THE MONTHLY REVIEW

EDITED BY

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VOL. XXII.

JANUARY—MARCH 1906

MORANG & CO., LTD.
90 WELLINGTON STREET WEST
TORONTO
LONDON: JOHN MURRAY

Printed by Ballantyne & Co. Limited
Tavistock Street, London

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A NOTE ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION

THERE are many curious and interesting conflicts going on in England beneath the surface of party politics; in foreign affairs, for example, cosmopolitanism fights with nationalism, and at home communism with individualism. Few, however, of those who take part in these struggles are aware of their true significance. They are as it were the silent battles of monsters raging at deep-sea levels, while far above on the surface foams the loud unmeaning quarrel of winds and waves. To change the metaphor, the petty squabbles which seem so important across the floor of the House of Commons are writings in cipher, which when translated into words mean the larger philosophical struggles of which I speak.

Now the Liberals never cease to remind us that they are the English "Intelligentzia" and their opponents "the stupid party," that they stand for education, temperance, and progress, in fact, that Liberalism is a concentrated quintessence of all the virtues and the Almighty a party politician. One might well imagine from all this press and pulpit talk that the inner meaning of to-day's politics was just the eternal struggle of what different ages have called Ormuzd and Ahriman, God and Satan, light and darkness, good and evil. That would be a shallow philosophy, though it seems to be the philosophy of some. The tragedy of this life is not that good strives with evil, but that evil strives with evil and good with good. There

is no doubt that Conservatism has the defects of its qualities, and as its most conspicuous quality is prudence, it suffers from the usual defect of prudence, a selfish and material view of life. This is, I think, inevitable to an association a large part of whose practical work lies in the protection of the rights of property; and the desire of the "haves" to retain what they have is not perhaps more selfish than the desire of the "have-nots" to despoil others of what they have. But it is easily intelligible that a Conservative, feeling his chief care, the protection of property and social stability, to be prosaic and uninspiring, has a tendency to fall back on prudence and common sense and to leave unchallenged to his opponents those high aspirations which they undoubtedly possess.

Now I myself am by no means a good Conservative; in certain things indeed I am an extreme Radical; but I confess that those things rarely come into the field of practical politics, and I have enough sympathy with Conservatives to wish to restore their shaken confidence in themselves and their motives. They have so often been told that they have no ideals, that they really seem to believe it at last. I should be glad if I could persuade some of them that there is in practical sober Conservatism a single unifying and vivifying principle. I find it in a quality which may be expressed in one word. In all the uncharitable assumption of the virtues which more than anything else has driven me away from official Liberalism, there is one virtue conspicuously—and, I will try to show, wisely—omitted from the catalogue of righteousness. It is justice, the idea of fair play to which we make such a strongly national claim, which seems to me to add soul to the body of prudence and to complete the claim of Conservatism to our respect.

Let us quickly run over as examples a few recent party controversies, without any attempt at a more elaborate analysis of the motives which took part in them. In the struggle over national education the Liberals, with their ready idealism, saw ahead of them a golden age of nationally controlled schools for all; and, careless of wrongs done by the way, in the true spirit

of doing evil that good may come, made straight for the Promised Land. What did it matter though school buildings and endowments had been left for teaching in the tenets of particular Churches? Adherents of these Churches will do well to remember which political party interfered with that projected spoliation. Again, take the liability of trade unions for the actions of their officers. I will not urge that the Liberal leaders tried to catch the trade union vote. That is true, but it is not all the truth, any more than it is all the truth that Tories tried to catch the votes of mine-owners. The soul of the quarrel was that the Liberals, eager to advance the position of the working classes, took no thought for the means they used. It is to Conservative common sense and fair-play we owe it that trade unions are not endowed with the privilege of irresponsibility, a privilege unknown to any social system, and foreign to the most elementary ideas of justice. Again, what was the attitude of the Opposition towards the Licensing question? Consumed with their laudable zeal to promote temperance—as what thinking man would not if he could?—they thought it no shame to evict from their livelihood without a farthing's compensation a multitude of men, who at the least are not shown not to be honest and well-conducted. From this monstrosity we were saved in part, perhaps, by Parliamentary expediencies, but more largely and truly by the hatred of injustice and oppression.

Lastly there is a peculiarly topical case, that of the unemployed. They, or rather their friends of the moment, claim not charity—which is offered them on all hands—but work. Now work not ventured by private enterprise is not likely to be remunerative; and unremunerative work is a pure charity. Men are not divided sharply into two classes of rich and poor, and such a State-charity would not have the savour of true charity, which is voluntary giving and the quality of mercy; but would be wrung from the pockets of those amongst others who, with energy and character, can only just keep themselves independent. For this struggling and over-burdened class Liberalism has no pity. The vision of a happy and prosperous

working class blinds them to actualities. So parks, trams, drivers of municipal dust-carts at two pounds seventeen a week, empty steamboats, on which the season's loss is not to be more than £9200 (this when there need be no loss at all, is of course inconsiderable), all these things, with free education in the present, and probably free boots and breakfasts in the future for the children of the poor, are ground not only from the rich man but from the poor clerk or parson. Where shall these find justice? As things are now, from Conservatism only.

This summary is of course superficial; but what I wish to show is, that a large part of the Conservative position in all these controversies was the love of fairness. I entreat Conservatives to remember this ideal of justice, and to go with heads high into the coming fight. They will then perhaps succeed in postponing *sine die* the time when money is to be unfairly exacted and wildly squandered in pursuit of ideals which cannot so be attained, and when all rights will be ignored that conflict with some distant good. They must not leave high aspiration to the dreamers of dreams. To get a wide view we always have to climb a hill. Conservatives, to find a broad and wise policy, must rise above the low point of view, from which wealth is mistaken for worth, and the true patriotism, which would rather have England right than victorious, for treachery. That materialism is the defect of their great quality of common sense is no excuse. If they remember this, and at the coming General Election lay confident claim to the two political master-ideals of prudence and justice, I feel convinced that the country will place its fate once more in their hands.

English Liberals have a favourite text, which they boast of as a summary of their political creed. It is, "*A liberal man deviseth liberal things*," and I should be the last to deny their claim to it. But there is another saying, one of Pascal's, which seems to me to be almost equally representative of their method, though they lay no claim to it at all. It is, "*Certainement l'homme ignore la justice.*"

E.

BRAINS AND BRIDGE

DOES aptitude for card-playing denote general intelligence? The question was asked in the course of general conversation among the guests at a country house-party where several men and women of distinction, and admittedly intellectually brilliant, were present. In less than ten minutes a controversy almost as fierce as if some vital point to do with politics or religion had been broached was in full force. Nor did it abate. But for the fact that the hour was past midnight and that many hundreds of pheasants awaited their doom next day, the discussion would in all probability have grown more and more heated and have been prolonged into the small hours of the morning. This incident it was that first opened my eyes to the deep interest taken in the question, and that led ultimately to my writing personally to a number of men I deemed to be in a position to express an impartial opinion upon the subject and likely not to be averse from doing so.

Among the first to reply was Mr. F. G. Aflalo, F.R.G.S., F.Z.S., editor of the well-known "Encyclopædia of Sport"—a man of the world, whose opinion may be deemed to carry weight.

Your question [he writes] is not easy to answer, and to myself, who have not touched a card for ten years, and who finally gave up a habit that had never been very strong before the modern cult of bridge fell heavily on the land, it presents peculiar difficulties, since, as might not unreasonably be averred, nothing is more gratifying than to condemn a weakness which one is free of.

Still, with this personal confession by way of preface, I shall not hesitate to reply emphatically in the negative. And, as there is some danger of confusing the issue, let me clearly state that my opinion is not intended to cover the incompatibility of general intelligence, even of brilliant intellectual attainments, and a passion for cards; for the history of the period covered by the Greville Memoirs, not to mention the personalities of several players among my own acquaintance, would unequivocally repudiate such a postulate. All that I can take your question to mean is, whether cleverness at, let us say, bridge (for the terms bridge and cards are become, in an age that lacks both humour and sense of proportion, almost synonymous) is in itself a symptom of intelligence in other matters. To this let me say, so far as a merely personal opinion is worth anything, that it most certainly is not.

Let my card-playing friends forgive me if, waiving personal points of view, I suggest that any one who thinks otherwise should, if he happen to be a judge of physiognomy, correct his illusion by spending half an hour in contemplation of the faces gathered round the table in the card-room of his club. If this experience bring no cure, then let him take a bridge-girl into dinner and hang on her conversation. Her simpering grandmother, who worked in coloured silks and hid her maidenly blushes behind a shower of ringlets, was a Minerva to her! The bridge-girl wears, as a rule, neither ringlets nor blushes, but is a hard-featured, calculating, nervous, nail-biting product of ultra-emancipation, and her "general intelligence" is in all probability on a level with that of the kohl-eyed playthings that eat sweetmeats in Eastern harems and peer out on the world of freedom through barred windows. She has no longer any taste for music, or the play, or the picture-gallery. The mid-day sun, like the mid-night lamp, finds her staring at the cards or thinking of them. Dinner, which, in a more cultured and less hurried age, was a period of pleasant nutrition and brilliant conversation, is to her an interlude of boredom, through which she sustains herself only with dreams of the winning hand that will presently be hers.

In striking contrast to this equitable expression of opinion are the views of five bridge-enthusiasts—"violent" is the only adjective that would seem to fit the case—to whom my letter of inquiry appears to have acted as an irritant. "Your question (and clearly you are a non-player)," writes one, "is too preposterous to answer." He then goes on to answer it: "In my opinion a man who cannot play bridge or poker must be next door to a fool." It is gratifying to know that he is not a neighbour. "Yes," replies my next correspondent, "I do most emphatically think that want of aptitude

(*sic*)"—what does this "*sic*" mean here?—"for card-playing denotes lack of 'general intelligence,' whatever that may be." My third correspondent of this set is a retired infantry officer, who has spent many years in India. "I don't know who you are," he writes, "and I have no wish to correspond with strangers, but all I can say is that I have played cards as far back as I can remember, and the fact of my now holding the position I am in should prove that I have ordinary intelligence at any rate." I don't think it necessarily proves anything of the kind, but having no desire to storm the position he now holds I give him the benefit of the doubt, stipulating only that his claim to "ordinary intelligence" be not taken to include ordinary courtesy. The two remaining letters of the five are written in much the same strain. Why these five inflammable gentlemen should have taken it for granted that I am under the impression that aptitude for card-playing does not denote general intelligence I can't think.

A very gracious letter comes from Dr. Macnamara, M.P., whose familiarity with educational matters, and intimate association for so many years with learned men of many sorts and conditions, eminently qualify him to express a just opinion:

". . . I should answer your question in the negative," he writes. "Aptitude for card-playing denotes, as I think, in the first place a specially retentive memory; and in the second place a brain so constituted as to permit of the exclusion for the time being of anything which would be a distraction to the matter in hand. These two qualities may be developed in a very high degree, and yet the individual may not justify the description 'generally intelligent.'"

The names of two other Members of Parliament who express their views I am regretfully compelled to omit. I say "regretfully" because they also are men so placed as to be in a position to speak with authority, and I can only conclude that their reason for desiring anonymity is that they have among their constituents hyper-sensitive bridge-players whose

plumes they deem it unwise to ruffle. For these two gentlemen agree in the main with Dr. Macnamara. They are of opinion that though an aptitude for card-playing, and more especially for bridge-playing, betokens intelligence in the player, yet, as the one puts it,

> Intelligence for playing at cards is a branch of intelligence peculiarly its own, and my experience is that cleverness at cards, at chess, and at figures, go generally hand in hand. I personally am acquainted with quite a number of men who, though good at those three things, are of very ordinary intelligence at all else, and singularly deficient in any sort of aptitude for music, literature, or painting.

His friend also appears to have noticed a lack of talent for music among men and women who are exceptionally brilliant card-players:

> It has always struck me [he says] that the brain of the very skilful card-player is what can only be described as a "mechanical" brain. . . . Also, I have never, to the best of my recollection, met a very talented musician—by which I mean more especially an instrumentalist, whose brain is above all else volatile, whose temperament is mercurial and almost always emotional, and whose sense of humour is generally very acute—who was able to concentrate his attention upon a game of cards for any length of time. . . . This is only my own experience, and I give it for what it is worth. It is quite possible there are men whose experience has been different from mine.

A gentleman whose experience has been very different from his, a man who ought to know what he is talking about, and to whom nobody could attribute lack of general intelligence, is Mr. Robert Sievier:

> I am certainly of opinion [Mr. Sievier writes] that a good card-player is, as a rule, possessed of more than general intelligence and quickness. Card-players, by whom I mean expert card-players, are usually men whom one would certainly describe as clever and bright all round. It is true that one occasionally meets a very good card-player who is not particularly brilliant at other things, just in the same way that you sometimes meet a man with a wonderful aptitude for learning languages, or with a singular gift for figures, who can hardly write an ordinary letter, but I maintain that, taking card-players collectively, their general intelligence is quite above the average.

Mr. J. H. Yoxall, M.P., who observes rather closely the

men and women with whom he comes in contact, is inclined to think there is "a special faculty for games to be found possessed by certain persons, just as there is the business faculty, the literary, and the artistic."

This special faculty [he goes on to remark] shows itself more in games which consist largely of physical adroitness, such as billiards, cricket, football, and golf; and in card games the more usual quality of memory, and the powers of observation and deduction, come mainly into play.

At the same time I do not suppose there was ever a really excellent card-player who had not specially developed to a high degree a certain form of the faculty of imagination, putting himself into the mind of his antagonist or partner for the time being as much as possible, and preparing accordingly to aid or thwart, just as a general in the field ought to be able to do.

Upon the whole, therefore, I should say that the aptitude for card-games indicates the possession of general intelligence—in varying degrees, of course—and more developed along certain lines than others; but nevertheless an amount of intellectuality above the average.

A student—I should call him a professor—of assimilative memory, a very fine card- and chess-player indeed, who has for years strengthened his memory on the assimilative principle for all purposes, but especially for card-playing, believes that "any man or woman with the normal complement of brains" can school himself or herself into becoming "at any rate a very fair average bridge-player." He does not, however, for a moment believe that exceptional aptitude for card-playing denotes "a good 'all-round' brain, any more than an exceptional facility for mathematics shows in the least that a man is generally clever—he may be the veriest dullard at everything except arithmetic." He admits that when first he began to play bridge he had already trained his memory "to the extent of remembering almost every card played," and his facility for whist-playing helped him materially at bridge, he discovered.

The reason so many men and women of intelligence play cards so badly [he declares] is that card-playing doesn't interest them in the least, with the result that they can't bring themselves to concentrate their attention upon a game of cards for any length of time, if for any time at all. The fact that

many execrable card-players begin to improve enormously in their play directly they begin to take a true interest in the game, goes far, I think, to prove this. On the other hand, I have met many people, some of them quite undeniably clever in many respects, who appeared to suffer from what can only be called "card-blindness." They really didn't seem able to distinguish one card from another when it belonged to a suit of the same colour!

Miss Eleanor A. Tennant, the only lady, I believe, who has ever written a book on the game, and whose "A B C of Bridge" is closely studied by almost every novice, would seem to share to a great extent the views held by Mr. Sievier and those held by Mr. Yoxall. She considers that

to be a really fine bridge-player certainly requires a high degree of intelligence, quite apart from that mysterious possession, "a card mind." It is these two qualities combined which produce the few first-rate bridge-players who stand head and shoulders above the crowd of would-be good players. What is called "a card mind" has really nothing to do with the mind, but is entirely a physical quality. The connection between the eye and the brain is much quicker in some people than in others, and it is the rapidity with which the eye communicates its impression to the brain which gives facility in card-playing, and makes people quick at any rate, even if they have not the intelligence to work out an elaborate plan of action.

As regards the comparative skill of men and women, I do not find that there is much difference amongst moderate players; but when we come to the first rank, the men certainly hold pride of place, and the two or three ladies in the bridge world who are equal to them are the more distinguished as there are so few of them.

Miss Tennant's is to all intents and purposes the opinion of the witty, vivacious, Miss Mary Dease, who is said to play as scientific a rubber at bridge as any woman not eaten up with false ambition need wish to play, and who has made —so her intimate acquaintances tell me—more than one front-rank player of "domestic" bridge wish that he had never met her—at least as an adversary at the bridge table. In a moment of mental aberration, or an outburst of indiscretion—I am not quite sure which—she has confided to me that not only she herself, but a number of ladies of her acquaintance find that no sooner have they taken up their cards than they become so completely absorbed in the game as to be

only sub-consciously aware that anything at all is going on around them, or that anybody is in the room with them, and that their minds become then and there incapable of recording any idea of any kind that does not bear directly, not merely upon bridge, but upon the particular game of bridge they are playing at the time.

This, no doubt, is as it should be, and is probably the frame of mind that goes to constitute what is called commonly "a first-class head for cards." Whether the gift, or the acquired power, or whatever it may be, of thus closely focusing the whole of one's mind and soul upon a game of cards implies a faculty for concentrating it to the same extent upon any other form of study requiring abstract thinking I shall not attempt to state dogmatically. Probably as many persons will be found to argue in the positive as in the negative. The fact remains, however, that accurate and close thinking and reasoning of any kind exercise the mind in the same sort of way that calisthenics develop the muscles of the body. Consequently the conclusion to be arrived at, after weighing carefully the pros and cons contained in the foregoing expressions of opinion, would seem to be that, though a natural aptitude for card-playing may not necessarily denote the possession of natural general intelligence in any high degree, that yet a careful, methodical and judicious course of training in the art of playing games of cards such as whist and bridge, that require brain-power and thought-concentration, is bound to strengthen the intellectual powers of any man or woman of average ability, and thus presently lead to a direct increase in his or her share of general or ordinary intelligence.

BASIL TOZER.

BULGARIA TO-DAY

BULGARIA is less known, perhaps, than any other part of Europe, lying only a three days' journey from London. She can offer little to attract the general traveller; she has no good hotels and but few art treasures, and her history is obscure and intermittent. Twice, for a few decades in the tenth and again in the thirteenth century, the Empire of the Bulgarians stretched from Belgrade to Constantinople and southwards to the confines of modern Greece; but a fallen stronghold here and there among the mountains, and the ruins of some thirty churches on the hill which overlooks the ancient capital of the Bulgarian Czars—Tirnova, one of the most picturesque cities in Europe—are all that now remain of the time of Bulgaria's greatness.

The Treaty of Berlin created the virtually independent State of Bulgaria out of an integral part of the Turkish Empire. During the twenty-seven years that have passed since then, Bulgaria has seen two revolutions, by one of which she gained a province and by the other lost a prince: she has had a three weeks' war with her Servian neighbours, in which she was entirely successful; she has shown a stubborn front against the greatest Power of Eastern Europe, and that practically unsupported by any foreign Government, and she has now apparently settled down to a career of vigorous progress under the present *régime*. Her constitution is liberal, and her laws are in thorough consonance with it. Experts who know her military

organisation declare that, in the event of hostilities with Turkey, if Bulgaria can make the first move, her army would reach Constantinople with comparative ease. Roads and railways have been made, towns reconstructed, factories built, schools of all grades and a university established, more land is taken into cultivation every year. If the people are not rich, neither are they poor. Commerce is increasing, foreign enterprise is encouraged and finds a field for the safe and profitable employment of capital.[1] Brigandage has been entirely put down, and travelling is as safe as it is anywhere in Europe. In short, Bulgaria has already fully justified her independence. That there is another side to the picture cannot be denied. The constitution has not always been respected, the conduct of statesmen and public servants has not always been beyond reproach; the Prince and his Ministers find many critics, and there is more than one hiatus in the general line of advance. But if the study of a people in the process of making does not disclose an entirely ideal state of things, it is not therefore of less interest, especially at the present moment, when the weakening of Austria has given an impulse to the tendency for other nationalities, however small, to claim a right to a separate existence.

