

## OUR SOVEREIGN LADY.

(By the Author of "English Hearts and English Hands.")

## CHAPTER II.—CROWNED AND WEDDED.

Another year had passed away. The eighteenth birthday, the coming of age of the Princess Victoria was near. Arrangements had been made to celebrate it with great rejoicings, but the rapidly-failing health of the king cast a shadow over the festivities.

At seven o'clock in the morning an eager crowd assembled under Princess Victoria's windows, for the serenade which was sung in honor of her birthday. All day long the bells rang merry peals; visitors flocked to the palace with congratulations; and rejoicings were general throughout the land.

The morning of the 20th of June saw a strangely different sight underneath those palace windows. Four grave and wearied gentlemen—the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chamberlain, the King's Master of the Horse, and the King's physician—stood there awaiting admission. All night they had watched beside the dying bed in Windsor Castle, where lay the king, his pale hand resting upon the shoulder of his faithful Queen, who, bowed down with sorrow, still watched beside him, until in the

"dark summer dawn,  
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds"  
fell on the dying ears; and then the failing breath ceased, and the earthly life had ended. As fast as horses could carry them, the bearers of the message "The King is dead—Long live the Queen," had sped through the ever brightening dawn, and reached Kensington in the broad blaze of a June sunrise at five o'clock in the morning.

Without the old palace no sound was heard save the chorus of song-birds in the gardens, whilst within the dwelling the inmates were wrapped in slumber so profound, it might have been the enchanted palace of the sleeping beauty. They knocked, and rang again and again at the porter's gate before they could arouse him, and gain admission into the court-yard. There they had again to wait, and even when they were admitted by a sleepy servant, it was only to be shown into a lower room to wait; and their arrival was to all appearance forgotten. At last they rang, and the attendant through whom they had requested an audience with Princess Victoria, returned to say that Her Royal Highness was in such a sweet sleep, that she could not venture to disturb her. It was the last sleep of her light-hearted girlhood. Thenceforward, the cares of a mighty nation must needs be borne by the tender young creature who, as yet, had never left her mother's side. How scarcely possible it seemed! But,

"So nigh is glory unto dust,  
So near is God to man,  
When duty whispers low, 'Thou must,'  
The youth replies, 'I can.'"

The tidings brought by these messengers would brook of no delay, "We are come on business of state to the Queen," they said, "and even her sleep must give way to that."

In a few minutes after receiving the summons, the young Queen stood before them with tears in her eyes, but perfectly collected and dignified.

It is told that her first request was to the archbishop—"I ask your prayers." And thus her reign began by seeking counsel from Him by whom kings reign, "for a wise and understanding heart to rule this so great people."

"Mighty the task, and glorious the fulfilling,  
Duties that round thy future hours must be,  
The East and West depend upon thy willing,  
Mistress art thou wherever rolls the sea."

"Glorious and happy be thy coming hours,  
Young Daughter of Old England's Royal line!

As in an Angel's pathway spring up flowers,  
So may a Nation's blessing spring in thine."

Queen Adelaide had sent, by the messengers, a letter to her royal niece, telling of her loss and her sorrow, and asking permission to remain at Windsor until after the funeral. At once the young Queen wrote a reply full of tender sympathy, begging her aunt to "consult nothing but her own health and convenience," and "to stay at Windsor just as long as she pleased." It was addressed to her to "The Queen of England," and on one of the attendants venturing to suggest, "Your Majesty, you are the Queen of England," the thoughtful reply was, "Yes; but the widowed Queen

is not to be reminded of the fact first by me."

Soon after the departure of the messengers, the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, arrived, and after a brief interview, returned to issue summonses for a Privy Council to be held at Kensington Palace two hours later.

Once more the Duchess of Kent and her royal daughter were together again as of old, but from this day and thenceforward the mother's guardianship of necessity had an end, when the daughter's reign began.

