

Port mentioned was the niece of that lady. The scene is graphically drawn.]

A Visit from the King and Queen.—Soon after dinner, while Mrs. Delany was left alone, as usual, to take a little rest—for sleep it but seldom proved—Mr. B. Dewes, his little daughter, Miss Port and myself, went into the drawing room. And here, while, to pass away the time, I was amusing the little girl with teaching her some Christmas games, in which her father and cousin joined, Mrs. Delany came in. We were all in the middle of the room, and in some confusion; but she had but just time to come up to us to enquire what was going forward, and I was disentangling myself from Miss Dewes, to be ready to fly off if any one knocked at the street door, when the door of the drawing room was again opened, and a large man, in deep mourning, appeared at it, entering and shutting it himself, without speaking.

A ghost could not more have scared me, when I discovered, by its glitter on the black, a star! The general disorder had prevented his being seen except by myself, who was always on the watch, till Miss Port, turning round, exclaimed:

“The King!—Aunt, the King!”

Oh, mercy! thought I, that I were but out of the room! Every one scampered out of the way; Miss Port, to stand at the door; Mr. Bernard Dewes to a corner opposite it; his little girl clung to me; and Mrs. Delany advanced to meet his Majesty, who after quietly looking on till she saw him, approached and enquired how she did.

He then spoke to Mr. Bernard, whom he had already met two or three times here.

I had now retreated to the wall, and purposed gliding softly, though speedily, out of the room; but before I had taken a single step, the King, in a loud whisper to Mrs. Delany, said, “Is that Miss Burnby?” and on her answering, “Yes, sir,” he bowed, and with a countenance of the most perfect good humour, came up to me. A most profound reverence on my part arrested the progress of my intended retreat.

“How long have you been come back, Miss Burnby?”

“Two days, sir.”

Unluckily he did not hear me, and repeated his question,—and whether the second time he heard me or not, I don’t know, but he made a little civil inclination of his head, and went back to Mrs. Delany.

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While this was talking over, a violent thunder

was heard at the door. I was almost certain it was the Queen. Once more I would have given anything to escape—but in vain. I had been informed that nobody ever quitted the royal presence, after having been conversed with, till motioned to withdraw.

Miss Port, according to established etiquette on these occasions, opened the door which she stood next, by putting her hand behind her, and slid out backwards, into the hall, to light the Queen in. The door soon opened again, and her Majesty entered.

Immediately seeing the King, she made him a low curtsy, and cried—

“Oh, your Majesty is here!”

“Yes,” he cried, “I ran here without speaking to any body.”

She then hastened up to Mrs. Delany, with both her hands held out, saying—

“My dear Mrs. Delany, how are you?”

Instantly after I felt her eye on my face—I believe, too, she curtsied to me: but though I saw the bend, I was too near-sighted to be sure it was intended for me. I was hardly ever in a situation more embarrassing. I dared not return what I was not certain I had received, yet considered myself as appearing quite a monster to stand stiff-necked, if really meant.

Almost at the same moment she spoke to Mr. Bernard Dewes, and then nodded to my little clinging girl.

I was really ready to sink with horrid uncertainty of what I was doing,—when his Majesty, who I fancy saw my distress, most good humouredly said to the Queen something, but I was too much flurried to remember what, except these words—“I have been telling Miss Burnby—”

Relieved from so painful a dilemma, I immediately dropped a curtsy. She made one to me at the same moment.

Another Royal Visit.—In the evening, when Mrs. Delany, Miss Port, and I, were sitting working together in the drawing room, the door was opened, and the King entered.

We all started up. Miss Port flew to her modest post at the door, I to my more comfortable one opposite the fire, which caused me but a slight and gentle retreat, and Mrs. Delany he immediately commanded to take her own place again.

I should mention, though, the etiquette always observed upon his entrance, which, first of all, is to fly off to distant quarters: and next Miss Port goes out, walking backwards, for more candles, which she brings in, two at a time, and places