Apart from the social and political interest afforded by a stay in Bulgaria, the country itself has much of the indefinable charm of the East, with all the picturesqueness of life, given by a simple and kindly peasantry, who still preserve the dress and the customs of many centuries back. It offers, moreover, to the lover of scenery and the naturalist the attractions of a little known mountain region, the haunt of perhaps the finest and most varied types of birds of prey in Europe.[2]

European geography has confined the use of the word Balkàn to the range which stretches from the defile of the Isker to the Black Sea, though it is of course applied as a

[1] Germany has not been slow to avail herself of her opportunities here.

[2] In one day's expedition, I saw the nests of an Egyptian vulture, a black kite, a black stork, a sacred falcon and an Imperial eagle.

convenient term to cover all the countries of the region. The Turkish word Balkàn means mountain in general, and serves equally for a chain or a single peak. The rounded hills of the Stara Planina, "the old mountains," with their bare, wrinkled folds, the fir-clad, snow-crowned heights of Rilo, the isolated peaks of Perim Dagh or Musalla, the solitary form of Vitosh, or the serried masses of the Albanian highlands, each and all are to Bulgar and Turk, the Balkàn. The Balkàn is the home of the *Samodiva*, half-nymph, half-goddess, who still dwells on the highest slopes; it is the kingdom of the bear, the wolf and the wild cat, the vulture and the eagle; the retreat of the hermit, the hiding-place of monasteries; the stronghold of the vaivoda, the insurgent or robber chief and his bands, the romance and the glory of Christian and Mohammedan, Serb, Bulgar, Montenegrin, Albanian, and Turk alike. In legend and history the Balkàn has always been the common link and the battle-ground, the inspiration and the despair of the perplexed nationalities who have, since time began, surged through the Peninsula.

The Slavs of Southern Europe are an agricultural people, but they have many of the characteristics of a mountaineering race. The fertile plains which they cultivate are at no point far from the mountains; there is little of the undulating country of an English landscape; the transition from plain and mountain is abrupt; the river quits the open plain to enter at once into a sudden defile, and the horizon is almost always bounded by a wall of mountains. The plains, partly because they are thus limited, have none of the monotony or depressing influence of the Hungarian level or the steppes of Russia, while they yet have that sense of space and distance which a hedgeless country always gives. For the brief season of spring, at least, before the sun has burnt the freshness out of the land, these Balkàn plains are full of charm. The level country stretches unbroken for miles, except where a row of tumuli rises abruptly, or a line of silver willows and poplars marks the windings of a river, or a grove of trees almost hides a low-

roofed village. Beneath the horses' feet is a carpet of flowers, a tissue of faint mauves and blues and pinks and yellows, which one hardly dares call hay. The mountains far away repeat the colours of the flowers in deeper, more mysterious tones. The only life is in the slowly moving herds of goats and sheep and horses; but the whole air, fresh still with a remembrance of the distant snows, is melodious with the tinkling of countless sheep-bells, the song of larks and nightingales, and, scarcely less lovely, the wild, intermittent music of the shepherds' flutes, so that there seems a vague exquisite warbling everywhere. I remember one "secret garden," half-wood, half-meadow, through which I rode, when spring was at its most beautiful moment. It was scarcely a wood, for the trees grew too far apart; little streams ran through it, and in its depth there was a deserted mill, a long low building with a red roof. Clouds of salvias, pink campion and ragged robin, orchises, purple comfrey and yellow lupin grew in the rich long grass; and in that one small space we heard cuckoos and nightingales, the beautiful song of the golden oriole and the low call of the hoopoo. Before the crops are grown there is little to bring the peasant abroad. Here and there a cart creaks by, as old-world as the buffaloes which draw it with sad, deliberate steps. The West has as yet hardly touched the agriculture of the Balkans. The plough, the ox-cart, the water-wheel, the tending and treading of the vines, the threshing of the grain, the strident monotonous chant of some interminable story, which helps the women as they bend over their reaping—the implements, and the system and the song have scarcely changed since Slavs and Bulgars became mingled in one nation some thirteen hundred years ago.

An agricultural people, living for five centuries under the rule of the most conservative nation in Europe, the Bulgarians have preserved many of the customs, not only of their own remote ancestors, but possibly of those little known Thracian tribes whom they eventually dispossessed and absorbed. Belief in charms and witchcraft still prevails, and offerings of food for the departed are still made in the country districts; I

remember a procession of women and children in their feast-day dresses, bearing elaborately prepared dishes with solemn faces to the village burying-place. A curious instance of the way in which the cult of a pagan deity can be merged into that of a Christian saint may be traced in the series of votive tablets, which form the chief remains from Thracian times in the Sofia Museum. These tablets show the rude figure of a hunter on horseback, sometimes with a spear and dog, in pursuit of wild animals; occasionally a female worshipper appears in the background, and sometimes a serpent and an altar. The transition from the cult of this tutelary god, the "Thracian rider," as he is called, may be traced through the more elaborate representations of later Greek art to the familiar horseback figure of St. George—least Christian and most popular of Christian saints—with the dragon and the lady, which appears equally on the frescoes and ikons of every Orthodox Church and on the silver ornaments of the Albanians. In the same way, the pagan festival of the spring, which antiquarians connect with the worship of this "Thracian rider," has become the great Church feast of St. George's Day, and one can well believe that the observances with which the feast is still kept date back to pre-Christian times. I was in Gabrovo, a little factory town built along the River Jantra, on St. George's Eve last May. The narrow street between overhanging houses, which forms the bazaar, was crowded with peasants and crying lambs, for every Orthodox household must slay a lamb on "George's Day." Until late years the lamb was not eaten, but was treated as a sacrifice, the first-fruits of the good gifts of Nature. On the feast-day itself, each house is decked with boughs of fresh green, and on each doorpost hangs, an unattractive spectacle, the lamb of yesterday's purchase. I rode that day from Gabrovo over the Shipka Pass; it was a morning on which all the world, pagan or Christian, might well keep the festival of spring. Snow was still lying on the higher parts of the Pass, but the rolling sea of wooded mountains below was green and radiant in the sun-

shine. The ascent is easy now on horseback, but what it was to fight up those death-dealing ridges in mid-winter is marked clearly enough by the ever-recurring monuments over some "Bratska Mogila"—brotherly grave, as it is touchingly called—where perhaps a hundred brothers-in-arms, Russians or Bulgarians, lie asleep together. Our cavalcade wound slowly down the steep descent back into the spring again, after the snow and ice of the Pass, over the wall of the range into Southern Bulgaria, the so-called Valley of Roses; a few weeks more and the plain would be blooming and fragrant with myriads of roses, grown for the famous attar distilleries of Kazanlik and Kalofer. As we neared the foot of the Pass, suddenly a great sound, full and solemn, rose from below, the bells of the Russian Memorial Church, and a few minutes later we looked down on its gold and green cupolas, glittering like jewels against the stern rocks behind. The scene in Shipka village was gay and charming, for the peasants were all in festal dress, the girls with their red and orange aprons, their hair in countless plaits, real or false, decked with flowers and strings of coins, an earnest of their dowry; the brides wearing their tinsel crowns and a rich display of silver clasps and chains, their linen garments ornamented with embroidery, beautiful in colour and design. But we seemed to have travelled much further from the Thracian rider and his cult, when we came on the children of Kazalik, who were keeping the holiday in a wood not far from the town. It was the Turn Verein of the place, pretty, healthy children in rational dress, martialled by a Swedish professor with the latest ideas on gymnastics and drill. They danced the Horo for me, the national dance of all Balkan peoples. The dancers join hands in a circle, and move, at first slowly, a few steps in one direction, and then one or two in the other, the music—bagpipe, flute, and guzla or violin—grows faster, the steps change, and often the figures become intricate and graceful. As the dance went on, the rational dresses, the twentieth century were forgotten; it was again the same dance and the same music with which their ancestors, a thousand,

perhaps two thousand years ago, had welcomed the coming of the spring.

The railway connects most of the chief towns of Bulgaria with each other, and there are fair carriage roads in many directions where the railway has not penetrated; but if the traveller wishes to see the most interesting and picturesque parts of the country, it must necessarily still be on horseback. And, given a good horse and fine weather, there can be no pleasanter or more independent mode of travelling, and no better way of learning something of the country and the people. The traveller must be content with simple fare and rough quarters often enough, for hotels can hardly be said to exist outside Sofia. But when hotels cease, hospitality begins, and an English traveller—who is for the Bulgarian before everything the fellow countryman of Gladstone and of Lord and Lady Strangford—can be certain of a kind welcome wherever he goes and from all classes alike. I had had the good fortune to meet Sir George Buchanan, British Diplomatic Agent at Sofia, before I went out to Bulgaria; otherwise I knew no one else in the country, and I had only two letters of introduction, but the natural kindness of the Bulgarians and the fact that I had lived one winter with their distressed brothers in Macedonia, made everything easy for me during the five months I spent there. In the diocese of Sofia alone there are some forty monasteries, where shelter, if not food, can always be obtained. A Bulgarian monastery is not specially interesting from an antiquarian or an architectural point of view, because the main buildings, which are chiefly of wood, in their present form seldom date back more than a hundred years, and the church, though possibly built in the ninth or tenth century, is generally little more than a stone barn with narrow slits for windows, and so dark within, that it is hard to distinguish the rude frescoes and ikons that adorn it. But partly because prudence dictated the choice of a site remote from the highway and the town, and partly because water and wood are among the first necessities of even a hermit's life, the

monasteries of the Balkans are to be found amidst the most romantic scenery. The Monastery of St. Naoum on the Albanian frontier overlooking the wide expanse of the Lake of Ochrida, St. John of Rilo, pre-eminent in size, riches and sanctity, standing in a mountain fastness of unsurpassed beauty; the Monastery of the Seven Altars, hidden in the heart of wooded hills; the Monastery of the Transfiguration, embowered in steep woods, above the narrow valley of the Jantra; the Poganovski Monastery near the Servian frontier, at the gateway of a wild gorge of the Jerma river; a humbler monastery, St. Nicola, now entirely deserted, perched on an almost inaccessible rock on a spur of Vitosh; St. Archangel, with its crazy balconies overhanging the defile of the Isker river, and its view across to the ruined stronghold of some Bulgarian Czar, almost hidden in springtime in masses of blooming lilac;—these are a few of the many monasteries, which amply repay the long ride and the rough road involved in their approach.

These monasteries have played a great part in the history of the Bulgarian people. Here, only, during the five centuries of Turkish rule, when Greek became the language of Church and school throughout the country, the Slavonic tongue was taught and written, and the idea of a Bulgarian nationality kept alive, and it was in the monasteries that the leaders of the movement for independence met and matured their plans. But the importance of the monasteries is now entirely past. They no longer exercise any influence on the political or religious life of the people at large, although the peasants still reverence them as places of pilgrimage, where miracles may be wrought for soul and body. The buildings are rapidly falling into decay; a solitary monk, who is the Abbot only because he has no companions, usually quite illiterate and not always of the highest character, with a few farm labourers, makes what he can out of the woods and fields and vineyards belonging to the convent. The care of his stock and his crops, or the making of rakia, a coarse spirit distilled from fruit,

interest him as a rule a good deal more than the perfunctory prayers which he stumbles through once or twice a week. On great feast-days the deep peace and silence of the monastery are disturbed for a few hours. From remote mountain villages, or from solitary huts, perched on almost inaccessible slopes—which, in the Stara Planina, their owners proudly call "derjavi," "kingdoms,"—little groups of peasants make their way to the monastery. Generally the whole family comes together, the children, four or five of them, on a long-suffering horse, tied at right angles to the wooden saddle. They bring bread and water to the monk to be blessed, and perhaps a sick child, for whom he is asked to "read." I have often seen a woman bowed in rapt devotion before the sacred pictures, while the monk, his dilapidated stole thrown over her head, reads prayers on behalf of the dead and living members of her family; and it is touching to catch the humble village names among the strange cadences of the old Slavonic. One wet afternoon I turned into the little church of the monastery where I was staying. It was almost dark; a very old brother was reading aloud, apparently at random, from the torn and mouldy books which lay on the decrepit revolving desks. The ancient Slavonic conveyed little more to him than it did to me, and for some time we pursued our own trains of thought, when my attention was caught by some phrase I could understand. The monk stumbled at a proper name in the passage, but went on for half a minute, when his conscience smote him, and he returned to the difficult word, again failed to pronounce it, again went on and again returned to the charge; and I finally left him alone, still wrestling with the proper name, which still persistently eluded him.

There is a certain general resemblance between all the poorer monasteries of Bulgaria. A low gateway leads into a courtyard, enclosed on two or three sides by irregular, two-storeyed buildings, in which there is seldom a straight line or a right angle. The lower storey is occupied by the farm servants and all the usual farmyard animals. The monks' cells and the

guest-rooms—the latter often entirely devoid of furniture—are on the upper storey, along which runs an open gallery, supported by rude pillars and arches of unpainted unvarnished wood, toned by the weather to a rich brown. These rough wooden arcades and the red or brown curved tiles of the roof, and, it must be said, an air of neglect and abandonment, are, perhaps, the most unfailing characteristics of Bulgarian monasteries. The church is usually built in the lowest part of the enclosure, as if the founders were anxious to attract attention to it as little as possible, and in mountainous places the whole monastery often seems to assume a protective colouring, toning in with the reds and browns of the rocks around it.

The Turkish Government has always respected Church property, as far as repeated firmans from successive Sultans are concerned, but it has been unable to protect the monasteries from attacks by robber bands or even by the Imperial troops. There is hardly a church where the sacred pictures have not at one time been defaced, and I was shown the place where not many years ago some twenty monks were dashed to pieces over the face of the precipice near their convent. One soon ceases to be surprised at any inconsistency in Turkish countries, but it was interesting to hear that Mohammedans still make pilgrimages to the wonder-working tomb of St. Naoum, a saint, one of whose exploits was the yoking of a wolf beside an ox to his plough. A Turkish Governor who had seen much of the struggle between Christian and Mussulman and who had visited the monastery just before I did, had recorded there his devout aspiration, that the same power of combining antagonistic forces for the same beneficent end might be granted to him through the intercession of the Saint. I stayed in a curious house, half-palace, half-prison, which a pious Turkish Bey had built some hundred years ago partly as a summer retreat for himself, but partly also in honour of Mariam, the Blessed Virgin Mary, of whose convent it forms a part.

The chief pride of Bulgaria is the great Rilo Monastery,

standing remote from town or village, among the highest summits near the Turkish frontier. The valley of the Rilo river is guarded by a natural gateway of rocks, and for two or three hours the narrow road—there is room only for the river and the road—follows the course of the clear rapid stream. Every now and then a felled forest tree comes rolling down the torrent, and when the logs lodge against the boulders a picturesque group of peasants, armed with long forks, sends them off again on their journey. The mountain sides are covered with dense forests of beech and fir, which are set in the brief summer that visits those austere heights in slopes of hay and Alpine flowers—orange geum, yellow columbine, lilies and gentians. It was almost dark when we clattered into the great courtyard, and there was only a vague impression of space and height and of a vast building, half-palace, half-fortress, with tiers of open galleries, high and white. One steps through the gateway of Rilo Monastery straight back into the Middle Ages. Most of the present building, it is true, is not more than one hundred years old, for twice at least has the greater part of the monastery been burnt to the ground, but the scene and the life are still surely mediæval. There have always been monks and soldiers and peasants and pilgrims in Rilo ever since, eleven hundred years ago, the first monastery was raised to the memory of the hermit-saint who fled from the world and from his devotees to this mountain fastness. The church, glowing with gold and colour; the library, with its ecclesiastical treasures and manuscripts; the rude tower, the oldest part now standing, where rings and chains mark the place in which madmen were once fastened to the walls; the kitchen, with its cavernous chimney, mammoth pots and spoons; the vast dormitories; the stables, where a thousand horses can stand; the outbuildings, where various trades and crafts are carried on—for the monastery must of necessity supply its own needs—the black-robed figures of the monks and the peasants in their unchanging costumes—everything carries one back to another era.

Four times a year come the pilgrims—sometimes fourteen or fifteen thousand in number, many of them several days' journey—to the tomb of the saint. Any great event in the family, birth, marriage, death, change of fortune, must be commemorated, if possible, by a journey to Rilo, either as a thanksgiving or to gain fresh blessings.

An hour's walk from the monastery, through upland meadows and woods, and up steps cut in the rock, one reaches the little chapel built over the grave of St. John of Rilo, and the cave where he spent many years of his life in prayer. The grave is guarded by a hermit, a *postnik* or faster, as he is called in Bulgarian. For forty years he has touched neither meat nor eggs nor milk; nor will he allow any such food to be eaten on his territory, even if his guest be royal. The old monk, living in cells cut in the bare rock, cultivating the herbs which garnish the bread he makes with his own hands, alone by the grave of his patron for weeks together, has himself become something of a seer and a saint. St. John of Rilo, tradition says, fed his guests, the Haiduks, the robber chiefs and their bands, with bread which the angels brought in answer to his prayer, and I could not refrain from asking his successor if he ever saw angels now. His wild hawk's eyes rested on me for a moment curiously, to see in what spirit I asked the question, and then he answered, almost casually as it were, "Oh, yes; they come round here sometimes," glancing at the rocky platform where we stood, and speaking as if angels were eagles or swallows—his only other daily visitors.

The current of modern thought has, it seems, turned definitely away from the contemplative life, and there has been no sign in the spiritual revivals of recent times of a return to the monastic ideals, which once always marked times of religious awakening. Before long it is probable that the Church lands of Bulgaria will be sold; and the monasteries themselves, with certain exceptions, which still justify their existence, will, by an easy transition, become farms, pure and simple, under the more profitable management of some thrifty

peasant owner. If the money obtained from this sale is applied to some scheme for the further training of men for the priesthood, the change will be no doubt of practical benefit to the Bulgarian Church, however much it may be regretted on other grounds.

Bulgaria has always been alive to the importance of education, and her schools and gymnasia reach a high standard already; but, like all rapidly progressive countries, her advance has been unequal, and general culture has hardly kept pace with actual book learning and material progress. One is often reminded in Bulgaria of the useful distinction drawn by the French between education and instruction, the training in manners and modes of thought and the mere acquisition of knowledge as such. The richer Bulgarian sends his children to "Europe," as he still expresses it, to finish their schooling, and the influence of foreign culture and ideas will of course be felt increasingly.

A generation ago class distinctions hardly existed in Bulgaria, but now every year the tendency to divide into classes becomes more marked. Government officials and officers rank highest socially, for here, where there is but one millionaire and few families of any class much richer than the rest, money is not yet the social power it has become in Western Europe. The parents of a smart cavalry officer, of a prosperous merchant, speaking half the languages of Europe, or even of a Cabinet Minister, may be simple villagers, still wearing their peasant costume and tilling the soil with their own hands. Salaries are very modest, and living is as yet simple and inexpensive. An officer, for instance, seldom has private means, and manages to live, not uncomfortably, on his pay. There is no horse-racing, little card-playing or theatre-going, no sport or games on the lines and on the costly scale implied in England, no display in personal luxuries or entertainments. The small income of a Government official leaves no margin for extravagance, and any tendency to raise the standard of comfort may mean, it must be admitted, a temptation to

enrich himself in other ways, while the humble position of his friends and relations may also prove another source of difficulty. The Bulgarian has had his political training under the worst masters, the Turk and the Russian ; and the marvel is, not that a contract here and there may give rise to suspicious rumours, and that interest rather than merit helps promotion in the Government service; but that a peasant people, who had been for five hundred years barely a name to the world at large or even to themselves, should have evolved for themselves a stable system of government, established security of life and property where chaos reigned before, produced men capable of filling posts as diplomats, and statesmen like Karavélof and Stambóulof, and acquired many of the outward and inward marks of Western civilisation and progress.

