

sisters of that convent, and all the assistant-mourners, were, by the tolling of the bell, assembled in the great chamber at noon on that day for the procession, but as the ceremonial and offices were according to the ritual of the church of Rome, the detail would not interest the general reader.¹

The earnest petition which the dying queen had preferred to the regent Orleans, in behalf of the faithful ladies of her household, who, with a self-devotion not often to be met with in the annals of fallen greatness, had sacrificed fortune and country for love of her, and loyalty to him they deemed their lawful sovereign, was not in vain. Orleans, however profligate in his general conduct, was neither devoid of good nature nor generosity. Mary Beatrice had asked that the members of her household might be allowed pensions out of the fund that had been devoted to her maintenance by the court of France; and above all, as they were otherwise homeless, that they and their children might be permitted to retain the apartments they occupied in the château of St. Germain till the restoration of her son to his regal inheritance. Long as the freehold lease of grace might last which a compliance with this request of the desolate widow of England involved, it was frankly granted by the gay, careless regent, in the name of his young sovereign. Thus the stately palace of the Valois and Bourbon monarchs of France continued to afford a shelter and a home to the noble British emigrants who had shared the ruined fortunes of the royal Stuarts. There they remained, they and their families, even to the third generation, undisturbed, a little British world in that Hampton-Court on the banks of the Seine, surrounded by an atmosphere of sympathy and veneration, till the revolution of France drove them from their shelter.² Till that period, the chamber in which Mary Beatrice of Modena died

¹ The particulars are preserved among the archives of France, in the hôtel de Soubise.

² The countess of Middleton survived her royal mistress eight-and-twenty years. She lived long enough to exult, in her ninety-seventh year, in the news of the triumphant entrance of the grandson of James II. and Mary Beatrice, Charles Edward Stuart, into Edinburgh in 1745, and died in the fond delusion that a new restoration of the royal Stuarts was about to take place in England. This lady was the daughter of an earl of Cardigan.

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