

not to be jealous, the only way was not to love him either. If he had chosen to be loved, I should not have found it a difficult task, for I was naturally inclined, as well as accustomed, to do my duty; but then I ought to have had a husband gifted with common sense, and certainly this man was not so."

Decidedly not; all his amusements were absurd and incongruous in the extreme. We find him getting into a great scrape with his aunt by drilling holes in a door which divided one of his apartments from her private dining-room, and then inviting the grand-duchess's maids of honour to come and peep at unsuspecting royalty enjoying its repast. Catharine, with a sense and good feeling which do her honour, absolutely declined to look at the rascally show thus provided, and warned her foolish spouse of the anger that the discovery would entail. Not very long after this cause of offence, the empress appointed a certain Madame Tchoglokooff duenna-in-chief to the grand-duchess, this lady being looked upon as a pattern of domestic virtue, and likely to exercise a favourable influence in bringing the young pair into happier mutual relations. A tiresome companion she must have proved with her incessant comments upon the merest trifle said of:

"This would displease her majesty."—"That would hardly be approved by the empress."

However, Catharine, with her imperturbable good-humour, would turn a deaf ear, or feign to sleep; and ere very long, Madame Tchoglokooff fell under the empire of a strong mind has over a weak one.

Wherever Elizabeth went, her nephew and niece had to accompany her.

"Our manner of travelling to Revel," the grand-duchess relates, "was neither agreeable nor convenient. I remember, during this journey, having one day to dress close to an oven where bread had just been baking; and on another occasion, my bed had been put up in a tent which was instep-deep in water. Moreover, the empress having no fixed hour for departure or arrival, for taking meals or taking rest, we were all, masters and servants alike, strangely harassed."

Returned to St. Petersburg, Catharine was informed of the death of her father, which appears to have sincerely distressed her.

"For a week," she says, "I was allowed to weep as much as I liked; but at its close Madame Tchoglokooff came to tell me I had shed tears enough, and that the empress commanded me to leave off—my father not having been a king. I replied that it was indeed true that he was not a king; to which she rejoined, that it was unbecoming in a grand-duchess to weep longer for a father who was not royal. Finally, it was decreed that I should go out on the following Sunday, and wear mourning six weeks."

Here are two specimens of the grand-duke's absurd amusements, and of the patience with which his clever young wife bore with them. On their return to the summer palace, Madame Krouse, once a severe Argus herself, proved ready to connive at anything for the pleasure of circumventing and spiting Madame Tchoglokooff, the Argus-in-chief.

This is Catharine's account: "She (Madame Krouse) procured for the grand-duke toys, dolls, and other child's playthings, for which he had a perfect mania. During the day, these were concealed in and under my bed; after supper, the grand-duke retired first, and as soon as we were in bed, Madame Krouse locked the door, and then he would play with these toys till one or two in the morning. Whether I liked it or not, I was obliged to take a part in this idle diversion, and so was Madame Krouse. I often laughed during it, but still more often was I weary, and even uncomfortable, all the bed being covered and filled with dolls and heavy playthings. I do not know if Madame Tchoglokooff got to hear of these nocturnal amusements; but one night, about twelve o'clock, she came and knocked at our door. It could not be opened at once, because the grand-duke, Madame Krouse and I were hard at work removing and concealing the toys, which we did pretty effectually under the counterpane. When this was accomplished, she was admitted; but she found us at fault with having been kept waiting, and told us the empress would be very angry when she heard that we were still awake."

But dolls were inconsiderable compared to other hobbies of the imbecile Peter, and Catharine's toleration had to be put to a still harder test.

"In order to increase his winter amusements, the grand-duke had seven or eight sporting dogs brought from the country, and placed behind a wooden partition which separated the alcove of my bedroom from an immense vestibule at the back of our apartments. As the alcove was only boarded, the smell of the kennel pervaded it, and we had to sleep in that tainted atmosphere. If I complained, he told me there was no other way of managing it. This kennel being a profound secret, I bore the discomfort without betraying his imperial highness."