The Bulgarian has not appealed to the outside world as a sympathetic personality, partly because he has been overshadowed by the more showy qualities of his neighbours, the Albanians or the Montenegrins, and partly because of the old prejudice in favour of his hereditary enemy, the Turk. The taint of centuries of contempt and servitude cannot be altogether thrown off in a generation, but the characteristics of the Bulgarian peasant are, as a rule, such as are least associated with a subject race. Brave, hardy, frugal, patriotic to the verge of Chauvinism, the hard-headed Bulgarian, with his utilitarianism tempered by his passionate sentiment of nationality and his love of his mountains and plains and rivers, is certain to prove ideal material for a buffer State and for a formidable army.

It is impossible to dissociate Bulgaria from Macedonia even in idea. Ever since the Treaty of Berlin confirmed Bulgaria in her independence, but gave back to Turkish rule the million Bulgarians of Macedonia, who for the few months that had passed since the Treaty of San Stefano had believed freedom to be theirs also, Macedonia has been as an open sore to Bulgaria. How could it be otherwise? The Bulgars of Bulgaria and the Bulgars of Macedonia are identical in race and

faith and language, and the artificial boundary erected by diplomats has proved as slight a bar to intercourse and sympathy, as the Turkish guard-houses and pickets, which attempt in vain to control the passage of the wild mountainous region near the frontier. But Macedonia has been a cruel drain on the resources of her free sister, and until the Macedonian question has been settled Bulgaria cannot feel herself free to move forward. Trouble to the south of the mountains means trouble to the north. After the insurrection of 1903 thousands of refugees poured into Bulgaria, and were supported there for many months, by public and private charity; and every year many of the finest and most promising young men leave their professions and the safety of their Bulgarian homes to join the revolutionary bands and die on the mountains of Macedonia for the sake of their brothers there. "We went out fifteen from this village and we have come back five," a handsome dark-eyed boy told me. And another, a schoolmaster, with the sad eyes of a doomed man and still pale from the hardships of last year, to whom I said that he had done his share, I thought, and should now stay with his wife and child, answered, "Do they ask the soldiers who go to die in Manchuria if they have wife and child? We, too, are all soldiers, and if Macedonia calls us we must go." "We do not know how great the sacrifice will be; perhaps, a hundred times more than it has been yet, still we must go on," said another, who had given his own life to the cause, and who had lost year after year friends and relations on the mountains. The methods may be regrettable, and the whole revolutionary organisation mistaken in its idea, but at any rate the movement calls out the most absolute self-sacrifice, and is prompted by the sincere conviction of men as inflexible as they are disinterested.

We see our own people suffering, [how often have I heard it said,] we read the promises of the Great Powers, we hear the talk of reforms; but we don't want these reforms, which, as you know well, mean nothing, absolutely nothing, to the peasant in his village. Are the taxes any lighter, are our lives any

safer? Did not the taxgatherer come but yesterday and drive away all our sheep and goats and cattle, because, try as we would, we could not raise more than half the money he demanded from us? Was not our headman shot down, as he was on his way back from the bazaar, not half an hour away from the village? And four of our young men, who had gone out to cut wood, when they did not come back at evening, their young wives went out to seek them, and they found them lying dead with their ears and their fingers and their feet cut off—and their eyes ——. Is this all well? If it is not the Turks, it is the Greeks who massacre us. You remember how the armed Greek band fell on the helpless village of Zagoricini that early morning last April, and killed sixty of our people—old men, women and little children. If we do not keep our bands moving in the mountains to defend our villages, if we do not sometimes meet the Turkish troops, the Powers will say, "See, Macedonia is quiet, she is satisfied with our programmes and our civil agents and our new gendarmerie, and all is well." And so we cannot rest in our homes.

The story of the struggle for independence thirty years ago in Bulgaria and to-day in Macedonia abounds in romantic and heroic incidents, of which it would be easy to multiply examples. A small band of fifteen insurgents took refuge in the mountain village of Cer, a few hours to the north of Monastir, one night last April. They were tracked thither by Turkish troops, and when morning came the insurgents found that their house was surrounded. There was no chance of escape; for the soldiers had placed a ring of village women between themselves and the house, and the insurgents could not fire on their own people. The leader of the band was one Uzunof, a man not yet thirty, very dark, tall and powerful, with the soft pathetic Slav eyes and gentle expression which do not preclude the doing of desperate deeds. He consulted for a moment with his comrades, and they at once agreed with his decision. They would never be taken alive, and to him as leader fell an awful task. I saw the letter which he wrote to his chiefs, the Revolutionary Committee, not five minutes before the end. "If I have decided amiss," he said, "the Committee must forgive me, but we see no other way. Say good-bye for me to my dear mother, to whom I have never brought much happiness." The letter was given to the woman of the house, and then Uzunof shot his fifteen comrades, one

by one, and, at the last with the same ghastly deliberation and firmness, took his own life. One who had been a member of the band and who was an unwilling witness of the scene lies now in a distant monastery, hopelessly deranged. Such stories throw a lurid light on the spirit in which these men fight for freedom.

The Bulgarian is intensely interesting to himself, and though keenly sensitive to European opinion, he is always ready to discuss his own characteristics with great openness. "What do you think of Bulgaria and the Bulgarians?" is the question put to the traveller by every one he meets, from the Archbishop and the statesman to the peasant who holds his horse at some wayside khan. And what is the answer? Statistics of trade and population, the opinion of foreigners who have long known and watched the country, not less than what the Bulgarians say of themselves, everything points to the conclusion that, given no unexpected disaster, Bulgaria must be reckoned as a factor of the highest importance in any new development of Balkan affairs. The Bulgarian profits by his mistakes and will not repeat them when once he has realised what they are. He will never again allow the influence of Russia to rule his country. Panslavism is, in fact, a dead letter outside Russia. The Bulgarian learnt a bitter lesson with the loss of the hero Prince, Alexander of Battenberg, and the intrigues which for a time threatened the separate existence of Bulgaria, who before had looked on Russia as her liberator. The Bulgarian will not merge his national Church, the symbol and indeed the source of his liberty, into the Church of Russia, identical though it is in ritual and doctrine, still less into that of Greece; he does not forget the Phanariot times, when his own tongue wastaken from him, and recent events in Macedonia have quickened his memory. He will learn all he can from Europe for the improvement of his army, his trade and the education of his children, but he will never again lose his own individuality. He will not let his sympathy with his brothers in Macedonia, burning though it is, hasten the crisis—which must surely come—until he is ready for it.

But no forecast of the future of Bulgaria can afford to ignore the curious and interesting personality of Prince Ferdinand and that of his mother, Princess Clémentine. The constitution of Bulgaria is on paper liberal to a fault, but the real power lies, for the present, in the hands of the Prince and the deaf lady of eighty-six, who has been called "the cleverest woman in Europe." When the crisis comes, the action of Bulgaria will depend—up to a given point—on the balance of certain contradictory personal qualities of the Prince himself. "The Bulgarians have always proved poison to those who have swallowed them," said to me an old Bulgarian Bishop, a remarkable instance of what Lord Rosebery has called "a practical mystic." With the traditional disloyalty bred by long unwilling subjection to a hated sovereign, they will be a dangerous people to govern or restrain if ever the will of the Prince comes into conflict with their strongest passions.

The day of further disruption in Eastern Europe seems very near, and it needs but a slight turn of the wheel to bring the whole question again to the forefront. Bulgaria, with her stubborn population and her army of three hundred thousand men, well equipped and easily mobilised, would in any case be an important factor in events in the Near East, and she would of necessity take a leading part in any confederation which might be formed among the Slavs of the Balkans. Such a confederation, however loose, if it included Bosnia, Herzegovina, and the Bulgars of Macedonia would raise a most formidable barrier across the high road to the East that lies beyond Constantinople.

ELLINOR F. B. THOMPSON.

RELICS

IN studying this subject we find ourselves brought face to face with the most powerful of all the forces which ruled the wills and consciences of men and women during pre-Reformation times. Its strength and power lie in the fact that it appealed to the three most potent influences in the lives of most people in all ages—the love of change and adventure, material success in this world, the chances of salvation in the next.

A pilgrimage to a distant shrine, the greater the distance and the danger, the holier the action, appealed with irresistible force to the large number of men who in all times have been eager to "see the world." Apart from its religious side, it attracted the highest and the lowest in every land. What new worlds did not such a journey open out! What stirring scenes did it not enable the pilgrim to be present at! What joy to behold the Holy Sepulchre, the Eternal City! Nay, even less ambitious travels to some celebrated shrine in the pilgrim's native land provided fields for thought. Then the happiness for cultivated men, leading lonely lives in monasteries or townlet, of seeing the world's treasures; the stately buildings, the famous pictures, the marvellous metal work and illuminated manuscripts, to be found in other lands; and, above all, the intercourse with their cultured inhabitants, kindred souls. When to all these advantages was added that of greatly increasing the chances of

a future heavenly reward—for the fear of hell was a powerful factor seldom absent from the thoughts of mediæval men and women—what wonder that the great roads of Europe were crowded with pilgrims, and the Mediterranean covered with ships conveying them from Genoa and Naples to the port of St. Jean d'Acre, to worship before some holy shrine? It required but little money; the pilgrim constantly travelled carrying nothing but his staff and scrip. He was sure of a supper, a night's lodging and a breakfast at one of the numerous monasteries near which he passed. Sometimes he travelled alone, or he was received amongst a great company, guarded by the Knights of St. John, and in this way he visited the Holy Land. Others often made the journey through the generosity of people richer than themselves, who were unable to go in person. Early English wills frequently mention sums of money to be set aside to enable some poor pilgrim to visit a famous relic in Spain, Rome or the Holy Land. Books were prepared giving the traveller all the necessary information, and there were vocabularies in different languages to help him on his road. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that even the peasant forsook his wife and family and went off on a pilgrimage, till at last the bishops interfered and ordered that no one was to be treated as a pilgrim unless he could produce an episcopal licence.

Those to whom the love of change and sight-seeing did not appeal; who were quite untouched by the religious aspect of the question, but who were eager for their own worldly advantages, encouraged the worship of relics in every possible way. The custom increased their own prosperity. The possession of a valuable relic was an enormous source of revenue to a town; its fortunes were made. Trade flourished apace. What wonder then that if one city became the happy possessor of a miracle-working fragment and started on a career of commercial prosperity, its neighbour forthwith began to look upon it with jealous eyes, and tried to procure another whose powers they attested were even greater? There was

much ill-feeling between the rival towns and monasteries as to the relative value of their relics. Their means of obtaining one were often doubtful. The relics of St. Alban were claimed by both Ely and St. Alban's Abbey; Glastonbury contended with Canterbury for St. Dunstan's body, and the dispute lasted till Archbishop Wareham's time, when he gave his decision in favour of his archiepiscopal city. In like manner the monks of St. Emmeran at Ratisbon disputed with the mighty abbots of the famous French foundation of St. Denis for the possession of its patron's body; the latter won the day. A really valuable relic once procured was a gold-mine to a town; its future was immediately assured.

If the mania was an indirect cause of infinite pleasure to the cultured, of spiritual profit to the religious, and a source of wealth to the worldly, what was it not to the Church? From the time when the worship of relics came into general favour, her wealth and her influence increased a thousand-fold. The doctrine of the Resurrection, and consequently of the sacredness of the body, was the principal cause for their preservation and worship. The Church saw her opportunity, and seized it, with a result which was almost magical. The emotions of men were excited by the ear, the eye and the touch. The clergy saw the means of obtaining incalculable benefits, which they were not slow to take advantage of. It will thus be seen that all classes, the upper and the lower, the trading and the priestly, were bent on encouraging the worship of relics for their own ends; and though there is no doubt that there were many pious souls who derived from them much spiritual consolation for the troubles of this world and hope for the glory of the next, it cannot also be denied that the material advantages gained by countless others added in a great measure to their universal popularity.

As early as the third century relics were already beginning to take their hold upon the popular fancy. It was a pious custom to celebrate the birthdays of holy people (*i.e.*, the day on which they were released from the afflictions of earth and

admitted to the glory of heaven) by assembling at their tombs, or the places where they perished. The blood of those who died for the Faith was eagerly collected in sponges, and various other extravagances are recorded. Of all relics preserved by mediæval Christendom fragments from the Cross were the most numerous and the most cherished. Its invention at Jerusalem in the beginning of the fourth century is testified by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, who says in a letter to the Emperor Constantine in 305 that it was discovered by the Empress Helena in Jerusalem in the reign of his father. This lady seems to have been a great collector of relics, as on her return to Treves from a visit to foreign countries she presented the cathedral with a whole chest full, which she had found in the Holy Land and elsewhere. Among them were several portions of the true Cross, one of the nails employed in the crucifixion of our Lord, the seamless coat, the body of St. Matthias, and the head of St. Cornelius, Pope and martyr. The practice of dispersing fragments of the Cross commenced in the fourth century, and the custom spread rapidly. We are told that after the destruction by fire of the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem the Christians divided the Cross into nineteen parts, and distributed portions amongst the principal churches of the East: Constantinople and Antioch each received two, Jerusalem kept four. This division took place about 643 A.D. At the taking of Jerusalem by Godfrey de Bouillon, the Crusaders obtained one of the pieces; it had been hidden by the faithful in the Church of the Resurrection to protect it from the Saracens. Overjoyed at the discovery of this valuable relic, they carried it at the head of their army and asserted that it was owing to its presence among them that many of their victories were due. At the close of the Crusades the churches of the East were almost completely despoiled of relics; Jerusalem and Constantinople lost nearly all their treasures. Those countries which had taken the largest share in the war received most of the sacred spoils; Venice was specially favoured, while Rome received among other relics many fragments of the

Cross, as also did Genoa, Milan, Pisa, Siena, and other Italian towns, which had largely contributed, both in men and money, to the contest against Islam. One of the largest pieces known is preserved in the sacristy of the cathedral at Brussels. It was brought from the Holy Land by Florent the Third, Count of Holland, during the Crusades, and afterwards passed into the hands of Vosmer, Archbishop of Philippi, who, in his turn, gave it to the Archduke Albert and the Infanta Isabella. In 1650 the latter bequeathed it to the church of St. Gudule. Spain, Denmark, Norway, and Russia possess but few pieces, which is explained by the fact that these nations took but little part in the Crusades. Louis the Ninth of France built, at the cost of 20,000 marks, a Sainte Chapelle at Paris to receive a large piece, besides other relics, including the rod of Moses, a part of the skull of St. John the Baptist, portions of the baby linen of the infant Jesus, and of the lance, the chain, and sponge of His Passion. The best-known pieces of the true Cross are those at Aix-la-Chapelle (which we are told belonged to Charlemagne, and were probably worn by him), and at Treves, Ghent, and Maestricht. It has often been remarked that the number of pieces scattered about the world are far in excess of the actual Cross itself, and therefore that the vast majority must be spurious; but putting the question of their authenticity on one side, it must be remembered that most of the pieces are very small, and of the thickness of paper. A German pastor, Fulda Pfarrer zu Dammendorf, asserted that if all the known relics of the true Cross were joined together there would be sufficient wood to build a battleship. Rohault de Fleury, however, after conscientious researches and minute inquiries as to the actual size of the pieces known to have existed, has calculated the amount in millimetres cubes, and he has come to the conclusion that, taken altogether, the portions do not come up to a tenth part of what must have been its actual size.

At the close of the ninth century the cult of relics had increased considerably. Departed saints were not only

reverenced, their intercessions and help implored, and the belief in their power of curing diseases, working miracles, and delivering from all ills unquestioned; but now their bones, their clothes, and anything which had belonged to them during their lives, the very ground which they had touched or in which they were buried, was venerated, credited with the virtue of healing the ills of both mind and body, and of defending those who were fortunate enough to possess one from all the wiles of the devil. A necessary consequence of this belief was, that every one tried to obtain a relic, with the result that a large trade in them was carried on, both in Europe and the East. Mosheim tells us that

> to obtain a sufficiency of relics to accommodate all who were zealous for them the latent carcases of departed saints were first sought by the priests with prayer and fasting, and then were discovered by the guidance and monitions of God. The exultation on the discovery of such a treasure was immense. Some made journeys to the East and travelled over the regions and places made famous by the presence of Christ and His friends in order to bring from them what could afford comfort to the faint-hearted and protection to their country and their fellow citizens. Nor did such travellers return empty, for the cunning Greeks, always versatile and knavish, took from the honest Latins their genuine coin and sent them home loaded with spurious merchandise. In this way the numerous bodies and parts of bodies of Mark, James, Bartholomew, Cyprian, Pantaleon and others in which the West still exults, were introduced among the Latins. Those who were unable to procure these precious treasures by either journeys, prayer or frauds, deemed it expedient to steal them or to seize them by violence or by robbery, as whatever means were resorted to in such a cause as this were supposed to be pious and acceptable to God, provided they were successful.

Relics were therefore multiplied without number; colossal frauds were perpetrated, and immense sums of money were made out of the credulity and terror of the people. Some Greek monks were discovered in Rome digging up dead bodies by night in order to palm them off as fragments of martyrs. The relics of Our Lord and His Mother were multiplied with amazing rapidity. In these days it is difficult to understand how the people could have been taken in by such transparent frauds; the accounts of them almost pass belief. Among the

most cherished possessions of the monastery of St. Trelles, under Abbot Angilbert, who died in 801, were fragments of the manger in which our Lord was laid; of the candle lit at His birth; of His vesture and sandals; the rock on which He sat when He fed the five thousand; of the bread which He gave the disciples; of the cross, the sponge, of some portion of the Blessed Virgin's milk, her hair, her dress and her cloak. Cæsarea exhibited the seat occupied by the Virgin at the Annunciation; Cana the couch on which our Lord sat at the marriage feast; Nazareth, a beam which He had used as a seat; while Matthew Paris tells us that the Dominicans brought over from Palestine a white stone bearing the impress of Christ's feet. Baldwin the Second, King of Jerusalem, presented to the Genoese the dish from which He partook of the Last Supper. The tree which Zacchæus climbed to see Jesus pass was exhibited, as also the one on which Judas Iscariot hanged himself, and the stones with which St. Stephen was killed. Nor was the cult restricted to passages in our Lord's life; characters in the Old Testament now came in for a share of public attention and worship. The bed of the prophet Elijah was shown, also the altar where Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac. Yet a few more years and these relics approached the grotesque. They included the tears and footprints of Jesus; among the former, shown at Vendôme were the tears our Lord shed at the grave of Lazarus, which, we are told, an angel caught as they dropped, bottled and gave to St. Mary Magdalen; feathers from the wings of the archangels Gabriel and Michael; a piece of the grilled flesh of St. Laurence; hairs from Noah's beard and relics of Abraham; the rod of Moses. After the Crusades relics increased both in number and variety; every one who returned brought back sacred spoils, which he had purchased at a high price from the often fraudulent Greeks and Syrians. Many of these relics were passed off as the property of saints and holy personages until then quite unknown to Western Christendom. Bokemond, one of the leaders, possessed a dozen hairs which the blessed Virgin had torn

from her head as she stood at the foot of the Cross; these had been given him by the Patriarch of Antioch. We are told that Bokemond divided them between Anselm and various churches. Many relics are asserted to have dropped straight from heaven; they took the form of letters from the Almighty, His Divine Son, the Virgin and the saints, to holy men upon earth. They are mentioned by several of the ancient chronicles. "In 1109," writes Mathew Paris, "much was said about a famous letter reported to have fallen from the sky into the hands of a prelate whilst celebrating mass, the object of which was to appease the always increasing disquietude of the Romans."