At eleven o'clock the royal dukes and the great officers of the state, and of the household arrived. After the proclamation, ending with the prayer, "beseeching God, by whom kings do reign, to bless the royal Princess Victoria with long and happy years to reign over us. God save the Queen!" had been read, the doors were thrown open, and the Queen entered. Her royal uncles advanced to meet her; she bowed to the lords, and taking her seat in the arm-chair that served for a throne, read her first speech in a clear, distinct, and audible voice, without any appearance of fear or embarrassment. The closing sentences ran thus: "Educated in England under the tender and enlightened care of a most affectionate mother, I have learnt from my infancy to respect and love the constitution of my native country. It will be my unceasing study to maintain the reformed religion as by law established, securing at the same time to all the full enjoyment of religious liberty; and I shall steadily protect the rights, and pro-

note, to the utmost of my power, the happiness and welfare of all classes of my subjects."

The Queen signed the oath for the security of the Church of Scotland, and the Privy Councillors were sworn, the two royal dukes first. As the old men knelt before her to take the oath of allegiance, and to kiss her hand, her color rose, and with gentle grace she kissed them both, saying to the Duke of Sussex, the eldest, "Do not kneel, my uncle, for I am still Victoria, your niece."

Never was anything like the impression she produced; every voice spoke her praises. A stream of royal visitors thronged the palace, until night brought its welcome quiet to the Duchess and her royal daughter.

The next morning, the longest day in the year, fit foreshadowing of the reign that was to be the longest of any Queen of England, was to witness the public proclamation of the new reign begun.

By ten o'clock in the morning the royal party had arrived at St. James Palace. The quadrangle in front, and even the parapets around, were filled with spectators. Garter-king-at-arms, surrounded by heralds, sergeants, trumpeters, and others, in their robes of office, formed a gorgeous group. But all eyes were turned to the window, where the royal maiden, dressed in deep mourning, was standing with her mother, and other members of the royal family. The proclamation announcing the death of

William the Fourth, and the accession of Queen Victoria, ending with the promise to yield to her "all faith and constant obedience, with all humble and hearty affection," was read aloud by Garter-king-at-arms, amidst an almost breathless silence. But hardly had the last word died away before the band struck up the national anthem; at a given signal the park and the Tower guns were fired; the courtyard was filled with loyal acclamations; and the thousands who thronged the adjoining park and streets echoed and re-echoed the deafening cheers.

The young Queen's calmness was overcome for the moment, and with the "touch of nature which makes the whole world kin"—endearing her inexpressibly to the hearts of her people—she turned from the brilliant assembly and the shouting crowd, and leaning against her mother, wept quiet tears within those sheltering arms.

"O Maiden, heir of Kings,  
A King has left his place,  
The majesty of Death has swept  
All other from his face.  
And thou, upon thy mother's breast,  
No longer lean adown—  
But take the glory for the rest,  
And rule the land that loves thee best.  
The Maiden wept;  
She wept to wear a crown.

"God bless thee, weeping Queen,  
With blessing more Divine,  
And fill with better love than earth's  
That tender heart of thine.  
That when the throne of earth shall be  
As low as graves brought down,  
A pierced Hand may give to thee



THE QUEEN AT A REVIEW.

The crown which Angels shout to see,  
Thou wilt not weep  
To wear that heavenly crown.

Within a month of these grand ceremonies, on a bright July morning, the Queen left her childhood's home at Kensington Palace, and, with her royal mother, took up her abode in Buckingham Palace. Great was the sorrow at Kensington, where they had made themselves most justly beloved. Into one humble home there, and into the sick-room of the daughter—a young girl—a ray of hope was sent to light up the dark cloud of the parting. The old soldier, Stillman by name, already alluded to as a favorite of the little Princess Victoria, had been placed by the Duke of Kent in a cottage in one of the lanes then to be found near Kensington Palace, and, together with his wife and two sickly children, had been commended by the Duke in his dying illness to the Duchess's care. Within a few years the father and the little boy died, but the girl lived on, a patient sufferer, and she and her mother were constantly visited and kindly cared for by the Duchess and her young daughter. What sorrow must have been felt in that cottage when the news reached it of the great event, and how the poor girl's heart must have sunk within her at the thought of the separation from the young Princess, whose visits had been the this sunshine of the shady life. But, even in supreme crisis, the heart of our Queen was—

"At leisure from itself,  
To soothe and sympathize."

