

the rest; then the Princess Royal, looking as young, as amiable, and as timid as when, with slow steps, she herself was led to the altar at the chapel Royal, but this time leading by the hand a fine little boy, who, all unawed by the stately pomp around, dragged on his mother's arm as he looked behind him at the pageant, and with difficulty brought his little feet to surmount the three steps of the *haut pas*. All have risen as they enter, and the Queen now rises too, and bows to her daughter with a kind and winning smile—the first that has passed across her face since she entered the chapel. Beethoven's noble march has been played as they filed in, but, as may be guessed, its strains, though beautifully rendered, are little attended to in such a scene as this.

Again the cheers come louder and more sustained than ever from the outside; again there is the same pause, broken by the trumpets and rattling kettle-drums in the nave, and this time all save the Queen herself rise and remain standing respectfully, for it is the bridegroom that approaches. Great officers precede him, but they are little heeded; all eyes are turned upon the Prince of Wales, who, in his uniform of General, but wearing over all the insignia and purple mantle of a Knight of the Garter, comes slowly up the Choir, partly accompanied, partly followed by his brother-in-law, the Prince of Prussia, and his uncle, the Duke of Saxe Coburg, similarly robed. The wedding March is played as they move up with stately ease, and the Queen rises and the three ascend and turn in line toward her bowing deeply. The Duke of Saxe Coburg and the Prince of Prussia retire to the south side of the altar, and the bridegroom, after kneeling a few seconds in prayer, rises and stands "the rose and expectancy of this fair State," in the centre of the *haut pas* alone, with his face toward the Queen.

Such an occasion is one in which few men appear to advantage; yet the Prince gains by passing through it. With the easy grace that seems natural to his actions he stood alone, the watched and observed of all observers, neither bashful nor confident, but with a manly royal bearing that became his illustrious birth and exalted station. He looked round upon the splendid scene for a moment quietly and easily, and his every movement, his look, his very bearing, seemed in their vivid likeness to his royal father to amaze and impress all—even those who, by their rank and station, might be supposed to be the most familiar with his features.

With a great clangor of trumpets, which at first are muffled in a rich indistinctness behind the curtain, the long looked for procession of the bride enters, and the Prince, giving one look to satisfy himself of the fact of the arrival, keeps his eyes fixed upon the queen, and never turns his head again till his affianced stands beside him.

The hush was now so deep and breathless that even the restless glitter of the jewels that twinkled everywhere seemed almost to break it, in another minute the young bride had entered, and stood

"In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen, hly and rose in one,"

the fairest and almost the youngest of all her lovely train that bloomed in fair array behind her. Though not agitated, she appeared nervous, and the soft, delicate bloom of colour, which ordinarily imparts a look of joyous happiness to her expressive features, had all but disappeared, as, with head bent down, but glancing her eyes occasionally from side to side, she moved slowly up towards the altar.

On these occasions, we believe, the dress of the bride ranks in general estimation as one only second in importance to the celebration of the ceremony itself, which is to be regretted, for a lady's dress, like a lady's beauty, can only be described by its effect. It is embroidered with silk, trimmed with silver, which can just be discerned in rich designs glittering between the snowy folds. The traditional white is not, however, departed from, though over all she wears a slight bodice with open sleeves of white silk embroidered with silver, and which, falling tight, sets off her tapering waist and faultless symmetry of form to absolute perfection.

Slowly the bride reaches the *haut pas*, and as she stops to bow to the Queen, some of her fair attendants, who are apparently more nervous than herself, attempt to kneel, but, finding their mistake, rise quickly and move on as if they did not mean it. Then, and then alone, does the Prince turn, as if to receive her, but checks himself as he sees them all bowing to the Queen, and for the first and only time he seems irresolute as to what he ought to do. The long keen scrutiny seems to have disturbed his composure at last though only for a second, and while the Anthem ceases, and all retire a little apart while the bride and bridegroom are left standing in the middle of the *haut pas*, the former, of course, closely surrounded by her attendant bridesmaids.