The worship of relics was as general in England as on the Continent. The great shrines at Canterbury, Glastonbury, Wakingham and other holy places were favourite spots for foreign as well as English pilgrims, and the roads leading to them were often thronged, while inns and places of rest for the travellers were scattered along the way. Foremost among them was the celebrated shrine of St. Thomas à Becket, which made of Canterbury the "centre of the religious life of the day, second to no other place of pilgrimage and devotion." Dom Gasquet tells us that at one time more than a hundred thousand pilgrims were gathered together in the city to attend one of the jubilee celebrations connected with his martyrdom. Numerous were the relics preserved of this saint, whose life and death seem to have taken such an extraordinary hold on the imaginations of the men and women of mediæval Europe, not only in England, but on the continent as well. His pierced skull; the point of the sword with which the act was performed; his hair shirt and girdle; the staff on which he leaned; the napkin with which he wiped his face; the cords with which he mortified the flesh and subdued all carnal desires; even some rags which were said to have done duty for pocket-handkerchiefs; all were carefully preserved, and received the adoration of the faithful, who lavished magnificent presents of gold, silver and precious stones upon his shrine.

In time the devotions to him far exceeded those offered to any of the Three Persons of the Trinity or to other saints. We learn that during "one year when no offering was made at the high altar and only £4 1*s.* 8*d.* at the Virgin's, the oblations at the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket amounted to £950 6*s.* 3*d.*" Other relics were also exhibited at Canterbury; amongst them being "an enormous quantity of bones, chains, skulls, hands, teeth, fingers and entire arms."

The extraordinary power which this cult had obtained over the imaginations of mankind was turned to great advantage by the non-Christian potentates of the East, who seldom lost an opportunity of extracting large sums of money or political advantages in exchange for relics, to them of no value whatever. When Jerusalem was seized by Saladin at the close of the twelfth century he found that the inhabitants had collected the relics and packed them into four large ivory chests. The Khalif, however, refused to allow them to be removed except on the payment of fifty-two thousand besants. This sum was promised by the Prince of Antioch, but at the expiration of the time allowed he was unable to find the money, and the relics were redeemed by Richard the First of England. After the capture of Constantinople, Mahomet the Second gave orders that all the relics should be collected and deposited in his treasury. He received enormous sums from Christian princes for the particular relics they most desired. About this time the reverence in which they were held reached amazing proportions. No expense was too great and no trouble was too much to take for the acquisition of one. Faith in their virtues reached its height. Venice offered in vain ten thousand ducats for the seamless coat of Christ. Siena and Perugia went to war over the wedding ring of the Virgin. At the Council of Basle, the Cardinal of Arles ordered all the most famous relics belonging to the town to be collected and carried in procession through the streets. They were afterwards placed in vacant seats, and we are told that so great was the sensation caused by this curious device that on

the invocation of the Holy Spirit the whole assembly burst into tears. The fact that several relics of the same subject, each reported to be absolutely genuine, existed at the same time, did not trouble the uncritical minds of the Middle Ages. In the present day there are twenty well-known gowns and seventy veils of the Virgin Mary, each pronounced to be the true one; twelve heads of St. John the Baptist, in tolerably perfect condition, besides numerous large fragments of his skull and seven extra jaws, each of great note, and held in much reverence in different parts of Europe. St. Julienne has twenty bodies and twenty-six separate heads, whilst St. George and St. Pancras each possess thirty bodies, and St. Peter has sixteen; St. Peter the Dominican only possesses two bodies, but he makes up for the deficiency in the number of his fingers, fifty-six of which are scattered about Europe. Almost the last relic imported into Europe was the head of the lance which had pierced the Saviour's side, and which was presented in 1492 by the Sultan Bajazet to Pope Innocent the Eighth. This relic already existed in Paris, Nuremberg, and other places, but the fact did not in any way lessen its value and miracle-working powers, and it is included among the principal relics in St. Peter's.

EVELINE B. MITFORD.

AMONG THE FÉLIBRES IN PROVENCE

"AVIGNON!" shouted the porter as the train drew up. And for the first time, instead of gazing regretfully from the windows and then being whirled on, either to Paris or Marseilles, I jumped from the dizzy heights of the P.L.M. train on to the platform below, feeling I had a right at last to stop here, luggage and ticket being stamped with the name which in itself conveys a magic charm.

Avignon! Constantine, Augustus, Marius passed in triumphal procession across my vision. Then the great Popes, dwelling for nearly a century in magnificent pomp in their fortress-palace on the hill, till the slight stern figure of Catherine of Sienna glided swiftly across the scene, taking with her to Rome the last of these spiritual monarchs of Avignon. And Petrarque! to think that in these very streets he walked, the divine poet, dreaming and singing of his love for the chaste lady Laura, she whose tomb in the old Church of the "Cordeliers" became in after years the shrine of generations of devout poet-pilgrims, the gorgeous François I^er^, "Père des Lettres," as he loved to be called, paying his homage by leaving a sonnet from his own royal hand inside the coffin.

Avignon! Scene of countless historic events, kingly pageants, imperial processions, gladiatorial shows and bull-fights rivalling those of Rome, battles, murders and sudden deaths, a tradition kept up by the grim Jourdain Coupe-tête of

the Revolution flinging his hundred victims from the Tarpeian rock of the Pope's palace. Avignon, with its old bridge of which our nursery rhyme told us the thrilling fact that "tout le monde y danse, danse—Sur le pont d'Avignon tout le monde y danse en rond."

And finally Avignon, the home of the Félibres, the birthplace of Félibige, which during these past fifty years has made it truly a modern Athens.

My first visit was to a certain little old-fashioned bookshop in a little old narrow street, where inscribed above the door is the name of a famous Félibre poet. Even without that name to draw one like a magnet, it would be hard to pass the beguiling little shop, with its old editions and time-worn leather-bound volumes, enticing one not only from the window, but from the quaint little tressel-tables outside. I had an added inducement to enter, for a friend awaited me in the cosy low-roofed salon at the back, the dark-eyed Dono Térèso, daughter and niece of two great patriot-poets, a Félibresse too on her own account, being a former Queen of the Félibres, a distinguished office held for seven years, during which time she presided over all the Félibrige and Cigale fêtes. The mother of Dono Térèso is also a poet, and of no mean order, devoted to the work of the Félibres, and, like her husband, a native of Saint Rémy, the picturesque little town of carnation gardens and orchards, a few miles distant from Avignon. As she quoted from an early popular poem of his, first in Provençal, and then, for my benefit, in French:

"Dans un *mas*[1] qui se cache au milieu des pommiers un beau matin, au temps de la moisson, je suis né d'un jardinier et d'une jardinière, dans les jardins de Saint-Rémy."

Fifty years ago the little acorn of Félibrige was planted by seven poets of Provence, who met together at Font-Ségugne (Vaucluse), and vowed themselves to the patriotic work of restoring, purifying and perpetuating the old language of Provence, the "langue d'Oc," at that time fast dying out and

[1] Farmhouse.

degenerating into a mere patois of many varieties. To-day Félibrige is a mighty oak, the leaves being like those of the "Tree of Life" "for the healing of the nations," the branches spreading not only over the length and breadth of the beloved land itself, but stretching to the remotest parts of France, even to Brittany where, in 1884, Renan took up the movement, and inaugurated the "Félibres de l'Ouest."

The real initiator of this widespread Renaissance was Joseph Roumanille, for he was the first modern poet to use the ancient tongue of the Troubadours as a medium for literary expression. His book of poems, published in the year 1847, was written for his mother, a simple Provençale peasant, guiltless of a word of French. Full of the traditions and beauties of Provence, his writings found an immediate echo in the heart of a people always enthusiastically patriotic. Roumanille, Mistral, and Ouseline Mathieu, meeting as three collegians at Avignon, formed the nucleus from which sprang the Félibrige Society, founded by the seven poets, of whom Theodore Aubanel and Felix Gras were distinguished members. But though Roumanille was the initiator and the editor of the first yearly Félibrige organ, under whose "oriflamme" the poet-patriots mustered, it was Mistral who developed and led the movement. He became at once its vital essence, the prophet, seer and chief, il Capoulié or Grand Master, by universal consent. No one like he has so expressed the soul of the people. His work mirrors not only their language and customs, their past, their beliefs, their traditions, but in a marvellous manner their land itself, so that with new sight and clearer vision they now look on the familiar landmarks of their youth, the very mountains, rivers, and plains speaking to them more clearly.

Mistral sings his "Lion d'Arles," and henceforth that famous rock of the Alpilles and his patriotic song, reviewing as it does the grand past of Arles, become inseparable, the song rising to the lips of every good Provençal as spontaneously as a morning greeting to a friend on the road.

The vast wind-swept plain of the stony Crau with its green oasis of olive and vineyards, becomes "the country of Mireille," that sweet heroine of the great epic which caused Lamartine to proclaim Mistral "un vrai poète Homérique."

Even the sun of Provence is endowed with a new significance and personality by the "Chant du Soleil," while the glorious "Hymne à la Race Latine" sends a thrill and glow of patriotic pride through every man, woman and child, not only of Provence but all the Midi where the "langue d'Oc" is spoken.

Aubouro-te, Raço latino,
Souto la capo dóu soulèu!
Lou rasin brun boui dins la tino
Lou vin de Diéu gisclara teu, *Etc.*

(Arise, thou Latin race—
Under the head of the sun!
The brown grape "bubbles in the vat"
And the wine of God gushes forth.) *Etc.*

As for the language of Provence had Mistral never written another word he has enshrined it for all times in the imperishable casket of that marvellous work "Lou Trésor dóu Félibrige," a dictionary comprising all the words of the "langue d'Oc" in its seven varieties of dialect, all derivations, idioms, obsolete terms, proverbs and sayings of the entire "Midi." The history of the race is contained in this book. It opens with a sonnet, the French of which is, "O peuple du Midi, écoute ma harangue: Si tu veux reconquerir l'empire de la langue, pour l'équiper à neuf, puis dans ce Trésor."

One marked feature of this far-reaching Renaissance is the entire absence of any political element. The Félibre is a better and more loyal Frenchman for his devotion to the land and language of Provence. His protest is merely against the deadly influence of uniformity and centralisation, which kills out individuality and all that goes to making a man instead of a machine. "To change the language of a people is almost to change the soul," says Gaston Paris. The heart and soul of

this race of old Roman stock will never consent to change while a man remains alive.

The mother of Dono Térèso spoke of the early days of the Félibres, when her little house, the very spot on which formerly stood the palace of the famous Cardinal, afterwards anti-Pope Benoit XIII., was their favourite rendezvous. She described the simple untrammelled life of these true poets, who dreamt as little of using their art as a means of making money or gaining personal renown as does the thrush singing his song of spring on the bough of apple blossom. Then, as the patriotic movement spread, of their larger reunions, the Feasts of Sainte-Estelle, symbolic patron saint of the order, at Nimes, at Arles, at Cannes, at Marseilles, with their brothers the Cigales, Félibres of Paris, chiefly exiled Provençaux. The *cigale* was soon adopted by all as badge, a bronze grasshopper in buttonhole and hat being worn by every Félibre. Oh those good days when Roumanille, Aubanel, Félix Gras, now, alas all gone, lived here in Avignon—Mistral at Maillane, Roumieux at Beaucaire, Daudet at Fontevieille! Of those close friends the veteran chief alone survives.

Saint-Rémy and the surrounding country about Avignon was once the ancient Greek colony of Glanum, and walking with Dono Térèso through the winding old streets of the papal city one was constantly reminded of this Greco-Roman ancestry. The women, with their stately dignified walk and statuesque outlines of face and figure, are evidently lineal descendants of the Tanagra statuettes, and their classic beauty is brought out admirably by the graceful Arlesienne costume. It is sad to hear that both in Avignon and Arles this dress is dying out, though happily still worn in all country districts. One sighs to think that women can lay aside for a commonplace modern garb, showing no line of beauty from head to foot, this beautiful costume so simple and practical, yet so flattering to their good looks. A straight full skirt, either black or dark violet, long-pointed shawl, full white fichu folded across the breast, and a head-dress—the most becoming ever

devised for a woman's head! A broad black velvet band worn like a coronet, and with just as regal an effect, one end falling down at the back, encircling a small white embroidered muslin cap, which is drawn up into a coquettish point.

. . . . .

We wandered through the streets of Petrarque, passing the great sombre Hôtel de Sade, famous in bygone days, and the historic palace of Baroncelli-Javons, where rooms of Pope Julius and of Henri IV. are to be seen, little changed by the passing of the centuries.

From the rocky heights of the Pope's palace we looked down on the old city, with its closely packed red-brown roofs, towers, churches and convents. At our feet the yellow Rhone rushed by, breathless, hurrying as if racing for a wager. Dante says, "Come ad Arli ov' il Rhodano stagna," but there is little sign of stagnation in the Rhone at Avignon.

On the famous bridge no one dances now. Silent and deserted, cut in two, stands this once royal road of the Kings and Popes, leading from the fortress-palace to the tower of Philippe le Bel at Villeneuve-les-Avignon, the walled city on the opposite bank.

From this splendid height all the country lies spread out like a fair garden. On one hand bounded by the snow-capped Ventoux and the Luberon range, towards the south by the low wall of rocky Alpilles, beyond which lie the ruins of the once great city of Les Baux.

Graveson, Maillane, Barbentan, Saint-Rémy, Châteaurenard lie low on the green plain, the Durance winding and twisting its capricious way, now hidden, now reappearing unexpectedly between the dark rows of cypress trees, those protecting guardians of the country from the too vigorous mistral, the purifying north-easter of Provence.

Away in the far distance towards Arles rose the Montagnette of Tarascon, city of Tartarin, and the fabulous Tarasque dragon. The Pope's gigantic rock seems to dominate the whole round world.

"Maillane and Saint-Rémy, that is where we will drive to-morrow," said Dono Térèso, pointing towards the jagged wall of the Alpilles. "Maillane, the home of our beloved Capoulié."

Accordingly, the following day, with the delightfully suitable escort of a Félibre queen, I drove across the plains from Avignon to Maillane to visit the great poet of Provence and his charming wife.

The orchards were all a-flower with white and pink blossom, showing vividly against the bluest of April skies. The trees just beginning to bud, yet not green, but, dashed with shades of pink and brown, full of subtle movement, the stirring and awakening of Mother Earth as Proserpine comes back to her.

We crossed the high bridge of the Durance; the river, at this point so wide and swift, it suggests the sea coming in as a flood; the beautiful waters, now blue, now white, have something in them of dangerous and treacherous, and, indeed, in the heavy rains this river is a constant menace to the city close by. Going through the wide street of Graveson we passed groups of women all in Arlesienne costume, with every variety of colour, one young goddess wearing a violet skirt and yellow shawl. These classic figures had a perfect setting in the old church tower, with its bell of stone and the straight tall cypress trees which abound in this part of the country, enclosing the gardens and giving a solemn, conventual air to the farms they protect.

Opposite the house of the poet is a sun-dial in the wall, with the words in Provençal:

Le gay lézard boit son soleil,
L'heure ne passe que trop vite—
Et demain il pleura peut-être.

"That is typical of the spirit of Provence," said Dono Térèso. And I felt again for the hundredth time I was really in Italy, not in France at all. These people, with their Roman ruins, Greco-Roman figures and faces, Roman speech (may the Félibres forgive me, but the relationship is close!), and Italian

hearts, joyous, sun-warmed, patriotic, what are they but Romans still?

We entered the poet's study by the garden, conducted there by a friendly white-capped bonne, evidently quite one of the family. "Madame was out with the dogs, Monsieur was alone, but at this moment of the day not seriously occupied. We might enter without scruple, he would be enchanted to see us." The little garden was fragrant with early spring. A shrub of japonica, its scarlet blossoms aflame in the sunshine, hyacinths, violet, white and rose, and a mass of blue periwinkles, the "pervenche of Provence," all growing in a sweet disorder without sign of gardener's assistance or preconceived design.

At the sound of our voices the poet stepped out of the open French window, a tall, robust, splendid figure, full of a vitality and vigour that made his seventy-four years seem incredible. He greeted his little Félibresse, the daughter of his closest friend and collaborator for forty years, with warmth. "I saw her born," he remarked as an explanatory note.

We entered the study, a real workroom or "cabinet de travail." Books, engravings, and photographs of friends, many of them faces the world knows well, covered the walls. On the chimney-piece stood a small Venus de Milo and other statuettes, one of the poet himself, in his soft felt "wideawake" and loose working coat. To our apologies for interrupting him he answered our arrival enchanted him, and was especially welcome just then as giving him respite from a tiresome work on which he was engaged, a work only to be described as "un travail de brute." It was the rendering into French of his autobiography from the original Provençal. Considering the widespread interest with which this book is awaited, we could not encourage him in laying it aside except, as we pointed out, for our benefit that afternoon. It would be hard not only on his own countrymen, but on all to whom the beautiful "langue d'Oc" is unknown, to seal up such a work in the Provencale tongue.

He spoke of the Roumanian folk-songs gathered together

by Carmen Sylva and Hélène Vacaresco—two true Félibresses! —and so admirably rendered into French by the latter. Also of the revival of the Gaelic tongue and the work of Mr. Yeats and others, in which he felt great interest, Ireland being in some ways a parallel case to that of Provence.

"It is forbidding a language in the schools and in the churches that gives it the most deadly blow," said the poet; "but in Provence the patriotic love of their language was too deeply rooted for any Government to kill. It needed but the voices of the poets to awaken it into new life."

I asked him of the old music and folk-songs of the country. "For that," he said, "you must go to Charles Riéu of Paradou, our brave 'Charloun' the Félibre. He is a peasant, a real peasant, not a sham one like some of them. He has never ceased to work in the fields, to sow, to reap, to toil for his daily bread. Yet free of charge he built a wall to the Cemetery and a new hall for the village Commune on condition he might inscribe a verse in the tongue of Provence on both buildings. So greatly does Charloun love his native tongue and his country! He has lived all his life, sixty years, in the little village of Paradou, near Arles. Go to him, and he will sing to you by the hour the songs he has written to the ancient melodies of this country, songs which the people have claimed as their own 'li Cant dóu terraire' (Chants du Terroir). Say that Mistral sent you."

I made a mental note of Charloun of Paradou then and there.

A motor-car whizzed by in the road beyond the garden. The poet shuddered. "Happily they are not stopping at my door this time!" He gave a sigh of relief. "To that invention," he said, "I owe those frequent parties of six and eight persons who descend upon me suddenly at all hours of the day, and even sometimes of the night. They come from all corners of the earth. Tourists from Lyon, Marseilles, Nimes, Aix, etcetera. God knows where they come not from! I have the misfortune to be now in their catalogue of monuments."

He broke into his big genial laugh, well seasoned with humour and a little necessary spice of sarcasm. "There is the Pont du Gard, the Arch and Mausoleum of Saint-Rémy, and the Poet of Maillane, they do us all in one tour, see you."

I thought of Goldsmith, Chatterton, Keats, and wondered if they would have welcomed this form of fame.

"So you pay for renown!" I sympathised.