One of the many moves of the young couple was to a small country house at Gostilitza, hastily and perilously built late in autumn, upon a frozen foundation, which the spring thaw undermined, and the whole fabric gave way, to the great peril of its inhabitants. In the midst of her natural terror, Catharine showed much presence of mind and thoughtfulness; but the unreasoning empress was offended with her alarm, and chose to see no cause for it in a falling house. At this period, the grand-duchess does not seem to have had one friend to love or trust. She was not allowed to write to her mother, and could only keep up a fugitive correspondence with her by a series of stratagems, all involving danger.

After the Gostilitza catastrophe, Oranienbaum became a favourite summer retreat. The following is Catharine's account of her manner of life there. "I rose at three in the morning, and dressed myself from top to toe in men's clothes; an old sportsman was ready waiting for me. We crossed the garden on foot, shouldering our guns. A skiff was in attendance at the shore; and then he, I, a pointer, and the fisherman who was to row us, got into the skiff; and I went to shoot wild-ducks amongst the reeds that border the shore on each side of the canal of Oranienbaum. At ten o'clock, or sometimes later, I went back, and dressed for dinner. After dinner, we took a rest; and in the evening the grand-duke had music, or else we rode. I remember reading about this time Brantome's memoirs, which much amused me." On her return to Moscow, Catharine applied herself—through sheer ennui—to severer studies. She waded through nine quarto volumes of German history, at the rate of one volume a week, and then read Plato's works; but her philosophy must have been sorely jarred by her proximity to her husband's apart-

ments, who had now a fancy not only for keeping, but training dogs. His brutal shouts, and the poor creatures' lamentable howls, disturbed her morning, noon, and night. By way of interlude, he would sometimes take up his violin, and scrape it furiously, and then return to his cruel discipline. One day, when a pretty little King Charles' spaniel was the victim, Catharine, moved by its prolonged and piteous howling, ventured to intercede, but that only brought down redoubled blows. "As a general rule," she says, "tears and cries, instead of moving the grand-duke, increased his rage. Pity was to him an unpleasant, nay, an intolerable sensation."

A sharp attack of illness which came upon Catharine at Perora, seems to have done much in softening Madame Tchoglokooff towards her; indeed, according to her own account, however prejudiced her attendants might at first be, the young grand-duchess never failed finally to conciliate and attach them to herself. "They never," she writes with excusable self-complacency, "found me sulky or exacting, but invariably ready to meet the slightest advance on their parts; and here my lively nature stood me in good stead, for none of these Arguses could help being amused by the things I said to them, and gradually they relaxed their severity."

As might be expected from his love of stimulants, the grand-duke went on from one degree of brutality to another. We have before heard Catharine allude to his evanescent preferences for different ladies of the court, and to the imperturbable good temper with which she listened to his confidences on this critical head. But when he became infatuated about the Princess of Courlande, who was positively deformed in person, and who had besides too much of Catharine's own skillful tact in courting and gaining universal popularity to have been a favourite of hers even if she had not been a rival, the grand-duchess was at last seriously provoked. "My vanity and self-love began to be shocked at the preference being given to that little monster. One evening, as I rose from table, Madame Vladislava told me that every one was horrified to see a hump-back preferred to me. I replied: 'How help it?' The tears came into my eyes, and I went to bed. I was hardly asleep when the grand-duke came to bed too; as he was drunk and did not know what he was doing, he began to discourse to me about the charms of his lady fair. I pretended to be fast asleep, that he might the sooner hold his peace; but after having talked more loudly still, in order to wake me up, and finding that I made no sign of waking, he gave me two or three hard blows on the side, grumbling at my sound sleep, and then turned round and fell asleep himself. I cried a good deal that night about this partiality of his, the blows he had given me, and my in every way disagreeable and wearisome situation. The following morning, he appeared ashamed of himself, did not refer to what had passed, and I pretended not to have been aware of it. The last week of Lent we recommenced our devotions."

