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ANNE OF CLEVES.

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH.

BY Z.

THE Tourist who voyages up the Rhine will perceive on his left hand, not many leagues from Dusseldorf, a ruin, like all others on that fascinating river, picturesquely placed and gracefully draped with vines and creepers. The moon looks down upon it with an air of solemn sadness, and the night-wind howls a dirge for departed youth and beauty.

Not always did desolation reign within those walls. In the early part of the sixteenth century it was the abode of one who, in those stormy times, won the epithet on whose possessors our Divine Saviour bestowed a double blessing. John III. Duke of Cleves, surnamed "The Pacifier," had inherited this castle in right of his wife. The fair Marie of Juliers, Berg and Ravensburgh, brought to her husband not only wealth and beauty, but a true woman's heart, loving and faithful,—a masculine energy of soul, united to feminine grace and delicacy, and a firmness of purpose which was perhaps necessary to a mother, when the other parent was so much disposed to yield to those about him. The Duchess had lived in retirement, occupying herself mainly with the education of her three daughters. Her sons were of course subjected to more warlike training.

In 1527, joy and sadness were mingled in the cup of Marie of Cleves. She was called on to bestow her eldest daughter, the darling of her heart, on the Duke of Saxony. The calm wisdom of John Frederick had gained the respect and esteem of all his contemporaries, and the maternal heart was filled with just pride that her beloved Sybilla was selected by the noblest of the German Princes, to share his honors and adorn his home. This feeling was in the ascendant during the short time that elapsed between the betrothal and the bridal—but when the eve of that day arrived which was to make the youthful maiden a bride, and for the last time

she repaired to her mother's closet for the nightly kiss and blessing, she found that parent whom, hitherto, she had noted as calm and self-sustained under all circumstances, bathed in tears. The Duchess clasped in her arms the child so soon to leave her, and the full tide of feeling was poured forth. Sybilla was surprised. Until this moment she had never dreamed of the depths that lay concealed under that collected, proud exterior. No unkind word, no biting jest, had ever passed those revered lips, but sympathy had been wanting. Now a new page was opened in that wondrous book—a mother's heart—a new tie was formed between those souls, and though never again might that graceful form lie confidently on the maternal bosom—a very child—though the morrow was to burst asunder many a link that had heretofore bound them, both felt that a stronger band was woven. Henceforth there was less of parental and filial—more of sisterly intercourse.

The morning rose bright and beautiful, and the thunder of the French and Austrian cannon on the plains of Italy, disturbed not the marriage ceremony which in the chapel of the old castle was celebrated in a more simple form than had ever before been used on a similar occasion in that consecrated spot. For Luther had given to the people the Word of God, and those who there bowed, had learned to address their Creator with but "one Mediator, the man Christ Jesus." The farewells were over, and more than ten years elapsed ere the Electress of Saxony again stood in her ancestral halls. Then she came not by the permission only, but by the earnest desire of her "lion-hearted" husband, to enter his solemn protest against the union, rumors of which had reached him, of his loving, gentle sister-in-law, with the "Royal Blue Beard of England."

Doubtless the noble Sybilla was a less strenuous advocate than the Elector would have been,