"So I expiate it," he groaned.

"Come to London," I suggested. "I will find you a quiet corner in which to rest and hide, since peace and quiet become so impossible in the plains of Provence."

He shook his head. "Even there in your London I might find a difficulty, for, curiously enough, it appears I resemble exactly a famous Englishman, or rather American, of the name Bouffaloo! Is there not one so called, yes?"

"Buffalo Bill," I laughed; and looking at the small statue on the mantelpiece realised why it had seemed so strangely familiar, recalling as it did the hoardings outside the Earl's Court Exhibition and those recently posted all over Paris.

"Yes," continued the poet, "it is now twelve years ago since I was in Paris. One day breakfasting in a café on the Grands Boulevards I beheld an exact double of myself. This man regarded me, and I him, startled and surprised. I said to myself: 'Am I myself or am I perhaps him? Same figure, same moustache, same hat!' He also had the air of saying this. Finally we advanced and shook hands warmly, I and Monsieur Bouffaloo, who, it appears, was at that moment delighting all Paris with his ponies and his Indians of the Wild West."

In connection with Buffalo Bill, Monsieur Mistral went on to tell us of a dog who about this same time came in a strange manner into his life. Walking one day in the fields between Maillane and Saint-Rémy, a strange and foreign-looking dog suddenly ran up to him. No amount of discouragement would prevail upon this beast to leave him. He looked up into his face, wagged his tail, and greeted the poet as a long-lost friend.

Persistently he followed him home, and never till the day of his death did he depart. Some time after it was reported that Buffalo Bill had passed through Tarascon with his dogs, horses and Indians on his way to Marseilles. "Evidently this dog had strayed from the rest and was attracted to me by the resemblance of my hat to that of his master," said the poet. "This at least was my first idea, but I have since been convinced that there existed also another reason—he was in reality an ancestor reincarnated, one who came to help and protect me, for rarely is it given to any man to possess such a friend as that dog was to me, while volumes might be written by the Society of Psychical Research on his extraordinary qualities and occult powers." Monsieur Mistral then proceeded to relate some instances of this strange dog's powers.

"On the day of the Toussaint it is the custom of my wife, accompanied by our faithful Eisabéu, to visit the cemetery and place a wreath on the tomb of our family. Pan-Perdu, for so I named him, at that time newly arrived, ran in before them and disappeared among the labyrinth of tombs and paths. When they arrived at their destination, however, behold Monsieur Pan-Perdu awaiting them, seated on the tomb of the family! Remark well, never before had he entered that cemetery, yet he runs straight to the right place. Who but an ancestor could have done this?"

We agreed it was certainly unanswerable.

On another occasion Pan-Perdu proved himself besides an ancestor in whom the staunch principles of the Catholic faith survived, in spite of his reappearance on earth with four legs and a tail.

"The Bishop was holding a service of Confirmation in our little church of Maillane," said the poet. "It was not the custom of Pan-Perdu to attend the services, he knew well that man excluded dogs from these rites, but on this occasion he entered quietly and unobserved, and as the Bishop laid his hands on the bended heads of the children behold the black head of Pan-Perdu thrust under his hand. 'What is this?'

cries the Bishop, startled and shocked. The children, seeing Pan-Perdu their friend, smiled and excused him. 'Oh, it is the dog of the poet—he is not as other dogs,' they reply. 'Oh, the dog of the poet!' exclaims the good Bishop, and stretching out his hand he lays it also on the head of Pan-Perdu, thereby confirming him also. Pan-Perdu respectfully licks the episcopal ring, and having thus been made a good Christian he discreetly retires. Ah, here come his descendants to vouch for the truth of my story," he added, and we rose to greet a sweet gentle lady, the poet's wife, who came towards us through the garden. Hearing we were speaking of the beloved Pan-Perdu she introduced us to his son and grandson, with whom she had been walking. We then accompanied her into the dining-room, where we partook of golden wine, a nectar fit for Olympians, and delicious little biscuits stamped with the Félibre badge of the Grasshopper.

"This you know is 'the divine beast'," she laughed, and explained she was quoting the words of Plato. "You cannot refuse to partake of him." We gladly ate cigales in plenty, on their own merits, without this high reference ; but whether the ancient sage was also a Cigale or a Félibre or both, I failed to make out. No one can doubt, however, that Plato owns with pride any brotherhood with the authors of "Les Isles d'Or," "L'Oubretto" or "Chansons du Terroir."

As to the wine the poet told us it was made by a famous Félibre, a monk of the Premontré Order, for years his friend and neighbour at the Monastery of Frigolet near Tarascon, now, alas, "expulsed" with the rest of his Brothers. What was one to think of the action of the Government in driving such men from France ? "It was a stupidity, a real stupidity, to say nothing else on the subject!"

Dom Xavier is now in England, but his golden verse and his golden wine, can he, I wonder, make either in exile under our grey skies ?

As we said good-bye and *au revoir* to our delightful hosts, the poet's wife picked me a bunch of the "blue pervenche"

or periwinkle. "For this is the flower of Provence," she said, "the flower therefore specially of the Félibres."

. . . . . .

Since Dante was forced to be an exile from his own beloved country, one feels glad he had at all events such a city as Arles to open her gates to him. Arles the beautiful, the queenly, which Constantine desired to make the capital of his great kingdom, the centre of all the Roman Empire. For long centuries she slept like the Princess of the fairy tale. So long her sleep lasted the world forgot her, and in spite of her wonderfully preserved beauty declared her to be dead. Now, however, though no fairy Prince has wakened her with his kiss, it being too late for Princes, the Félibres poets have sung their sweet songs in her ear, and she has stirred and smiled in her sleep, till people cease at least to say that she is dead. She has wakened even so far as to be conscious of pride in her glorious past and a noble patriotism in her present.

The Lion of the Alipilles, her guardian, also has come to life. He has shaken his mane, and rallied round him those sons of Arles who form the patriotic Félibres of the "École du Lion"—"ab ira leonis," as the old device had it.

At Arles, in 1852, took place the first congress of Provençal poets under Roumanille before even the founding of the Félibres. Since then Arles has shared with Avignon the nurture of Félibrige. She has been ever the Félibres' ideal city, the capital of their kingdom. Here Mistral founded his museum, visiting it regularly once a week, and holding on these occasions select little reunions of the poets, small Félibres, in former days true Fêtes, when Roumieux from Tarascon, Dom Xavier from Frigolet, Daudet from his mill at Fontevieille, Charloun from Paradou, and the Avignon poets, Roumanille, Aubanel, and Félix Gras were of this goodly company. Now, though the Fêtes of Sainte-Estelle show an ever-increasing number of ardent Félibres, few, alas, of the great master-builder's first fellow workers remain!

About seven miles from Arles, across the Crau, that Crau whose stones still witness to the great fight of Hercules, and across which poor little Mireille took her flight to the Church of the Saintes-Maries, lies the little village of Paradou, the home of the Burns of Provence—Charloun Riéu.

Paradou is a little stone village in the plains, grey, solid, and respectable, utterly lacking in any touch of the picturesque, or of the trim flowery brightness of the English village in spring time.

We inquired of a small group of villagers for the house of Charles Riéu. They came forward, politely eager to give us information about their celebrity, all speaking Provençal. Alas, the poet was absent, had left that day only, and would not be home till the following evening. But his brother was here, they would call him to speak with us.

The brother was sent for, and I made known my errand. Monsieur Mistral had sent me to hear the songs of the poet of Paradou. At the name of Mistral we took on an additional interest, not only in the eyes of the poet's brother, but all the listening bystanders.

To my question as to whether he also could sing, Monsieur Riéu shrugged his shoulders hopelessly, helplessly. For him, the poetry was a language he understood not, and to sing he knew not! "Moun frère," he added with pride, "he was always different from we others, he understood the poetry, he loved it from a child, but he is not proud, moun frère. Ah, no, he was never proud. Like me, he is a peasant, he works hard just as we all work, lives as we live, no difference at all except his poems which he makes."

He asked us if it would make us pleasure to see the house of Charloun and some of his books. "We live together since I have become widower," he explained as he walked towards one of the cottages at the end of the main street just raised from the roadside. A severe plain little four-wall cottage. Outside hung the key on a nail. He unlocked the door and we entered the room, which was kitchen and parlour in one.

Very bare and plain was this "poet's corner," speaking eloquently of the hard toiling life of the simple peasant. A dresser scantily furnished, a small table or two and a few chairs, a cupboard, nothing more. On the walls hung some photographs of the family—one of the poet in solemn funereal garb, but with a singularly cheerful face, full of vigour and intelligence. A row of large coloured prints of those lovely ladies who philanthropically advertise soap, hairwash, &c., was the most striking feature in the room. Not a book to be seen, the only trace of Félibrige being the framed card of membership, pointing to the fact that Charloun Riéu had been elected a Félibre just on thirty years ago.

A solitary pot stood on the smouldering ashes in the wide chimney. One looked in vain for any sign of personal comfort, even the bright copper pans and saucepans were absent, which generally lend such a cheery look to the French interior. Yet this was the man who had ungrudgingly given labour and time without pay in order to foster a spirit of patriotism in his little corner of Provence.

"The books of Charloun are in the bedroom upstairs—they are not many. I will fetch them," said his brother, mounting the little narrow wooden staircase which led to the room overhead.

He brought us the last edition of the "Chants du Terroir," a book including three volumes of poems, the first of which was published in 1884, with a preface in Provençal by Mistral. The second, "Nouveaux Chants du Terroir," in 1900, with a study of the author in French by Rougier. The third, "Les Derniers Chants du Terroir," in 1904, with a preface in French by Véran. This last includes some of the old folk-tunes of the country—dances, dirges, marches, to which the poet has set his songs, as Burns did his, to the old tunes of Scotland.

"From '84 to 1900 did your brother the poet write nothing?" I asked.

"My faith, but yes; he wrote always when by reason of the bad weather or some such cause it was impossible to work

out-of-doors, but my poor father and my poor mother, see you, they cared nothing for poetry, it worried them rather. So my brother he buried all he wrote in the *cartons* he kept upstairs, save, of course, the verses which are inscribed above the door of our 'commune,' and those on the big cross in the cemetery. Charloun he it was built them both, on the condition he might engrave his verses. Those verses, see you, one will read them perhaps a hundred years hence, and one will say, 'Ah, here in Paradou they were at least good Provençaux, who loved or spoke their own tongue'—so says Charloun! In former days my brother dwelt not here, but in the house by the church where we all were born. He supported the parents so long as they lived. When at last, ten years ago, my poor mother died, very old she was, very old, even as my poor father when he went—Charloun, as one might say, spread the wings." With an expressive gesture the peasant brother stretched out his arms: "By that time he had already fifty years, the poor boy, he opened the boxes wherein lay the manuscripts of years, and began to arrange his second volume. But he is not proud, my brother—oh, no, he is not proud, still he works in the fields—works hard, even as I work. In all his life he received only six months of school education here in Paradou; for we were a numerous family, ten children and poor—it was necessary Charloun should work, and waste no more time in learning. He has taught himself all he knows. There are many who would be proud to be so honoured as Charloun has been by our great poet Monsieur Mistral, and by many famous writers also, who write him letters and even come here to Paradou on purpose to visit him. Here are two medals, one of gold, a piece worth four louis!" He opened reverently a leather case. "Think you he cares for these? Not the least in the world. Medals and such things make nothing to him!"

"And he has never married?" I asked.

"Ah, no—never. The women, the cafés and all such things, he leaves them on one side," said the brother with a fine scorn. "The poetry that is what interests him, only the

poetry. He was made like that, see you, while I, his brother, and all of us were made quite the other way, to understand nothing—nothing of all that. See here his book, the 'Odyssee of Homer.' This he has translated into our language of Provence. Here is some of the manuscript." He showed us an MS. in the finest, most delicate scholar's writing—a University hand! "And this also, 'Télémaque,' a great poem it appears, though for me I understand nothing of it. We were ten of us, brothers and sisters, but out of all that number one sister only resembled Charloun. She made no poems, but she could speak them. And she knew how to express the ideas. Oh, it was as if they two had another language from we others. But alas, she died, that one, while she was young!"

No doubt all great souls, whether poets, prophets or artists, are lonely, those who dwell on the mountain tops must needs be so, but let us hope such utter solitude is rare, as this peasant-poet must have known; denied even the society of those brother-poets whose hands were occasionally held out to him, because of the duty which bound him to his old parents till youth and middle age were past.

"But you understand and love your brother's own songs, don't you?" I asked, this tragic case of the poet Charloun making the sunshine itself seem less bright.

"Ah, yes, I understand like the rest most of the songs of Charloun, though I cannot sing them, I regret to say. They are our own songs, see you, made in the Provençal—not the French of other poets, which we speak not. All the world here in Arles, in Avignon, Tarascon, Saint-Rémy, even so far as Nimes and Marseilles, now sing the songs of Charloun and recite his poetry. At the Feasts of Sainte-Estelle they make him to sing his songs, and the voices of three hundred will join in the chorus. Ah, that is what makes pleasure to my brother. It is a pity he is absent to-day—willingly he would have sung to you for an hour. It is truly a pity! But," he added hospitably, "these ladies will return, I hope, one day. My brother he comes back after to-morrow."

A pity! Indeed it was a pity. The little word was pitifully small to express the great disappointment. We assured him we hoped surely to come back in two days' time; but even as I said it I felt a secret misgiving, a presentiment that all I should see of Charloun and hear of his songs would be the shadow-figure conjured up by the peasant brother's words as we sat in the homely little kitchen, and the shadow-songs that seemed to echo round the walls.

We drove back to Arles as the sun sank down in a glory of red and gold, throwing lovely lights and shadows across the wide stretches of the Crau and the Carmague, painting all violet the distant hills.

At least it was consoling to think that Charloun Riéu had the country of Mireille for his home, the author of "Mireille" for his friend, and the Félibres of Provence for his brothers.

CONSTANCE ELIZABETH MAUD.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE UNITED STATES

AS the direct outcome of the Spanish-American War Cuba gained her independence under the guardianship of the United States, and the latter acquired the mastery over Puerto Rico and the Philippine Islands. But indirectly, the effect in the United States of this conflict between a young and strong Republic and an old and weak Monarchy was perhaps more important and far-reaching. Until then American attention had been almost exclusively fixed upon internal development. Occasionally, it is true, the United States intervened abroad on the ground of maintaining of the Monroe Doctrine—as in the Venezuela Boundary case. Nevertheless, foreign affairs occupied a secondary place; a traditional attitude of aloofness being observed with regard to everything not covered by the Stars and Stripes. Latterly, however, the political horizon in the United States has widened, and the acquisition of dependencies—they can scarcely be called colonies—and the need of opening up new markets have led to the growth of interest in external relations. A consciousness of power and a wish to be recognised as a serious factor in international affairs have ensued. And these have generated a desire for a strong and forward policy. President Roosevelt played a leading part in the war with Spain, and since he assumed office the expansionist movement has become more accentuated. To what extent the great advance which it has

made is due to the personality of the President himself, to his popularity fostered by the success attending his efforts, it would at present be difficult to say. Unquestionably many of his fellow citizens are opposed to his policy. They regard it as of too imperialistic a nature to serve the best interests of their country. In at least one important instance the Senate and the Executive have recently been at variance. Prominent politicians have maintained that the latter is inclined to encroach upon the prerogatives of the former. It is therefore possible that at the close of Mr. Roosevelt's term of office a reaction may take place. For the moment, however, the impulse to bring American influence into play abroad appears to be irresistible. Mr. Roosevelt, by nature a leader of men, seems to aspire to become a leader of nations. Under his ægis the negotiations terminating the greatest war of modern times have been brought to a successful issue. The views of his administration on subjects quite unconnected with the Western Hemisphere are listened to with respect by the Powers more closely concerned. Whilst, in matters relating to the American continents, it may be said that they are received not only with respect but with deference.

Among the numerous illustrations of the profound change to which reference has been made perhaps not the least remarkable is the increasing activity displayed by the United States with regard to the affairs of some of their more immediate neighbours in what is sometimes called "Latin America." The most striking evidence of this activity lies in the new interpretation which has been put upon the Monroe Doctrine. For the last eighty-two years this Doctrine has formed the basis of the policy of the United States concerning relations between European nations and the other trans-oceanic Republics. So much has been written about it that any discussion of its merits would be beside the mark. For better for worse, its existence has not only long been an undeniable fact, but its general scope and meaning have been recognised *de facto* if not *de jure* by European Powers. Until quite recently it ranked

purely and simply as an embodiment of the principle of "America for the Americans"; of the formation of a gigantic "reservation," consisting of the greater part of two continents into which outsiders were not to be allowed to intrude. It has remained for President Roosevelt to convert the Monroe Doctrine from a mere weapon of defence into—at any rate in theory—a two-edged sword.

The most salient passage in President Monroe's original dictum, delivered in 1823, runs as follows:

> With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European Power we have not and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have on great consideration or just principles acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them or controlling in any other manner their destiny by any European Power in any other light than as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States.

Now, let this be compared with one of the most concise of President Roosevelt's numerous pronouncements on the subject which occurs in a speech made at Chautauqua on August 11 last:

> We cannot, however, permanently adhere to the Monroe Doctrine unless we succeed in making it evident that we do not intend it as an excuse for the aggrandisement of the United States at the expense of the Republics of South America, and that we will not permit it to be used by any of these Republics as a shield to protect them from the consequences of their own misdeeds against foreign nations. Inasmuch as America will prevent other nations from interfering on this side of the waters, it shall in good faith try to help the sister Republics which need such help upwards towards peace and order.

The underlying principle contained in the last extract, the unselfish desire to lead sister Republics into the paths of righteousness and financial probity, had frequently before been voiced by the President, and formed the "leit-motiv" of his lengthy message to the Senate regarding the Santo Domingo Protocol. It has since, both during his late tour through the Southern States and in his recent message to Congress, been reiterated in somewhat more peremptory language. But the point to which it is desired to draw special attention

here is the fundamental difference between the original exposition of the Monroe Doctrine and its present amended form. The first is purely negative. It amounts to a "Thou shalt not," addressed to all and sundry whom it may concern. In the second this "Thou shalt not" is qualified. It admits that there may be, indeed are, wrongs to be righted, and that opportunities for philanthropic intervention exist. But it asserts that the United States must be the sole arbiter between plaintiff and defendant, must be left to judge at what moment intervention is desirable, and shall alone play the part of mentor. How far, in one or two instances, practice has hitherto been in agreement with precept will be shown hereafter.

The Latin American Republics may roughly be divided into three categories. Those belonging to the first, viz., Argentina, Brazil, Chili, and Mexico, stand in some respects on a totally different level to their fellows. They have apparently reached the second stage of development, a stage in which chronic political disturbance is a thing of the past and vested interests form a powerful bulwark for law and order. There seems no reason to doubt the honesty of their intentions, and it is probable that they would resent as unjustifiable interference anything in the shape of United States' "protection" or control.

In the second category are Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. These have latterly shown signs, in a greater or lesser degree, of a progressive spirit, though the last two have both quite recently experienced the throes of civil war, and it is to be feared that the political atmosphere in Uruguay is not as cloudless as could be desired. The third category consists of the turbulent Central American quintet, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Salvador — though foreigners have latterly had little open cause for complaint against Salvador and Nicaragua—and of Columbia, Venezuela, and Santo Domingo, all of which have given the State Department at Washington much food for thought during the last couple of years.