In spite of tyrannical freaks every now and then, the Empress Elizabeth appears to have been, on the whole, attached to Catharine, and thoroughly aware of her great intellectual superiority to her boor of a nephew, of whom she often spoke in most unmeasured terms, though she attached a certain value to him as being the heir. She had long regretted Catharine's childless state; and the following passage describes her unscrupulous and inconsiderate joy when the succession to the throne appeared to her still further secured: "About twelve o'clock on the twentieth of September, 1754," writes Catharine, "I gave birth to a son. As soon as he was swaddled, the empress sent for her confessor, who gave the infant the name of Paul, after which she told the midwife to take the child and follow her. I remained on my bed of suffering. Now, this bed was placed opposite to a door full of chinks and crevices; behind me there were two large windows, which closed ill, and on each side two other doors—the one leading to my dressing-room, the other to Madame Vladislava's. As soon as the empress was gone, the grand-duke went away too, so did M. and Madame Schouvaloff, and for three good hours I saw no more of any of them. At length, Countess Schouvaloff returned in full-dress, and appeared shocked to find me still as she had left me. She went off at once, and I suppose sent for the midwife, who came in about half an hour, and told us that the empress was so taken up with the baby that she had not parted with it for a moment; as for me, no one gave me a thought. This neglect was not very flattering; I was dying with thirst. At length, I was comfortably arranged; and I did not see another living soul that day, nor were any inquiries even made for me. The grand-duke, for his part, was drinking with his companions, and the empress taken up with the child. In the town and the empire generally, there was great rejoicing. The following day, I began to suffer from intense rheumatic pain, and high fever set in; nevertheless, I still saw no one, and no one inquired for me. I did nothing but moan and weep. Madame Vladislava was the only person in my room; at bottom, she pitied, but could not help me. Besides which I did not like to be pitied or to complain; my nature was too proud for it—the very idea of being unhappy was intolerable to me, and up to this time I had done all I could not to appear so." Poor Catharine! they would not even let her see her child. No "baby fingers, waxen touches" to heal this terrible sense of isolation and neglect. Nay, she did not dare openly to ask about him; to have shown any anxiety would have been construed into an injurious doubt of the care taken of him by the empress. Only after six weeks was the mother permitted to look, for a few moments, upon her little son. She thought him "very beautiful, and the sight of him gave her a degree of pleasure." Later, she with small satisfaction beheld him nearly killed by kindness in the imperial chamber. "They kept him," she writes, "in an exceedingly warm room, swathed in flannel, lying in a cradle fitted up with the fur of the black fox, covered with an embroidered and wadded satin coverlet, and over that another of rose-coloured velvet lined with black-fox fur. I have often seen him lying thus, the perspiration streaming down his face and limbs, which so relaxed him that when he grew older, the least breath of air gave him cold."

Catharine's memoirs break off abruptly a few months before the death of the empress. The Schouvaloffs, the reigning court-favourites, had done what they could to injure her in the estimation of her imperial aunt, but the tact and policy of the grand-duchess prevailed. Two or three times, in the course of her narrative, we find glimpses of a certain desire for the nation's good, that had grown up even in the midst of her corrupt court-life, and which prepare us for the brighter portions of her after-career. It was but little indeed that Catharine

could know of the people. As Herzen well remarks: "The winter palace, with its administrative and military machinery, was a separate world in itself. Like a vessel floating on the surface of the deep, its only real relation to the inhabitants of that deep consisted in devouring them."

It speaks well for the original goodness of Catharine's heart that, despite all hardening influences, it should retain its sympathies for the masses, crushed, barbarous, and proscribed as they were; and amidst the excitement of war, and the intrigues of court-life, remember to ameliorate the condition of the serf, and provide for the instruction of his children. We lay down her memoirs gladly, for we are weary of the hollow, unprincipled, unreal life they reveal; but we lay them down with a deepened conviction that "none are all evil," and a disposition to retain, as our prominent impression of this once bright and beautiful, this great, but most unhappy woman, that she was beloved in life, and wept in death as the "mother of her people."

EDUCATIONAL VENEERING.