Handel's march from 'Joseph' had been played at entering, but all music had ceased as the party stood around the altar, till its strains broke out with the solemn words of the chorale:

"This day, with joyful heart and voice
To heaven be raised a nation's prayer,
Almighty Father, deign to grant
Thy blessings to the wedded pair."

So shall no clouds of sorrow dim
The sunshine of their early days;
But happiness in endless round
Shall still encompass all their ways."

The exquisitely soft music of this chant, at once solemn and sorrowful, was composed by the late Prince Consort. It may have been this, or the associations and lifelong memories called up by the scene beneath her, but certain it is that as the hymn commenced her Majesty drew back from the window of the pew, and, after an effort to conceal her emotion, gave way to her tears and almost sobbed, nor did she throughout the rest of the ceremony entirely recover her composure.

The bridal party saw nothing of this; the bride's face was turned from the pew, and the Queen was withdrawn too much from the front for the Prince to see her, though his looks were often turned in that direction. As the solemn chant ended the Prelates advanced to the communion rails, and the Primate, in a rich, clear voice, which was heard throughout every part of the building, choir or nave, commenced the service with the usual formula, 'Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the sight of God and in the face of this congregation to join this man and this woman in holy matrimony.' There is a solemn pause after that dreadful adjuration, in which they are charged to answer if there was any impediment to their marriage, and then after a moment the Primate passed on to "Wilt thou, Albert Edward, have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour and keep her in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all other, keep ye only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?"

To this the Prince rather bowed than responded, his utterance was indistinct. To the same question, "Wilt thou, Alexandra Caroline Maria, have this man to thy wedded husband?" the reply was just audible, but nothing more, though, as usual, every ear was strained to catch it.

But to the words, "I take thee, Alexandra, to my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part according to God's ordinance; and thereto I plight thee my troth," the Prince repeated clearly word for word after his Grace, though now again, when it was the turn of the young bride, she could be heard to answer almost inaudibly, and her cheeks were suffused with a crimson flush, and she seemed very nervous.

To the question, "Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?" the royal father of the bride only bowed and moved towards the Princess, who was removing her glove hurriedly. Then the Primate joined their hands, and in a clear, soft voice firmly and deliberately repeated the words:

"With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow; in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

All then knelt down while the prayer commencing 'O Eternal God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Giver of all spiritual grace, the Author of everlasting life; send Thy blessing upon these Thy servants, this man and this woman, whom we bless in Thy name,' was solemnly repeated, and then they rose, while the Primate joined their hands and said the final words, "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

With these words, which in law completed the marriage ceremony, the service was continued to the 67th Psalm, the solemn strains of which came like a relief to what seemed almost the overwrought feelings of all within the choir as the words went pealing softly through both nave and aisle.

Then was continued the usual prayer and exhortation, during which the guns in the Long Walk were heard booming forth, and the steeples throughout the town seemed to fill the air with sound. Misled for a moment the Queen's band began tuning their instruments, and even the organ gave one or two sprints and whistles, as if anxious to lead in the race of harmony. It was premature, however, and there was a gentle hush, which restored the former silence, when the Primate was heard concluding the exhortation. Then, raising his voice, he solemnly pronounced the benediction, during which the Queen, who had been more deeply affected, knelt and buried her face in her handkerchief. The bride and bridegroom then joined hands, and turning to the Queen gave more a nod of kindly friendship than a bow of State, which the Queen returned in kind. In another minute, the Queen, giving a similar greeting to the Princess, quitted the closet, and the whole pageant went pouring forth in a gorgeous stream or flood of colours, waving plumes and flaming jewels, out of the choir. None can tell but those who were present, how grand and solemn was the whole ceremony, or with how much of hope and true devotion the marriage of the second Prince of Wales was celebrated in St. George's Chapel, Windsor. As they left, the choir and the band went pealing the **Hallelujah of Beethoven:**