The combined area of these eight countries is somewhere

about ten times that of the United Kingdom. On the other hand, their population is, roughly speaking, rather less than double that of Greater London. Their revenues are mainly derived from customs duties and monopolies (direct taxation being so unproductive as to be practically non-existent), and probably do not together exceed a total of from seven to eight millions sterling per annum, or a little over twice that of Greece, one of the smallest and poorest of European countries. Most of them, like Turkey, lead a hand-to-mouth existence, hypothecating the resources of to-morrow to meet the requirements of to-day, among which the "Department of War" always holds an important place. Yet they embrace, both from an agricultural and from a mineralogical point of view, some of the richest portions of the earth's surface. The regeneration of Mexico by Porfirio Diaz has shown what can be accomplished in one generation in a Spanish American State. There can be no doubt that under an equally stable form of government the minor Republics would also prosper. With the help of foreign capital, which—were local conditions other than they are—might find remunerative employment within their boundaries, the development of their great latent resources would proceed apace. Unfortunately, however, their ruling classes, which in many cases spring from a stock possessing a large admixture of Indian blood, usually seek their own advantage rather than the well-being of their countries. Indeed, since they obtained their independence, the Government in all of these Republics has, with rare exceptions, been in the hands of a succession of tyrannical Dictators who, claiming to be the apostles of freedom, have committed unspeakable horrors in its name. Each of these despots has maintained his hold upon the country which he misgoverned by terrorism, only as a rule to be overthrown sooner or later by some other equally unworthy aspirant to absolute power. Thus blood has been shed and treasure wasted in almost uninterrupted fratricidal strife. If to this be added the long tale of more or less fraudulent borrowing and the small regard shown for the rights and interests of foreigners, it

is not surprising that these States should be regarded as only semi-civilised; that foreign capitalists should be apt to fight shy of ventures within their borders, and that dealings in their external debts should rank not merely as speculation, but as sheer gambling.

Setting aside the effects of such artificial maintenance of credit as has for the last year or more been practised with regard to Russian Bonds, one of the best means of gauging the status of a country is its reputation in the money markets of the world. This is indicated by the rate at which it can borrow and by the Stock Exchange quotation of its State Securities. And in all countries where civilisation has made sufficient strides for the value of credit to be appreciated, the service of the National Debt is deemed the most sacred of obligations. In the case of nearly all the Republics under consideration it may safely be asserted that, except in the form of private advances at usurious rates, their borrowing powers are practically *nil*, whilst the low average price and violent fluctuations in the value of their Bonds shows how little confidence is felt in their ability—not to say their desire—to pay their way.

The foreign loans originally contracted by these countries (with the solitary exception of Santo Domingo) were negotiated to aid them in winning their independence. During the sixties and early seventies of the last century, however, when Russia, Turkey, and Egypt were engaged in issuing what a witty Frenchman has styled "les emprunts à jet continu," certain of the smaller Spanish American States also appeared in the European markets as borrowers on what was for them a large scale and at high rates. But the golden dream of those who acquired their securities was not enduring. The crash soon came, and the evidence given at a Parliamentary inquiry held in London in 1875, revealed not only that the issue of these loans formed a dark page in international finance, but also that the countries in whose names they were contracted were sinned against as well as sinning. Anything like a historical survey of the numerous conversions, unifications, consolidations, and more especially

reductions, to which the external debts of the minor Latin American Republics have been subjected, could not fail to weary the reader. But it may be of interest to state that the foreign debt of Colombia has been in existence for 83 years, during approximately 47 of which no interest was paid; the corresponding figures for Guatemala, Honduras, and Venezuela being respectively 78 and 48, 78 and 72, and 83 and 41. Costa Rica and Nicaragua have benefited by intervals during which they owed nothing to the foreign bondholder. Nevertheless, the external debt of the first has been in default for some 30 years out of the 47 which represent its total existence, whilst Nicaragua paid nothing for 49 years out of 66. Salvador neglected her share of the old debt of the Central American Federation from 1827 to 1860. With the exception of a single lapse her subsequent record is good, and she now occupies the happy position of having no regular foreign debt. Finally, Santo Domingo began her financial connection with the outside world by a loan issued in 1869. She has since then off and on been in default for about 22 years.

In justice to these States, however, it must be admitted that during the last thirty years political troubles have not been alone responsible for the financial chaos. It must be remembered that, as well as being silver producers in a small way, several of them are also silver users. The effects of the decline in the value of the white metal have been severely felt in countries of far greater economic stability and staying power. It could not therefore but prove a serious blow where development in other directions has been hampered by the lack of a feeling of safety for property and even for the person. In some instances the difficulty has been overcome by the successful introduction of a gold currency. Given the necessary foresight, administrative prudence and energy, this course might probably by now have been more extensively adopted; but these elements have unfortunately been wanting, and although the exchange problem which to-day weighs so heavily upon certain of the Latin American Republics has doubtless

been aggravated by misrule and reckless financial methods, it unquestionably owes its origin to the depreciation of silver. Another evil has more recently befallen several of them whose staple export has for many years been coffee. The influx of gold due to its sale abroad has provided the means of paying for the many articles which they are incapable of producing and must needs import. The fall in prices has therefore been a veritable disaster. It is true that a slight recovery has taken place, but statistics show that the industry is still very far from its former state of prosperity. In some cases the growing trade in bananas may in time be a source of wealth. For the present, however, it is almost entirely in the hands of foreigners, and practically the whole of the profits remain abroad.

Speaking purely from the point of view of financial relations with the old world, the general situation is, nevertheless, probably better now than it has been for many years past. Nicaragua has for ten years faithfully fulfilled her external obligations. Salvador punctually pays the annual subsidy to an English railway company, which, with the exception of some American "claims," is her only foreign liability. Colombia and Venezuela have both just made new arrangements with their long-suffering creditors. Whilst, if the United States Senate will allow him, President Roosevelt intends to hold out a helping hand to Santo Domingo. The list of black sheep therefore for the moment comprises only Costa Rica, Guatemala, and last, but in a sense not least, Honduras, with her revenue of £200,000 a year and her foreign debt of close upon £21,000,000.

In the light of past experience, however, it is impossible to foretell how long the present improved conditions will endure. Moreover, there are various reasons for thinking that even in the best disposed of these Republics the outlook is by no means promising. Two or three illustrations will suffice to justify this assertion. The Nicaraguan debt is small, but owing to the depreciation of her currency every £1 she pays abroad represents about $25 of the local money, instead of $5.

Some two years ago Colombia issued from a protracted civil war, which, if the number of privates killed was in any degree proportionate to that of the generals, colonels, &c., who fell, must have decimated the population. She has since lost Panama, whilst the expenses of the war were met by the short-sighted expedient of issuing forced currency. As a result she now finds herself saddled with a debt in notes reaching the enormous total of nearly $850,000,000.

At one time the rate of exchange for the paper dollar touched 25,000 per cent. But by legislative enactment the parity between gold and paper was fixed not long ago—in respect of Government transactions—at the relatively moderate figure of 10,000 per cent. Even this means that Colombia's dollar represents only 2*d.* of our money, and the brain whirls at the thought of the equivalent in currency of the £81,000 which she will in future have to pay each year for the service of her foreign debt. Thus, apart from remedying all the other evils resulting from the civil war, the present Administration is confronted with a currency problem of phenomenal difficulty. General Reyes, the new President, is said to be one of the most enlightened and progressive rulers in South America, and he is understood to be taking steps to introduce a gold coinage, but his task seems akin to that of Sisyphus.

In Venezuela the outlook is somewhat less gloomy. Here at least the bolivar, intrinsically equivalent to the franc, circulates freely; and as President Castro has at length succeeded in subduing his adversaries, a season of peace may be anticipated. Yet the "Revolución Restauradora" which placed General Castro at the head of affairs and the subsequent insurrections have cost the country dear. Both victors and vanquished unfortunately inflicted injuries upon the property of foreigners. Even at the rate of £180,000 per annum it will take Venezuela at least seven years to pay the compensation exacted, and fresh foreign claims are, like ill weeds, growing apace. Under the new arrangement the external debt is exceptionally well secured, but its service, together with that

of the internal debt, will form a considerable item in the budget, whilst the army, of so vital importance to a President whose lease of power has been obtained by force of arms, must be maintained at all costs.

It may perhaps appear that a large amount of space has been devoted to the financial situation of these various Republics. The object has, however, been to demonstrate that if the United States have any real intention of acting up to the principles enunciated by President Roosevelt, their path would, under existing circumstances, be beset by many difficulties; whilst if the present improvement should not, as it is quite possible, be permanent, the position in the future would become yet more complicated.

The most clearly defined case of United States intervention on the new system is that of Santo Domingo. Here a definite plan of action has been elaborated. It cannot be denied that, if judiciously carried into effect, the proposed course would be beneficial. The story of the origin of this intervention is told at length in President Roosevelt's Message to the Senate on the subject of the "Santo Domingo Protocol" embodying the proposed arrangement, viz., that the United States should administer the Customs of the Republic, and devote 55 per cent. of their product to the payment of its debts. Briefly summarised, the facts are as follows: The disorder in the finances has reached such a pitch that, according to the Dominican Finance Minister himself, 80 per cent. of the revenue would be required to meet the full service of the total debt. On various occasions European creditors have, through their Governments, made complaints at Washington concerning the state of affairs in the Republic. And in 1903 the representative of a European Power suggested the institution of international financial control.[1] The United States, true presumably to the dictum "America for the Americans," would have none of this. Among the many claimants were a

[1] In his recent message to Congress President Roosevelt stated that at least two foreign nations were on the point of intervening.

group of American companies possessing large vested interests and with them were associated important British creditors. On behalf of these companies the United States, in the middle of 1904, obtained an arbitral award condemning Santo Domingo to make considerable monthly payments to them, and providing that, in the event of such payments not being made, a "Financial Agent" of the United States was to enter into possession of certain specified Customs Houses. Needless to say, the payments were not made, and the United States commenced collecting a part of the Customs receipts for the sole benefit of the above-mentioned Companies and their associates. Reading between the lines of President Roosevelt's above-mentioned Message it would appear that this procedure provoked representations on the part of various interested Powers. Be this as it may, the fact remains that the arbitral award, though rendered by an International Court of Arbitration, was practically quashed at the instance of the United States Executive, and the new Protocol substituted in its place. This Protocol formed the subject of a severe controversy between the United States Senate and the authorities in Washington, the former declining to ratify it on constitutional grounds. It is said, however, that it will again be brought before the Senate, and, in the meantime, a *modus vivendi* has been arranged under which United States officials are in charge of all Dominican Customs Houses, 55 per cent. of the receipts being provisionally deposited in a New York Bank for ultimate *pro ratâ* distribution amongst the creditors.

Such, in mere outline, is the situation, and on the surface it certainly seems that no better or fairer arrangement could have been devised. But irrespective of the placing of the United States upon a plane of superiority which can scarcely be pleasing to other Powers, it possesses at least one very serious defect. The Message explicitly states that the United States would "pay what proportion of the debts it is possible to pay on an equitable basis." There can, of course, be no question that the intention is of the best. In the case, however, of the

American claims against Venezuela, which were submitted to a Mixed Commission at Caracas in 1903-4, the amount awarded represented only 2·86 per cent. of that demanded by the United States Government on behalf of its citizens. This circumstance cannot but engender serious misgivings concerning the degree of discrimination which would be exercised in dealing with the various creditors of Santo Domingo, both as regards the validity of their claims and the rights of some amongst them to preferential treatment. Indeed, it might well be argued that if such was the result of an impartial examination of claims which could and should have been thoroughly sifted beforehand by the United States authorities, the *bonâ fide* creditors of Santo Domingo can scarcely expect absolute equity in practice, as well as in intention, at their hands.

Santo Domingo has been purposely mentioned first because American action there appears less open to criticism than elsewhere. The state of dependence to which the Republic would be reduced is the outcome of the misdeeds of its people, and evokes no sympathy. Again, it is unquestionable that, under the suggested *régime*, the creditors would get something, whereas they now get nothing.

The events connected with Colombia during the last two years show the attitude of the United States in a less favourable light. According to President Roosevelt, a part of his country's mission is "in good faith to help the sister Republics which need such help upwards towards peace and order." What, for lack of a better definition, may be termed "active acquiescence" in a successful revolt on the part of Panama, her most valuable province, seems a somewhat peculiar method of rendering to Colombia that assistance of which she stood sorely in need. It will be the duty of the historian of the twentieth century to bring to light the whole truth as to the secession of Panama. Some of the assertions made on behalf of Colombia are doubtless based upon unsubstantiated rumours. But even to-day the following five facts are common property: (1) By a

treaty entered into in 1846 the United States guaranteed to New Granada (now Colombia) both the neutrality of the Isthmus of Panama and "the rights of sovereignty and property which New Granada has and possesses over the said territory." (2) By the abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty the United States obtained a free hand with regard to the construction of an inter-oceanic canal—a project which they were extremely anxious to carry into effect. (3) The Spooner Act (which authorised the United States Executive to construct the canal) expressly stipulated that "should the President be unable to obtain for the United States . . . the control of the necessary territory of the Republic of Colombia . . . within a reasonable time and upon reasonable terms" steps should be taken to utilise the Nicaragua route. (4) Shortly after the Treaty negotiated by the United States Executive with the Government of Colombia had been rejected by the Colombia Senate, an insurrection took place in Panama, and the United States Government recognised the new Republic within forty-eight hours of its outbreak, and, fourteen days afterwards, signed a Treaty with its representative for the transfer of the Canal concession and zone. (5) The attempts of the Colombia Government to suppress the insurrection were frustrated by the presence of United States warships, which, acting under orders, prevented the landing of Colombian troops.

The conduct of the Colombian Senate in rejecting the original Canal Treaty was, of course, most irritating to the United States. It was also reprehensible in the extreme. The excuse that the Colombian Constitution did not permit of the Convention being ratified was brought forward at so late a period that doubts may well be entertained as to its practical, though perhaps not its technical, validity. Means could probably have been found for overcoming the difficulty, and there is reason for fearing that the Senate's suicidal action was due to unworthy motives. But "two wrongs do not make a right." If the Colombian attitude was inexcusable

the subsequent action of the United States, a great and highly civilised Power, was certainly most discreditable. The rights of a weak nation were ruthlessly trodden under foot, and attempts have even been made to justify this procedure on the grounds of expediency and universal advantage.

The incident illustrates the manner in which the great northern democracy is overshadowing the minor transoceanic nations. Apart from this and its relation to the construction of the Canal, foreign interest in the treatment of Colombia by the United States is naturally more or less academic. The position assumed by the United States concerning Panama's share of the Colombian foreign debt, however, brings the whole question within the scope of this article. Few impartial persons will deny that Panama, which has now nominally become a sovereign Republic, is in reality an offshoot of the United States in which American influence is all-powerful. Consequently there can be little doubt that on the merest hint from Washington, the Panameño Government would have done ample justice to the holders of Colombian Bonds. Panama, it is true, offered to become responsible for an amount of Colombia's debt proportionate to her population, *i.e.*, about one-sixteenth, on condition that her independence was recognised by the latter. This was, of course, tantamount to an indefinite postponement of any arrangement. In addition, it was not unreasonably argued that as Panama under the Canal Treaty had become entitled to receive from the United States £2,000,000 which, but for her secession, might eventually have gone to Colombia, a settlement on the basis of population was inequitable. President Roosevelt was therefore asked to act as arbitrator. This he declined to do, his reason, which in the peculiar circumstances appears somewhat specious, being that no similar request had reached him from the Government of Panama. The outcome of further efforts to obtain assistance was a point-blank refusal to intervene, on the ground that the petitioners were not citizens of the United States. Nevertheless, the United States Government professes

to desire to hold the scales of justice evenly between these recalcitrant Republics and their creditors.

Colombia's neighbour, Venezuela, has earned an unenviable reputation for turbulence and the violation of the rights of foreigners, and the blockading of her coasts by Great Britain, Germany, and Italy belongs to recent history. Yet, without desiring to attribute to her virtues which she does not possess, it must be admitted that the causes for complaint against her have often been grossly exaggerated. The fate of the American claims submitted to the mixed Commission of 1903-4 has already been mentioned. When it is remembered that the amounts awarded by all the Commissions which then sat represented less than 20 per cent. of the sum total of the foreign claims, and that certain other claims put forward by France have lately been reduced by the umpire from nearly 43,000,000 to about 3,000,000 francs, it is evident that this assertion is not entirely without foundation. Lack of space forbids our dealing adequately with the conflict between France and Venezuela regarding the French Cable Company or the difference with the United States concerning the Bermudez Asphalt Company. But it may safely be asserted that in both instances the Venezuelan case is by no means weak.

Venezuela has incurred the displeasure of the United States authorities probably quite as much by the spirit of independence which she has displayed as by the infliction of "torts" upon American citizens. She has resented the dictatorial attitude of her great northern neighbour, and the arrogance displayed by the late United States Minister at Caracas—his assumption of the *rôle* of "Resident" instead of "Minister Resident"—was not calculated to allay that resentment. Indeed, in the recent relations of the United States with Venezuela we look in vain for traces of a philanthropic desire to assist her in her troubles. Attempts at coercion by "carpet-bag" diplomatists and the supporting of claims adjudged almost baseless by impartial arbitrators have been their most striking characteristics. We hold no brief for

General Castro, who has many of the faults of his race. To the Anglo-Saxon mind his utterances often appear absurdly bombastic, whilst his methods are doubtless the reverse of diplomatic. But he possesses a redeeming quality which is comparatively rare in Latin America. He seems to be swayed by political ambition rather than by cupidity. Moreover, he recognises the value of foreign credit. As soon as tranquillity was in some measure restored in the country, he made earnest and persistent efforts to effect a settlement of the foreign debt, and, notwithstanding many obstacles, has at length been successful in his endeavours.

From among several other instances in which either the influence or the action of the United States has been prejudicial to the interests of the foreign creditors of Latin American States, only one more need be briefly alluded to. The Government of Guatemala has been conspicuous for its bad faith towards its external creditors. An agreement concluded in 1895, under which certain specified revenues were assigned as security for the foreign debt, was broken in 1898. Subsequently three successive arrangements, entailing heavy sacrifices on the part of the creditors, but containing new provisions regarding security, were entered into with authorised representatives of the Republic. Each of them was, however, in turn repudiated by the Guatemalan Government. A few months after the last of these three abortive contracts was signed the Government obtained a loan from an American Syndicate. To ensure the speedy repayment of this loan the Syndicate was granted a lien not only upon the revenues which the Guatemalan agents had then offered as security, but also upon those originally pledged in 1895. The right of the European creditors to either one or the other form of security were matters of common knowledge, and the United States authorities could not but be aware of the facts of the case. Nevertheless they became to all intents and purposes parties to the transaction between the Syndicate and the Guatemalan Government. Clauses were inserted in the contract stipulating

that a duplicate original should be deposited at the United States Legation in Guatemala city, and that the Syndicate should have the right of appealing to the United States for protection and support in the event of any violation of its terms. Needless to say, this could scarcely have been done without the knowledge and consent of the American Government.

