an era by itself—an era in which all phases of thought, scientific, literary, or religious, are in harmony with the altered conditions of life—an era in which the great nations of the earth are being drawn together by the interchange of thought, of labor, and of international courtesy.

A JUBILEE REVERIE.

BY C. F. FRASER.

It is not my wont to indulge in reveries; but during leisure hours I have sat aimlessly musing until my thoughts, guided by some unexplainable influence, have become centred and fixed upon some particular scenes or occurrences which had for years been buried in the deepest recesses of memory. It was thus with me on a bleak evening during the past winter I had fallen into a deep and prolonged reverie, and fancied myself again a boy in my native town of Windsor. During this waking dream the scenes of my youth passed rapidly before my mind's-eye, and, in my imagination, I again saw the old town as it then stood. There was the main street, with the three glorious elms which had so often attracted the attention of strangers; there, too, was the Haliburton block of buildings, which, since the removal of the Haliburton family to Clifton, had been used as a hotel, its wings having been subdivided into shops and offices. There, too, was the little brown house at the corner, over the site of which the apple-trains of Annapolis now pass. The recollection of such familiar scenes recalled to my mind the occupants of these old-time Windsor dwellings, and at length my thoughts became fixed upon the shop of Isaac Lewis, which occupied one end of the low, brown corner-house to which I have referred. Isaac Lewis, its proprietor, a veritable Jew, was standing, as of yore, behind his little counter, vainly endeavoring to adjust his spectacles so that he might examine more closely one of the antiquated watches which he had taken from its accustomed place in the window. How long these self-same watches had hung there I know not; but, staring out as they did at every passer-by, I imagine their faces must have become as familiar to the inhabitants of Windsor as was that of the good-natured toll-gate keeper, Will Thom, or the old Jew himself. The watches, the window, the little shop, and Isaac Lewis appeared to stand out in bold relief against a background of many Windsor scenes. The old Jew, with his slight and bending form, and his dishevelled grey locks, his Hebrew nose and mouth, looking straight at me out of his keen, suspicious grey eyes, made me feel guilty and uncomfortable, although I cannot tell why. He was muttering as usual to himself, and I listened and heard him in half-audible tones repeat some remarks which he had addressed to me when I was a boy, and which I think may be of interest to some of my readers. "Each nation," said Isaac, "is proud of its great men, proud of its lawgivers, its writers of books, its holy men, and its mighty men of valor; but I say unto thee, my son, that the great men of this day and generation grasp but the shadow of the truths that have been revealed in Holy Writ. Lasting fame cannot be theirs until they understand the truths themselves; and as we go down the centuries their names and fame will be as if written upon water, while the time of our great Jewish leaders, such as Moses and Samuel and King Solomon the Wise, will be known in the uttermost parts of the earth.

"Yea, my son, Jewish civilization has had its influence all down the ages; mankind may be unwilling to acknowledge it, but to my people despised and down-trodden as they have been and still are, the inhabitants of the world are indebted for their present enlightenment. Translate ye will the writings upon the tablets unearthed at Nineveh, interpret as ye will the hieroglyphics found on the tombs and monuments in the valley of the Nile; admire as ye will the laws and civilizations of Greece and Rome, and yet ye must admit that my people were exalted above these heathen nations, and that their civilizations, compared with that of my fathers, were a shadow unto sunshine. Yea, it is true, my son, that the great empire under whose flag my people have found peace and liberty, can yet gather many useful lessons from a closer examination of the Mosie law; and it may come to pass that these laws, antiquated as many of them appear, will yet form the basis for new imperial legislation, and mayhap prove the solder by which the unity of the empire may be preserved. O, father Moses, would that these Gentiles could understand and appreciate the law delivered to us by thee! In it are many things which are to them a sealed book. But it shall not always be thus; the day is even now at hand when that glorious institution, the jubilee of the children of Israel, shall be closely studied by the wisest men. If they could but now see the equity and justice of the laws which govern its proper observance, then indeed would the trumpet of the jubilee sound with gladness throughout the land, and the people would rejoice, as my fathers did rejoice, even three thousand years ago. That jubilee, my son, meant liberty and equality among the inhabitants of the Land of Canaan. With the first sound of the trumpet every Israelite's bondswoman and bondswoman was set at liberty, and once more came into possession of the lands which had been apportioned to their families by Joshua. During the year of jubilee no labor was performed upon the land; my fathers sowed not, neither did they reap; and through this wise provision the soil was given its needed rest, thus allowing it to regain its lost fertility, and preventing its becoming barren by reason of continuous harvesting.

"Through the institution of the jubilee, land monopoly was rendered impossible, and capital in land being available to all the people, industry reaped its full and just reward. List ye, my son, under such a law no family could remain for generations in abject poverty; for at the jubilee the lands with which they had parted, it may be from necessity, once again became their own property. Nor was this unfair to the persons who had become the temporary owners of the lands; for all purchases were based upon the law, and the law provided that in the jubilee year the land should revert to its original owners; and hence the prices paid by purchasers varied according to the nearness or remoteness of the ensuing jubilee."

Here the old man stopped, and after a prolonged silence, broken only by the unrythmical ticking of a dozen clocks, he continued slowly, as if