

first gifts the Prince made to the Queen was a little pin he had received from his mother when he was a child, and also that Princess Louise, the Prince and Queen's oldest daughter, was named after her grandmother and resembled her.

The Dowager Duchess, above mentioned, occupies a prominent place in the narrative. She seems to have been more than a mother to the Princes Ernest and Albert, and it is from her letters to her daughter, the Duchess of Kent, mother of Queen Victoria, that most of the facts relating to Prince Albert's childhood are gathered. She appears to have been a singularly affectionate and thoughtful old lady. Her Majesty says of her :

"The Queen remembers her dear grandmother perfectly well. She was a most remarkable woman, with a most powerful, energetic, almost masculine mind, accompanied with great tenderness of heart, and extreme love for nature. The Prince told the Queen that she had wished earnestly that he should marry the Queen, and as she died when her grandchildren (the Prince and Queen) were only twelve years old, she could have little guessed what a blessing she was preparing not only for this country but for the world at large. She was adored by her children, particularly by her sons; King Leopold being her great favorite. She had fine and most expressive blue eyes, with the marked features and long nose inherited by most of her children and grandchildren."

From the letters of the Duchess we learn precisely when Prince Albert was born—how the accoucheuse Siebold had only been called at three on a certain August morning, and how at six "the little one gave his first cry in the world and looked about like a little squirrel with a pair of large black eyes;" only the eyes afterwards proved to be blue. M^{me}. Siebold, the accoucheuse here mentioned, had only three months before attended the Duchess of Kent at the birth of the Princess Victoria.

On the 22nd of May, when Prince Albert was barely eight months old, his mother thus describes her children :

"Ernest est bien grand pour son âge, vif et intelligent. Ses grands yeux noirs p^rsentent d'esprit et de vivacité. . . . Albert est superbe—d'une beauté extraordinaire; a de grands yeux bleus, une tout petite bouche—un joli nez—et des fossettes à chaque joue—il est grand et vif, et toujours gai. Il a trois dents, et malgré qu'il n'a que huit mois, il commence déjà à marcher."

The grandmother records more than once that Albert is not a strong child, but very beautiful. "Little Alberinchen, with his large blue eyes and dimpled cheeks, is bewitching, forward, and quick as a weasel. Ernest is not nearly so pretty, only his intelligent brown eyes are very fine; but he is tall, active, and clever for his age." And again: "Albert is very handsome, but too slight for a boy; lively, very funny, all good nature, and full of mischief." It also appears that the handsome, fragile boy was very subject to attacks of croup—a matter which gave the grandmother great concern when, at four years old, Albert was removed with his brother from the care of the nurse to whom they had been hitherto entrusted, and handed over to the tutelage of Herr Florschütz of Coburg. She remarked that he

ought not to be taken from his female nurse, who slept with him; that a woman was more wakeful than a man, and that if the Prince should be visited in the night with one of the attacks of croup to which he was subject, his tutor might not discover this until it would be too late—a truly womanly and maternal idea. The Prince, however, was glad of the change, for we are told that "even as a child he showed a great dislike to being in the charge of women, and rejoiced instead of sorrowing over the contemplated change."

This tutor seems to have been a man of rare intellectual endowments, and an adept in imparting instruction; in short the pupils and their teacher seemed to be equally happy and fortunate in each other. His recollections of the Prince, whom he received at such a tender age that he was child enough to be carried up and down stairs on the back of his tutor, form a very readable part of the Memoir. They are too lengthy, however, for our pages, much as we should like to introduce them. Their early studies over, we have an account of a European tour made by the young Princes, and of their first visit to England in May, 1836, accompanied by their father.

There is a letter here which records that his first appearance was at a levee of the King's, "which was long and fatiguing, but very interesting." A drawing room, a grand dinner, and a brilliant ball at Kensington Palace followed—not very much to the Prince's delight apparently; for they brought late hours, and he could never keep awake at night. This strange sleepiness was characteristic of his earliest years, and we are told that "manfully as he strove against it, he never entirely conquered the propensity."

During their stay in England the Duke and his sons were lodged at Kensington, "and it was on this occasion that the Queen saw the Prince for the first time. They were both now seventeen years old—the Queen completing her seventeenth year during the visit, the Prince three months later."

It does not appear that the Prince and his cousin Victoria had any idea, *at this time*, that their union had been seriously thought of by his grandmother, before referred to, or the Queen's favorite uncle, the King of the Belgians. Such, however, was the case; the idea soon spread, and the sagacious Leopold, to divert attention from it, suggested that the Princes should make a tour in Switzerland and the north of Italy. It was not, however, till after the Prince's second visit, which occurred in 1839, that anything passed between the Queen and her future husband on the subject. In the meantime William IV. died, and Victoria ascended the throne. The Princes were then attending the University of Bonn. From the seat of that University, Prince Albert wrote to congratulate her on the event in the following terms :

BONN, 26TH JUNE, 1837.—My dearest Cousin,—I must write you a few lines to present you my sincerest