Since the days of Lord Palmerston it has been the rule of the British Government that the "bondholder" must be left practically to his own devices; that he must accept full responsibility for his acts, and not expect either the Foreign Office or any other Government Department to help him out of the quagmire into which his imprudence has led him. Occasionally a Foreign Secretary has been known to go so far as to intimate that the conclusion of a settlement between debtor and creditor would be viewed with favour—thus abandoning in some slight degree the official attitude of non-intervention—but on the whole the principle laid down by Lord Palmerston has been adhered to. Whilst this line of conduct may appear harsh and unjust in individual cases, it would be useless to deny that it possesses elements of soundness. Not only must these minor interests necessarily be subordinated to the wider issues involved in the general foreign policy of the country, but for the sake of national prestige official action would in case of need have to be supported by armed force. Debt-collecting with machine-guns is a proceeding worthy of the "mailed fist," which would most certainly not commend itself to the British Public. On the other hand there is the danger, which is becoming more and more real every day, that these semi-civilised peoples may come to regard inaction as evidence of inability to act, and that our political and more especially our commercial interests in the tropical regions of the Western Hemisphere may suffer accordingly. Nevertheless, as Great Britain appears to have consented to the conversion of the Caribbean Sea into, for all practical purposes, a United States lake, it is to be supposed that

she must and will abide by the consequences of her bargain. The question whether she is receiving the full surrender value of her interests belongs to the domain of *la haute politique*, and need not be here discussed.

The unpleasant idea of using our navy as a bailiff immediately conjures up a vision of our sailors shedding their blood whilst the rich "bondholder" "sits at home at ease." In point of fact, however, the venturesome holders of the bonds of these Republics comparatively seldom belong to the wealthy section of the community. They may roughly be divided into two classes, viz., the speculators pure and simple and what may be styled the unwary investors. Upon the speculator no pity need be wasted. He has usually full knowledge of the risks, and buys the "waste paper" at ten or twenty per cent. of its face value in the expectation of a rise in prices which, if it takes place, occasionally doubles his capital in a few weeks or months. The fate of the unwary investor on the contrary enlists all our sympathy. He, and indeed often she, is a person with a small capital, which renders the prospect of 7 or 8 per cent. irresistibly attractive. Knowing little, having no means of obtaining either information or sound advice, and with hazy ideas of finance and sometimes even of geography, the unwary investor generally buys at relatively high prices, and in nine cases out of ten loses.

During the past two years both these classes of bondholders have learnt to look upon the United States as the *deus ex machinâ* who will transmute their almost worthless paper into pure gold, and a phenomenal inflation in prices has consequently taken place. Enough has probably been said in the preceding pages to show that so far this belief is founded upon words instead of deeds, for hitherto the intervention of the United States has produced negative rather than positive results with regard to the interests of the European bondholders. Indeed, such action as has taken place has been almost exclusively for the benefit of American citizens, and, notwithstanding fine phrases, Europeans have in reality met with neither sympathy nor help.

It is true that the idea that the Monroe Doctrine ranks not only as a declaration of rights, but also as an acknowledgment of an international duty on the part of the United States, is of recent growth. It is therefore impossible to assert that the future may not bring forth fresh developments. These may perhaps falsify present experience, and show that the American Government is seriously intent upon justifying President Roosevelt's somewhat grandiloquent language by seeing justice impartially done. But even if this should come to pass there would remain one important factor to be reckoned with. So long as the Monroe Doctrine might be regarded merely in the light of a barrier interposed between themselves and Europe, it was acclaimed by the minor Latin American nations. It will, however, readily be understood that, tenacious as they are of their independence and of their right to misgovern themselves as they choose, the interpretation now put upon this Doctrine is anything but to their taste. They have consequently been learning latterly to dislike and mistrust their northern neighbours, of whom they have long, to some extent, stood in awe. Moreover, they are probably well aware that, as far as they are concerned, the "big stick," which has lately been shaken at them from many platforms in the United States, is more or less of a rhetorical expression. To seize an unprotected isthmus is an easy undertaking for a naval power, and the seizure of the ports of a weak country need present no difficulties. But it may safely be asserted that the inhabitants of these Republics could, without serious inconvenience, exist for an indefinite length of time without commercial relations with the outside world, and the holding of ports would therefore be an empty and useless display of power were communications with the interior interrupted. The task of actually forcing the *pax Americana* upon these States, throughout the length and breadth of their territories, is one upon which, in view of past and present experience in the Philippines, even Mr. Roosevelt would presumably hesitate to enter.

"INVESTOR."

AN IRISH EXPERIMENT

SINCE the time of Spenser and Fynes Moryson the domestic life of "the mere Irish"—the real Irish, that is, for in this connection, as in so many others, the Planters do not count—has been the subject of wondering comment by generations of observers. In Spenser's view, one of the foremost reasons for giving the kern fixity of tenure in his holding was, that thereby he might take more comfort of his life, more safe dwelling, and a delight to keep his house neat and cleanly—"which now being, as they commonly are, rather swine-sties than houses, is the chiefest cause of his so beastly manner of life and savage condition, lying and living together with his beast in one house, in one room, in one bed; that is, clean straw, or rather a foul dunghill." Again, it was uncertainty of estates which, in the judgment of Sir John Davies, "hath been the true cause of such desolation and barbarism in this land as the like was never seen in any country that professed the name of Christ." Then, it was probably no better urging than his inborn British taste for the delicacies of life, and his fond recollection of them, that led Fynes Moryson to chronicle with such brutal frankness his experience of "the wild and mere Irish": their barbarous and most filthy diet, their fondness for usquebaugh, their greediness, their lack of spoons, candles, napkins, their houses of boughs and mud, with "fires in the midst of the room, the smoke whereof goeth out at a hole in the top thereof," their manner of sleeping naked "without

straw or other thing under them, lying all in a circle about the fire, with their feet towards it"; their likeness "to wild beasts in whose caves a beast passing that way might perhaps find meat"—a description which recalls the passage in Macaulay that tells of "the half-naked savages, who could not speak a word of English, made themselves burrows in the mud, and lived on roots and sour milk."

Again, it was surely no desire to give things as they were not, which, in more recent times, led Carlyle and Thackeray, Lecky and Froude, Trench and Le Fanu, to record their observations of the bleak realities of Irish domestic life; nor can it be said that in the fictions of Carleton and Lever, Kickham and Banim, Miss Lawless and Miss Barlow, is no element of sad truth, in the impressions of modern journalists, from Max O'Rell to Mr. Bart Kennedy, no sobriety of statement. Even as it was in the days of Spenser and Moryson, so in these present days it would appear that "the mere Irish" (let the insolent phrase stand for its present worth) are still in a more or less distressful condition, not, of course, in that beastly and savage condition which was mark of their degradation and slavery in the year 1600, without spoons and feather beds, without candles and tables, without tailor-made clothes, and frilled shirts, and bleached sheets, yet still in a condition which is sign of their neglect, or disregard, of the comforts, the elegances, the beauties, the luxuries of existence. In Ireland still are mud hovels, "the smoke whereof goeth out at a hole in the top thereof." In Ireland still do families live with the beast in one house, in one room, if not in one bed. In Ireland still you find ugly naked little habitations scattered upon the hills, no beauty without them or within, no comfort, no homeliness, fowls pecking on the noisome yards, middens reeking before the open doors, a cesspool here, a filthy office there, the walls cracked, the roof unsound, the rooms damp, unclean, ill-lighted, unsanitary—rather swine-sties, dare we call them, than homes. In Ireland now folk exist on the irreducible minimum of this world's bounty: the least and worst possible in the

way of clothes, food, household gear, personal effects, comforts, enjoyments, earthly aspirations. Bread, tea, and potatoes, with occasionally a libation of usquebaugh, may still be called the national food. Rarely do you find flowers by the walls, anything save kale and potatoes in the garden patch. Somewhere to live, something to wear, a spark of fire, food enough and just good enough to satisfy the cravings of hunger; such, with a little diversion on occasion, much talk by the firesides, much placid acceptance of the unvarying round of life, much earnest devotion on the path that leads to another and a better world, is still, despite Land Purchase Acts and the blessings of local government, despite the best efforts of reformers and agitators, almost the sum of existence for a majority of the peasants and villagers in many parts of Ireland. They seem to require no more and no better. All the good things of life—the material things which others labour to have—they seem content to do without, happy ever in their contemplation of good things to come. Gardens, orchards, trim hedges, comfortable homes, pleasant surroundings, the many pleasures and bounties that are within the reach of even the humblest and poorest, seem to them not worth while. They are well enough, they say. Why bother? What is the good? Where is the use of flowers, beans and peas, carrots and parsnips, apples and currants? Sure they can manage, please God, without such pampering. Cheap dishes, what more can they do than stay hunger? Is it the like of them to be eating eggs, or feeding a pig for themselves? Must not the dunghill be somewhere? Who is responsible for the leaking roof and the cracked walls? Is not a clay floor the cheapest and most convenient, seldom needing a besom and never sloppy? Have they not lived all their lives, and their fathers before them, without opening windows, and airing beds, and scrubbing dressers, and all such vanities, and where is the time for them anyway? Ah, sure now all is well enough, glory be to God, and there is never a bad but could be worse.

In face of such talk and such an attitude of mind would-be social reformers must often have stood not less wondering than

helpless. For, be his faults what they may, the Irish peasant is not stupid, is not inaccessible to ideas, is by no means loth to seek and accept the main chance. On questions of national politics he is alert and sometimes in advance of the age. In many respects he is the equal, and in some the superior, of his class in other countries—in England, shall we say, or Belgium, or France. Outside his own country, as Americans can testify, he shows himself capable of aspiring. Even at home he knows the difference between good and bad, has taste, imagination, aptness, a fine discernment of the ridiculous. For the beautiful in literature, music, and to an extent in art and nature, his perception is, and for centuries has been, true. He is not ignorant, not devoid of intellect and a certain refinement in thought and manners. Certainly he is by nature anything but the squalid, worthless mortal that the hasty impressions of journalists would make him, nor has he all the melancholy and sometimes ludicrous qualities that characterise his appearance in many pages of fiction. Having found his real self—no easy matter that—there in the midst of his unlovely surroundings, your judgment must be how little he fits them, how easily, an he had the mind, he could raise himself above them, changing himself, readily changing them. Yet he changes little. He has not the mind. There he is, and there are his surroundings, the cause of your helpless wonder.

Why is it? The question has been asked a thousand times, answered a thousand ways. His religion, its needs, its form, the immoderate following of it, has given cause for many answers. His political record, full as it is of oppressions, injustices, rebellions, decimations, exiles, an alien rule and an embittered opposition to it, has supplied many more. That uncertainty of estates which long ago gave Sir John Davies a reason, combined in more recent times with the taxation of improvements by rapacious owners, has continued, and with much reason, to account for the wreckage that marks the stream of emigration Westward. We hear of the tyranny of agitators, the misguided influence of masters both temporal

and spiritual, the misdeeds of landlords, the lack of real education, of initiative, of capital, the poverty of the land, the smallness of holdings, the dearth of mineral wealth, the woes of inclement skies. All this and much more we have heard unto weariness from generations of observers; but, until a year or two ago, scarcely have we heard of any observer willing or capable to do more than theorise about the domestic condition of the Irish peasant. Practitioners in plenty have tried their hand at bettering his economic state, giving him land acts, education schemes, poor-laws, systems of local government, and all the rest; but who before Sir Horace Plunkett's day has tried his hand at bettering the peasants' domestic state—not talking and theorising about it, but honestly trying to make it better? Who has tried? Yet can it be gainsaid that, so long as a majority of the Irish peasants are practically homeless, so long will all those economic bounties of the practitioners be dowered upon them in vain? What of free holdings if the houses upon them be swine-sties? What of educating a man if you leave him ignorant of the rules and mercies of home? Where really must you begin if you would raise people from their unlovely condition of life? Where is character formed? By what is judgment made of a nation's well-being?

About a year ago, Sir Horace Plunkett, with that practicality of purpose which so happily characterises all his efforts for the good of Ireland, devised what he called an Irish Home Improvement Scheme. In this he was actuated more by private than official motives. The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, of which he is Vice-President, took no responsibility. All expenses were guaranteed by him. The controlling committee was selected from his friends—the Countess of Fingall, the Countess of Mayo, Father Finlay, Father Maguire, and others. Local sympathy was sought. Teachers and lecturers were engaged. And when the scheme had matured, two ladies, Miss O'Conor Eccles, who for long has laboured on behalf of social reform, and Miss J. H. O'Brien, herself a practical student of Belgian methods of domestic

economy, were sent by Sir Horace to Dromore, there to begin the experiment of "implanting the principles of more cheerful living into the homes of the Irish people."

Dromore is an Ulster village, situate in the county of Tyrone, about nine statute miles from Omagh, in the direction of Enniskillen. The surrounding district is pastoral, hilly, unsheltered, the soil very unkind, and owned mainly by the squireen class of landlord that fattens on the spoil of the Landed Estates Court. No gentry give the neighbourhood the benefit of their presence and example. It is removed from the stir of trade. Every one is poor or worse than poor; at that dead level of existence where daily bread means constant struggling, without joy in strife or much earthly hope, for the least that man and nature can give.

Now, for sake of clearness and comparison, let us try to picture Dromore as it was in the old dark times. It is a straggling place of three mean streets, along which in wretched array, interspersed with little shops, a few places of worship, the school, the co-operative creamery, the parochial hall, the police barracks, and the usual abundance of sordid public-houses, stand the homes of the villagers. The sidewalks are broken, the streets always unclean and often deep in mud. Nothing beautiful, or even pleasant, takes the eye. You see pigs, fowls, goats, noisome gutters, littered gardens and yards, a donkey-cart standing before a shop, a beggar chanting a ballad, ragged children without any heart for play, toil-worn women peering hungrily from gloomy doorways, men going about their business, such as it is, with what spirit they have: and over all, heavy as the pervading peat-smoke, that depressing atmosphere of squalid neglect which hangs like a pall, darkening even the sunshine. Among the eight hundred inhabitants, of whom about two-thirds are Roman Catholics, only the doctor, the clergy, the teachers, the policemen, and perhaps a few others, have any standard of comfort. The great majority are at that lowest level of existence, indifferent, hopeless, patiently enduring what is sent and must be taken for granted, struggling always for the merest means of life.

"Hell upon earth" is the judgment of one who knows their condition well. "No, not hell but purgatory," says another. Yet both agree that the people have fine qualities, have grit and endurance, kindliness, adaptability, great patience. They have need of some of these qualities : without them they would not be Ulster folk.

Such then was Dromore when, some eighteen months ago, Sir Horace Plunkett began his experiment of trying to implant the principles of more cheerful living into the homes of its people. Beginning at so low a worst was almost inviting failure. But Sir Horace, as ever, was sanguine. His staff was enthusiastic and capable. The local clergy, and in particular that excellent priest, the Rev. Matthew Maguire (he who with Father Finlay, in September 1901, laid the foundation of reform in Dromore by forming the St. MacCartan's Home Industries Society), were ready to give sympathy and help. Father Finlay journeyed to Dromore, introduced the teachers to the people, and expounded their object. Sir Horace, and other members of his committee, added their explanations and hopes. And in the summer of 1904 a start was made.

Having settled themselves in a model cottage in the heart of Dromore, Miss O'Brien and Miss Eccles began work by giving daily lectures, chiefly to women, in the parochial hall. These lectures were in no way academic either in matter or style ; rather were they in the nature of simple personal talks in which attention was directed first to the exterior, then to the interior, and lastly to the inhabitants of the home. The unsightliness, not to say the danger, of the family midden ; the unseemliness of filthy yards and approaches ; the good impression conveyed by whitewashed walls, painted doors and windows, sound thatch, inviting thresholds ; the advantages of a tilled garden in providing simple food-stuffs and flowers ; the need for air, light, cleanliness in the home, with windows that might open, doors that might shut out the pig and fowls, a hard floor, a tidy hearth, a chimney to carry off the smoke ; the due order and method in which household duties should be performed, the good results of scrubbing dressers, airing beds,

sleeping in ventilated rooms, and finally the necessity, if health and well-being were to be preserved, of strict personal cleanliness: such in general was the scope of these friendly talks. They were attentively, often sympathetically heard. There were scoffers, unfriendly critics, of course. But what of them? A beginning was made. Already the scheme had found friends in Dromore.

Next, with a view to winning the children, evening classes were begun, and practical instruction given them in the elementary rules of living. Poor little mortals, they sadly needed such care. Often their personal condition was deplorable, unwashed, uncombed, with ragged clothes and bodies needing the mercies of a carbolic bath. Manners they had none. They considered it mean to heed, or reprove, petty dishonesty. But they were amenable, always interested in what they were told and ready to apply it. The public washing of Miss O'Brien's face gave them much delight. Instruction in the use of the tooth-brush impressed them greatly; but in this, as in other matters, the effects of instruction were often nullified at home. "Tooth-brushes, indeed!" laughed all Dromore; "and what Christian mortal has need for such contrivances?" However, the good work continued. After a while demonstrations were given in the art of washing clothes; then the scope of instruction was widened to include the principles of nursing, rearing and training children, of caring the sick, of preparing food on the Belgian plan. A deal of this perhaps had small practical result. In Dromore, as in other places in the world, women have their own fixed ideas of the right way to wash clothes, to nurse their children and to care their sick; but when Miss O'Brien showed how a good meal for six persons, consisting of vegetable soup, fish or meat, and a sweet made from stale bread, could be prepared at a cost of a shilling, and when the lace girls of the St. MacCartan's Society were induced, not only to better their working conditions, but also to improve their usual dietary of tea and bread by providing for themselves co-operative lunches, consisting of pea soup and toast, potato dumplings, cabbage mould, and

bread-and-butter pudding—why then there was talk in Dromore. The dishes were voted "grand." Several of them, the potato dumplings especially, were tried with more or less success in the homes. Brothers and husbands gave their commendation and asked for more. Nevertheless, there was, even at best, a certain attitude of stolid indifference. Some made learning a kind of personal favour. Others condescended to attend the lectures. When, having distributed some blackberry jelly, the teachers offered to make as good, themselves supplying the jars, sugar and cooking apparatus, for any who might be inclined to gather blackberries from the hedges, not one was inclined. Not one. If Miss O'Brien, or Miss Eccles, wished to provide Dromore with blackberry jelly, why there were the laden hedges. Why to be sure. "Is it the like of us go out picking blackberries. Ah, now!"

Withal, the teachers were never discouraged, and sometimes they found encouragement. An appeal, after a lecture, for the names of all willing to put what they had heard into practice, was answered by twenty women and girls—the finest and most intelligent, be it said, in Dromore. The lace and crochet workers were eager always after improvement. Here and there a midden was removed from the doorstep. A girl showed pridefully the six cartloads of gravel that had displaced the refuse-heap in the family yard. Despite the opposition of owners, the indifference of authorities, and the natural unwillingness of tenants whose uncertainty of estate was constant (one cottager was given notice to quit for *having appeared to complain* that the rain poured through a broken roof upon his children's bed), a real improvement showed in some of the homes. Doors were painted, walls whitewashed, windows and floors mended. And when at last Miss Eccles came upon an old man striving to lime-wash his cabin with a heather besom, hope sprang within her.

Then, accompanied often by Father Maguire, and all the more welcome for that, the teachers spent a portion of every day in visiting the homes, learning to know the people intimately, discovering their condition, striving to rouse their

interest, inviting them to the lectures and to demonstrations of the principles of housewifery in their model cottage. These personal visitations did much good. Confidence was established. Kindly relations grew. "Here's themselves"; soon the cry became a watchword in Dromore. Steadily the scheme won favour. At every lecture were new and more eager faces. All sorts and conditions came inquiring, seeking counsel, help. Each day there was a reception at the model cottage. As all were invited, so all were made kindly welcome. Whilst Miss O'Brien was giving an object-lesson to a party in the bright little kitchen, Miss Eccles was showing groups of four or five about the bedrooms and sitting-room, taking pains the while to explain the art of bed-making, dusting, cleaning, sweeping, how to ventilate, how to air clothes and mend and fold them, how to keep everything sweet and neat and cosy. Pleasant work this, and not without its due reward, its manifest effect, on the home life of Dromore.