A messenger arrived from Buckingham Palace bringing for the sufferer a copy of the Book of Psalms, with dates written on the margin to mark the days on which the Queen read the different Psalms; and within, a little marker worked by herself; and, dearest of all, this message, that the little gift was sent just then to show her "that though now, as Queen of England, she had to leave Kensington, yet she did not, and would not, forget her."

On July 17th the Queen went in state to close Parliament. Then, for the first time, the silvery clearness and sweetness of her voice was heard, audible even in its most delicate modulations, throughout that great assembly. One who was present, and well qualified to judge, thus describes this first speech, and the appearance of our Queen. "The serene, serious sweetness of her candid brow and clear, soft eyes gave dignity to the girlish countenance. . . . The Queen's voice was exquisite, the enunciation was as perfect as the intonation was melodious, and I think it is impossible to hear a more excellent utterance than that of the Queen's English by the English Queen."

In September Her Majesty went to Windsor Castle; and held a review, riding in front of the troops, who received her with enthusiasm. In November she paid her first visit to the city of London, when the church bells were rung, the houses were decorated, and the people cheered her all along the route. At the Guildhall Queen Victoria was received with magnificent hospitality, but it was noticed that, declining sumptuous dainties and rare wines, the young Queen chose the simplest of the fare, and drank iced water only.

(To be continued.)

## "WHY DON'T YOU SAY 'AMEN'?"

A few years ago, as Charles G. Finney was holding a series of meetings in the city of Edinburgh, many persons called upon him for personal conversation and prayer.

One day a gentleman appeared in great distress of mind. He had listened to Mr. Finney's sermon on the previous evening, and "it had torn away his 'refuge of lies.'" Mr. Finney was plain and faithful with him, pointing out to him the way of life clearly, and his only hope of salvation. The weeping man assured him that he was willing to give up all for Jesus, that he knew of nothing he would reserve—all for Jesus.

"Then let us go upon our knees and tell God of that," said Mr. Finney. So both knelt, and Mr. Finney prayed:

"O Lord, this man declares that he is prepared to take Thee as his God, and cast himself upon Thy care, now and forever."

The man responded, "Amen!"

Mr. Finney continued; "O Lord, this man vows that he is ready to give his wife, family, and all their interests up to Thee."

Another hearty "Amen!" from the man. He went on: "O Lord, he says that he is also willing to give Thee his business, whatever it may be, and conduct it for Thy glory!"

The man was silent—no response. Mr. Finney was surprised at his silence, and asked:

"Why don't you say 'Amen' to this?"

"Because the Lord will not take my business, sir; I am in the spirit trade," he replied.

The traffic could not withstand such a test as that. The Lord will not take such a business under His care.—*The Pacific.*

"Do YOU THINK it would be wrong for me to learn the noble art of self-defence?" a religiously-inclined youth inquired of his pastor. "Certainly not," answered the minister. "I learned it in my youth myself and I have found it of great value during my life." "Indeed, sir! Did you learn the old English system, or Sullivan's system?" "Neither. I learned Solomon's system," replied the minister. "Solomon's system?" "Yes. You will find it laid down in the first verse of the 15th chapter of Proverbs: 'A soft answer turneth away wrath.' It is the best system of self-defence of which I have any knowledge."

A BRIGHT little girl in the Presbyterian Sunday-school, upon being asked what sort of a spirit that of the Pharisee was, replied; "It was doing a good thing, and then feeling big over it."