

"UNITE GENTLENESS OF MANNERS WITH FIRMNESS OF MIND."

was thought by the spectators that she had lost her reason, she again repeated "*Vive le Roi!*" in a calmer voice, so as to leave no room for doubt as to her deliberate intention. What prayers and supplications had failed to extort was won by her fury, and she obtained the boon she desired, in dying by the side of her husband!

After the battle of Waterloo the unlucky fortress of Longwy had to sustain a blockade and siege from the Prussian troops extending over ten weeks, during which three thousand bombs were flung into it several days in succession; and its local historians describe how eighteen thousand Prussian soldiers defiled through the town, encountering to their surprise a garrison of only two hundred men!

In the month of January, 1871, Longwy, after sustaining a siege, was bombarded by the Prussians for forty-eight hours, and was obliged to surrender. On this occasion the garrison included between three and four thousand men, whilst the besiegers were double that force.

Additional Notes to August.

ANECDOTES OF GEORGE CANNING.

(8.)—GEORGE CANNING, a highly-gifted orator and distinguished politician, was born in London in 1770. His father, an Irishman, was a man of considerable literary abilities; but he died, broken-hearted, on the very day that his infant son was one day old. The widow, by the advice of Garrick, went on the stage, but she possessed little talent for the profession, and soon became a mere playhouse drudge—ready to take any part—but not fit to take one. In despair she married a drunken actor, whose cruelty had previously sent two wives to the grave. This man died in a madhouse, and she then married a linen-draper at Exeter, named Humm. Happily for her son George, he was rescued from the further miseries of his wretched home by the kindness of an uncle, who took charge of him, and sent him to Eton, thence to Oxford, afterwards to the Middle Temple, and so into public life. But his mother had the happiness to live to see the success of her son, and to receive from him at all times the tenderest marks of filial affection. In the year 1800 Canning was placed in affluence by his marriage with Miss Joanna Scott, the daughter of General Scott, with a fortune of £100,000. The public career of Canning is a matter of history—but it may be stated, in passing, that to him may justly be ascribed the line of British policy in Spain which destroyed the hopes of Bonaparte, and led to his final overthrow; for, as Canning once emphatically declared, "his had been the hand which committed England to an alliance with Spain." Having, as it was alleged, unfairly endeavoured to procure the removal of Lord Castlereagh from office, a duel took place (in which Canning was wounded) and both parties had to quit office.

It has been remarked by a well-known writer, that "if Mr. Canning had not been a busy politician, he would probably have attained great eminence as a writer; and there must be extraordinary vitality in jokes and parodies, which after sixty or seventy years are almost as amusing as if their objects had not long since become obsolete." The following is a specimen of Canning's poetical powers, and was evoked by the following:—His aunt, a rather eccentric lady, on the anniversary of one of her birthdays, took it into her head to make a present to each of her relations. To Mr. Canning she gave a piece of fustian, which produced from him the ensuing lines:—

"While all on this auspicious day,
Well pleas'd their gratulations pay,
And sweetly smile, and softly say
A thousand pretty speeches;
My Muse her grateful tribute wings,
Nor scorn the lay her duty brings,
Tho' humble be the theme she sings—
A pair of shooting-breeches.

"Soon shall the tailor's subtle art
Have fashion'd them in every part,
And made them snug, and neat, and smart,
With twenty thousand stitches;

Then mark the moral of my song,
Oh! may our lives but prove as strong,
And wear as well, and last as long,
As these, my shooting-breeches.

"And when, to ease the load of strife
Of public and of private life,
My fate shall bless me with a wife,
I seek not rank or riches;
But worth like thine, serene and gay,
[This line was wanting in the MS.]
And form'd like thine, to give away,
Not wear herself the breeches."

Canning's *Friend of Humanity* and the *Knife-Grinder* is well remembered as witty ridicule of the youthful Jacobin effusions of Southey, in which it was sedulously inculcated that there was a natural and eternal warfare between the poor and the rich:—

"FRIEND OF HUMANITY.

"Needy Knife-grinder! whither are you going?
Rough is your road, your wheel is out of order;
Beak blows the blast—your hat has got a hole in't,
So have your breeches!

"Weary Knife-grinder! little think the proud ones,
Who in their coaches roll along the turnpike-
Road, what hard work 'tis crying all day, 'Knives
and Scissors to grind O!'

"Tell me, Knife-grinder, how came you to grind
knives?

Did some rich man tyrannically use you?
Was it the squire, or parson of the parish,
Or the attorney?

"Was it the squire, for killing of his game?
Covetous parson, for his tithes distraining?
Or roguish lawyer, made you lose your little
All in a lawsuit?

"(Have you not read the *Rights of Man*, by Tom
Paine?)
Drops of compassion tremble on my eyelids,
Ready to fall, as soon as you have told your
Pitiful story.

"KNIFE-GRINDER.

"Story! God bless you! I have none to tell, sir;
Only last night a-drinking at the Chequers,
This poor old hat and breeches, as you see, were
Torn in a scuffle.

"Constables came up for to take me into
Custody; they took me before the justice;
Justice Oldmixon put me in the parish-
Stocks for a vagrant.

"I should be glad to drink your honour's health in
A pot of beer, if you will give me sixpence;
But for my part, I never love to meddle
With politics, sir.

"FRIEND OF HUMANITY.

"I give thee sixpence! I will see thee — first—
Wretch whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to ven-
geance—
Sordid, unfeeling, reprobate; degraded,
Spiritless outcast!"

[Kicks the Knife-grinder, overturns his wheel, and exit
in a transport of Republican enthusiasm and universal
philanthropy.]

The following is given as a specimen of Canning's wit:—"Mr. Canning used habitually to designate the selfish and officious Duke of Buckingham as the 'Ph.D.,' an abbreviation which was understood to mean 'the fat Duke.' That bulky potentate had cautioned Canning (through Lord Morley) on the eve of his expected voyage to India,* against the frigate in which he was to sail, on the ground that she was too low in the water. 'I am much obliged to you,' he replied to Lord Morley, 'for your report of the Duke of Buckingham's caution respecting the *Jupiter*. Could you have the experiments made *without* the Duke of Buckingham on board? as that *might* make a difference."

* Canning had been appointed Governor-General of India, but the melancholy death of Lord Castlereagh caused a change, and the Seals of the Foreign Office were delivered to Canning. He became Prime Minister in 1827, but died shortly afterwards.