Veneering is a great art. It makes things "go so much farther," and there is nothing an economist likes so much as to make things hold out. Our ancestors were so foolish as to build solid mahogany tables, bureaus, and sideboards. We know better. We have found out that a piece of wood a sixteenth of an inch thick will transform the commonest wood into mahogany or rosewood. And so the honest old tables and sideboards have given place to sleek veneered ones, which look just as well.

A monument should be built to the man who discovered this wonderful art. For its applications are so numerous. The crockery men sell imitation china; they have learned the art of veneering. The rogue veneers himself with the dress and manners of a gentleman. The cook veneers his dishes. The shabby broker veneers his credit by keeping up appearances. The parson, alas! sometimes veneers his sermon with thin layers of learning. The doctor veneers his conversation with sounding phrases. The politician veneers his thieving by thin patriotism. The fortune-hunter veneers his cupidity with professions of love. What a wonderful art it is! How bad we should feel if the veneering were taken off, and all our purposes, acquisitions, and pretensions appeared the naked pine and poplar that they are!

But when it comes to education, we wish veneering had never been invented. And now that George and Maria are about to begin school, let us enter our protest against the veneering establishments. There are schools for boys and hundreds of schools for girls where the whole business transacted is the putting on of a thin layer of outward appearances. Everything is taught from a compend. History is boiled down to a strong decoction of facts and dates, and Ann Matilda is required to swallow it. "There were five thousand on one side, commanded by General Brown. There were seven thousand on the other, commanded by General Smith. General Smith was surprised on Sunday morning, and driven back with a loss of five hundred men and three pieces of artillery." This Ann Matilda, and Ann Matilda's parents, and Ann Matilda's friends fondly believe is history. It is paid for as history, labelled history, and must be history. But whatever there is of philosophy, poetry, of culture, of mental discipline in history is gone. This desiccated extract has no nourishment whatever. Of the peculiarities of race, of the domestic life, of the underlying causes of history, Ann Matilda learns nothing. She has swallowed a register, a gazette, but not a history. But she has passed her examination and "graduated." Her education is all right. It has the seal of the proper authorities on it, and she can go in peace.

English literature is worse taught than history. It is a thing that cannot be learned from a compend. The very essence of the highest culture, for people who speak the English language, is in English literature. But no one can learn English literature at second-hand. A good, thorough knowledge of the authors themselves in their works is the only road to this culture. And all short-cuts are only vain delusions.

The great mistake in the education of girls, and for that matter of boys, is that they master nothing. A little here and a little there is the plan. The object seems to be to enable the pupil to give a long catalogue of things studied. And for this charlatanism the parents who demand it are chiefly responsible. There are schools which are thorough. It is not for us to point them out, but for parents to be sure that they are not caught with the chaff of an empty pretence. In education, veneering will peel off.—*Hearth and Home.*

All the Paris newspapers are pretty much in accord as to the success of M. Sardou's new play, *Raja*, and there appears little doubt that the author has, in this instance at least, succeeded in his object of holding up to public derision the school of politicians of which the ex-dictator of Bordeaux is the recognised leader. The Rais are, of course, furious, and strong representations are being made at Versailles as to the inexpediency of allowing the representation of a piece, the Imperialistic tendency of which is so strongly marked. So fierce, indeed, is the political excitement aroused, that, according to one Paris correspondent, the theatre has to be protected by the police. Frenchmen are, as a rule, sufficiently sensitive to ridicule, and M. Sardou has in *Raja* hit some of the extreme school of politicians exceedingly hard—so hard that it is confidently anticipated that M. Thiers will be unable to resist the pressure put upon him, and will order the withdrawal of the piece.

The strictest monarchical etiquette is observed at the Duc d'Aumale's receptions. One of the *invités* having comfortably seated himself at a late *soirée*, M. d'Aumale went up to him, smilingly asking him for the latest bulletin about the illness that prevented his guest from standing. The Duc d'Aumale is also severely commented upon for suing small parishes for the recovery of forests, of which they had enjoyed the usage for ages.

Thirty-seven enthusiastic members of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, made one horse draw them to a concert in aid of the Association at Salem.

A movement is on foot for all workmen in France to labour one hour per day extra, and devote the proceeds to liberating the territory from the Germans.