So far, only the women had been directly approached; but when at last real signs of awakening had come, an effort was made to reach the men. A course of lectures to the men of the Gaelic League was so appreciated that they asked for another. A carpentry class, in charge of a trained instructor, was formed, and proved a real success. At first some of the youths and boys attending were inclined to rowdyism, but a little judicious firmness on the part of the instructor soon resulted in order and civility; and before very long Dromore had new things in almost every home, salt-boxes and knife-boards, chairs and stools and tables, even new doors and window-frames, settles and bedsteads. Next, with a view to implanting ideas of discipline and improving the poor physical standard of the village, a class for drill was organised under the supervision of an ex-soldier; and immediately the voice of the agitator was heard denouncing the class as an obvious preliminary to recruiting. Useless to explain or protest. Vain to open the class to women and girls. Home improvement scheme or no, Dromore was proof against the temptations of the King's shilling. So, advised by the technical instructors of the Agricultural Depart-

ment, a diversion was made by offering to help in the laying out of model kitchen gardens for any willing to work and use them. No fewer than forty cottagers, within and without Dromore, accepted the offer. Fruit trees and useful plants were supplied free. Instruction, and often help, in draining, fencing, planting, pruning, was liberally given. Soon cottage gardening became something of a craze in Dromore; and now, should you care to visit the place, not only may you tread clean streets and trim sidewalks, but from them you may have sight of many brightened homes, whitewashed, painted, ordered, and provided with some of the necessities and luxuries of life. Better still, you will find these brightened homes to be at once sign and measure of the great general improvement in the communal life of the village. That heavy and pervading atmosphere as of hopelessness materialised, of misery and neglect, will no longer obscure your sunshine. You will go pleasantly among the people, finding them happier, healthier, more sober, comfortable, industrious, better clad, better fed, with the bearing and aspect of folk who have uplifted themselves in the scale of things national, temporal, personal, and are on the way still higher. You will find flowers, in their season, everywhere. You will find the co-operative dairy flourishing—"the best of its kind in all Ireland." You will find the lace and crochet girls, some two hundred in all, working in a large, healthful building, with good pictures on the walls and flowers in the windows; you will see how skilful they are, how comely and bright and contented; and you will hear wonderingly, not so much that their rate of wages often is eighteen shillings a week, as that all this luxury of environment—the flowers, the pictures, the fittings, the co-operative lunch, the fine cheerful room—is the result of the exertions and contributions of the girls themselves. You will find a branch of the Gaelic League helping in the good work of regeneration, uplifting and educating the people, giving them the rules of well-being, health, conduct, fostering in them a love for all that is best in the heritage of Ireland—its ancient tongue and literature, its treasured story, its national life, its own good customs and

manners, amusements, festivals. And then, not wonderingly it may be, though in view of Ireland's record during the last fifty years or more the consummation is almost beyond belief, you will hear that not only has emigration ceased from the parish but immigration has begun. From the sweating dens of New York, from the factories of Lancashire, the people are coming back to Dromore. Actually!

It is a consummation in which Sir Horace Plunkett, his committee, his workers, and the far-seeing patriots who in 1901 founded the St. MacCartan's Society, may well take credit and pride. Yet results must not be exaggerated, or expectations unduly heightened. Even in Dromore only a beginning has been made, and Dromore is but a corner of Ireland. It seems hardly possible that those Ulster folk will ever slip back into the slough, will not make good the words that Sir Horace Plunkett, a while ago, spoke to them, "by carrying on the work, for their own sake and the sake of Ireland, with the same zeal, the same earnestness, the same true patriotism, and the same intelligence that has carried them so far." Still, it is seldom unwise, in most Irish matters, to prophesy only when we know; and we shall know more when Sir Horace has proved his scheme among the kindlier, if less strenuous, people of the South and West.

Yes; but a beginning actually has been made in this excellent enterprise of "implanting the principles of more cheerful living into the homes of the Irish people," and excellent results have come of it. The new Dromore is there; its uplifted people are there, proving indubitably, even through what they have already accomplished, that, in the words of Father Finlay, "at least one parish in Ireland can take up a programme of sober work and carry it out . . . can show to the world how even the least-favoured districts of this island may be made the happy home of a happy people." Let us remember that. And let us keep in view the spectacle of that little stream of Irish immigrants. Not emigrants. But *immigrants*.

SHAN F. BULLOCK.

THE BLACK SEA

THE Black Sea! And stormy, tumultuous, and black it indeed was when I crossed it in the end of October on a Russian steamer from Constantinople, our route being *viâ* Sebastopol, Yalta, Kertch, Novorossisk, Poti, and Batum. And yet as compared with the tempests that were then raging amongst the peoples who dwell on the northern and eastern shores of that sea, its tumbling waves were even peaceful, hospitable, and friendly.

Tho *Svätoi Nikolai* (Holy Nicholas) which carried myself and a few other passengers, but a heavy cargo, to Batum, was tossed like a nut-shell on the waves as they ran mountains high. I should never have believed that the Kara Denis of the Turks and the Chernoye More of the Russians could be, if I may use a topographical expression, so deeply trenched. After putting some of our passengers ashore on the Crimea, by the time we reached Novorossisk there were only three of us first-class passengers left—the Three Musketeers as we afterwards called ourselves, namely, Colonel Ileschenko from Van on the Persian frontier, a place lying south of Shusha, Consul Akimovitch, on his way to Bayazid, on the borders of Turkish Armenia and the Persian province of Azerbaijan, and myself. During the last stage of the journey we did not see much of each other. The sea ran so high, that to get to the saloon required something of the skill of an acrobat. We preferred to keep the horizontal in our berths. Every time

the vessel rolled, my outlook window, which was on the port-side, dipped a couple of yards under the water, but when she went over to the starboard I caught glimpses, two or three cable-lengths away, of the outline of the shore and the forest-clad creek of the Caucasus, already in part capped with snow, and glittering in the sunshine.

In the roadstead of Sukhum-Kaleh we lay to for several minutes, whilst some sinewy Abkhasians came off in the boats to fetch a few bales and packages. One of these men climbed up on board and said something to a young woman who was travelling second-class. She burst suddenly into tears, and her grief was so violent and so self-abandoned, that all attempts to comfort her failed. Her husband had been shot in a disturbance. But she was only one of thousands upon thousands of Russian women who are made to weep in these days! Her wailings continued to echo distressingly and inconsolably through the fitful gusts of the tempest to the end of the journey.

When we reached Poti the storm increased in violence. The sky was black as ink, and the rain beat violently on the deck and against the windows of the saloon. But we had only three hours more of it; at midnight the steamer "stamped" into the harbour of Batum. But what a landing! The rain pouring down in torrents, the night as black as pitch, not a street light visible, not a porter to be seen, no cabs or droshkies to be had, and, to crown all, the comforting intelligence that all railway traffic had ceased three days ago! In a word, we had dropped into the midst of the "great strike," which extended to labourers of every class, and was completely paralysing all commerce. By dint of the promise of a handsome reward, we induced two or three rough harbour loafers to help us with our luggage, and under cover of the darkness they guided us to the nearest "hotel." It was a veritable den of thieves, crowded with Georgians and all kinds of riff-raff. Our guides assured us that, if they were detected breaking the strike, they would be shot down without mercy, and, as

we learnt afterwards, in so saying they did not exaggerate one bit.

I was bound for Teheran. But why in the name of wonder should the spirit of unrest, now so rife in Russia, choose just at that very time to visit the Caucasus? You may well ask. When I left Constantinople on October 25, provided with two extra passports from the Russian Ambassador, M. Zinovieff, who had formerly been in Stockholm, Russia was comparatively quiet, and the railways, at any rate, were running without hindrance. I had the choice of three routes—(1) Batum, Tiflis, Baku, Reshd, Teheran; (2) Batum, Tiflis, Erivan, Nakitchevan, Tabriz, Teheran; (3) Trebizond, Erzerum, Bayazid, Khoi, Tabriz, Teheran. The first of these I was quite familiar with, and wanted to avoid it. With regard to the third route, that starting from Trebizond, I had been told in Constantinople, by Dr. Martin, that at that season of the year it was practically closed in consequence of rain and snow and the swollen state of the rivers, and the Persian Ambassador, Mirza Riza Khan, who also had formerly been Minister in Stockholm, dissuaded me from making such a long and tiring journey across the mountains of Asia Minor. In consequence of this, and with the view of saving time, I decided to travel *viâ* Erivan; from Batum five days would bring me to Tabriz, and two weeks more to Teheran. But the fates had decreed otherwise. I was forced to waste two valuable weeks, and at the present moment I am writing on board an Austrian steamer bound for Trebizond. If I had travelled from Constantinople to Trebizond direct I should by this be in Bayazid.

But have these two weeks really been wasted? No; I have unexpectedly had an opportunity of witnessing at first hand, at all events, one small scene in the gigantic struggle for freedom which is now shaking Russia to her foundations, and which, it seems to me, is the prelude to a revolution of the most stupendous character. I hasten to say that Batum, so long as I remained within the town, was entirety cut off from all communication with the rest of the world, even from such

places as Poti, Kutais, and Tiflis, all, comparatively speaking, in the same neighbourhood. All the telegraph lines were cut, the railways torn up, the postal service stopped. Thus for nearly two weeks I was without any news except what was brought by special messengers on horseback or by the boats from Russia, and that consisted of uncertain and contradictory rumours. It was for all the world like being shut up in a beleaguered town or being detained in compulsory confinement, surrounded by spies and brigands, in danger of one's life and loss of one's property. Not a day passed without murders and rifle-shots in our immediate vicinity. Hymns of mourning, white coffins, bareheaded drunken priests, weeping relatives, broadsides from the warships (four large ones and three small ones) in the harbour, patrols of Cossacks, mounted gendarmes, companies of infantry on the march—all armed to the teeth—these were the sights and sounds observable all day long from our windows.

Waiting is always trying to the patience; but to be tied hand and foot when you are dying to be in action is galling in the extreme. Yet these days passed rapidly enough—a continuously changing kaleidoscope of fantastic scenes, full of vivid contrasts, burning themselves in upon the memory.

After remaining one day the *Holy Nicholas* steamed back to Odessa, taking all her cargo with her, and the same thing happened to all the vessels which arrived subsequently, whether they came from Russia or from elsewhere. The losses must have run up to millions of roubles.

We spent the night in Versal's den, which was kept open in spite of wind and weather, so that every living creature inside it, men and animals alike, ran the risk of being dealt with as "strike-breakers." But early the next morning I made my way to the Hotel Frant ia, where I should, at any rate, have a roof over my head that was weatherproof. The hotel was closed and empty, the windows shuttered, and all the servants had run away, nobody being left except the landlord and two boys. However, I was given a room, though

they told me I should have to look after myself. There was precious little to eat and drink, nothing but a little bread and wine and some cold sturgeon several days old. Meat was not to be had for love or money; to make a fire was forbidden, though the samovar might be heated morning and evening. There was not even water to wash one's hands and face in; all the *sutchis* or "water-men," who usually retail water about the streets, had, like everybody else, gone out on strike, and I had to wash with the contents of mineral water bottles. It put me in mind of the privations of the Taklimakan, except that now the sea echoed stormily in my ears.

In the Frantsia I found also a Georgian prince. The very first evening we became warm friends and supped (!) together. He swore by all that was holy that he would guide me through the forests of Georgia and over the pass of Suram, and would bring me safe and sound to Tiflis; and a very good reason he had for saying so: he was himself a robber chief, and would have acted in collusion with the bandits. I thanked him politely for his kindly proffer, and was congratulated by my two travelling companions, who were certain I should very soon have been stripped of everything if I had accepted the man's guidance. No, there was nothing for it but patience—patience; but to be content to kick one's heels in such a miserable place as Batum one needed the patience of a saint.

The first day of our stay in Batum, namely, the last day of the month of October, we spent in trying to learn something of the position of affairs, and we soon became convinced that the strike was something different from an ordinary strike, however inflexible the discipline and vigour with which it was carried out; it was a political movement of a very serious character. The town lay as if in the stupefaction of sleep, and except for the reports of firearms the dreary cobbled streets, with their monotonous rows of ugly houses, were silent and empty, though at other times they are noisy enough with the rattle of carriages and freight waggons. All shops and offices

were closed, shuttered, locked and barred. A Georgian who had sold food secretly by the back-door to some of his customers received a warning in writing from the strike committee that he had been condemned to death, and would be shot on the following day. The respectable citizens kept within doors; nobody ventured abroad except loafers, spies, and riff-raff. Not a single woman was visible, except such as belonged to the off-scourings of the people. Public gatherings were forbidden, and it was only here and there that a small group of workmen was to be seen. Every carriage that appeared on the street was driven by a soldier, with his rifle close at his hand, and the occupants were invariably officers. The only folk on horseback were Cossacks, and they patrolled the town backwards and forwards in every direction. All the public buildings were guarded by military; the banks in especial were closely watched. Soldiers were always on guard outside the Hotel Frantsia.

Numbers of boys, ten to twelve years of age, prowled about the streets; to all appearance they wore the most innocent air, but in reality they were the spies of the strike committee, and reported everything they saw, particularly every breach of the committee's regulations. Even the foreign consulates were kept closed, and it was only by back ways that one was able to get at the consuls; at all events, that was the case with regard to the two whom I visited. The merchant was unable to visit his office; if he did, he was at once reported by the boy spies, and might esteem himself lucky if nothing worse befell him than to have all his windows broken and himself get a good drubbing. In some cases he would be informed by letter that he had to pay such and such a sum of money in ransom for his life. To enter a bank was considered to be in the highest degree dangerous—you ran a risk of being robbed on your way home. Nevertheless, I went to the Tiflis Commercial Bank and got an advance on my credit note, and managed to reach the hotel unmolested.

As for the economic strike, the railway men were demanding

an increase in their wages to the extent of 40 per cent., namely, an advance from twenty-five to thirty-five roubles a month. And in conjunction with them the terrorists were labouring with remarkable—indeed, with irresistible—energy, and were cleverly making use of the general discontent to further their own ends for the dissolution of society. They were stirring up the people with revolutionary addresses in secret meetings. They declared that the Czar was already deposed and driven out of the country, and that Witte was President of the Russian Republic; the time was come for the people to take the power into their own hands; all property was going to be divided justly; the poor would get land and bread. Away with tyranny! Down with the rule of the autocrat! Down with slavery! Speeches of this character were cheered to the echo by the uncritical crowd, whose imaginations were feasting on the good things which the immediate future was to bring them. Every man you met on the street may be a leader of the terrorist party or an agent of the same. The passers-by looked at one another with suspicion. It was as though the entire inhabitants of the place lived in momentary expectation of something dreadful happening.

On the countenances of the more distinguished amongst the Caucasians—and they were mostly Georgians with fur caps and long coats and cartridge bandoliers slung across their shoulder—the prevailing expression was one of satisfaction. They were manifestly delighted at the serious difficulties against which the Russian authorities had to contend; they were clearly comforting themselves with the hope that the sway of the Russians over their formerly free Caucasia was now approaching its end.

The Governor issued a proclamation forbidding any man, whosoever he might be, to show himself abroad after 6 P.M.—a more than doubtful pleasure in any case, when the streets were as dark as midnight, and you ran the risk of being shot down at any moment. If the terrorists suspected any person of possessing a revolver they at once swooped down upon him

and appropriated it for their own use. In this way they had, I understood, become possessed of a very considerable supply of weapons. The Cossacks and soldiers had received orders to seize at once all the fire-arms they could get hold of, except such as belonged to the military.

On October 31 there were eight murders in Batum, five of the victims being soldiers and one a gendarme. The acting captain of police was attacked by a band of the terrorist party and shot in the cheek, but his life was saved by the peak of his cap; and had he not had the presence of mind to drop from his horse and lie as if dead, he would have had two or three more bullets into him. Thereupon a fight took place which cost three of the attacking party their lives, whilst several more were wounded. This took place in broad daylight. After the first two or three days I ceased to pay any particular heed to the report of fire-arms, although it was very painful to hear them echoing through the stillness of the night.

That same night there was a serious affray in the Turkish bazaar. A hundred Cossacks or so went galloping past my window on their way to the scene of the disturbance. A volley was fired, then another, and another; but only a few people were wounded, for the soldiers fired for the most part into the air. After that the bazaar was cleared by the Cossacks with their *nagaikas* (whips). That same evening the warships in the harbour fired about a score of shots from their big guns, so that all the windows rattled in their frames, conveying a reminder of the power of Russia, and a threat of bombardment if any further outbreak occurred. And all night long the searchlights of the war vessels played upon the town, lighting up brilliantly the windows of the houses that looked upon the sea, and etching here and there on the black background of the night the outline of a white Turkish minaret with startling vividness. Restless, searching, penetrating, those cold, inquisitive eyes of the armoured warships swept over the unhappy town all through the hours of that long October night. Listen! A shot under my very window! The clatter of

horses' hoofs die away in the distance; all is again silent. Has another human being lost his life?

Next day, November 1, a peaceable Turk from Trebizond came to Batum, paid a visit to the Turkish bazaar, and was on his way home when a patrol of two or three Cossacks overtook him, and cried, "Stoi! (Stop)." The Turk walked on unheeding. There followed a second challenge, and a third. The Turk paid no heed. The Cossacks then, obeying the order that had been given to them to shoot without further ado any man who refused to obey their triple challenge, shot the Turk dead in the street.

Neither the Colonel nor the consul nor I found the time heavy on our hands. Every evening we took a turn on the shore boulevard, then clothed in tropical greenery, but by dusk we had generally sought the shelter of our hotel, though occasionally curiosity led us out again about nine; but we were never molested. On the evening of November 2 we lingered a little longer than usual on a seat by the shore. The sun had just set over Trebizond, in a blaze of blood-red fire, but a vivid yellow reflection still hung above the level waters of the Black Sea. The evening was silent and still. A steamer was slowly labouring towards Trebizond, its outline showing up as black as midnight against the fiery yellow background. In the north we saw the crest of the Caucasus, capped with snowfields, but faint and evanescent as in a dream, like an interplay of pure vanishing colour. In the north-west the mountains faded away softly into an impalpable mist. The sea was like a mirror, except that a flat swell dimpled its surface. The mountains motionless and solemn like ghosts, not a breath of wind moved. The earth was at perfect peace. But man—man alone was restless, man alone was evil!

The next day I was present at a funeral. A police-constable had been shot on his beat and was to be interred. It was a touching service, the silver-white coffin in the midst of the tall lighted candles, the priests and acolytes singing funeral hymns, and the clouds of incense enwreathing the ceremony

in mystic vapour. The service finished, the funeral procession set forth. First marched a man with a big crucifix, then followed another with a wreath, and two more carrying church banners; then came the priest with a little cross in his hand, and behind him the coffin, borne by officers of rank, amongst them the Governor himself—a touching and ennobling sight. The rear of the procession consisted of the friends and relatives of the dead man, a company of infantry, two bands of music, playing solemn funeral marches alternately, the music being thoroughly Russian, melancholy and monotonous, but high-pitched, so that its echoes affected the listener with a sense of impressive solemnity as they floated up over the slumbering town. The procession was closed by a troop of mounted Cossacks, while on each side the streets were lined with crowds of onlookers. Who was the dead man? Was the abrupt termination of his life but the atonement for some great sin he had committed? Not at all; he was but one victim amongst many, many thousands of an antiquated and unjust system, which, like this poor victim himself, is now, unless all indications are false, on its way to the grave.

But the Governor and other distinguished officers soon quitted their positions as pall-bearers, their places being taken by comrades of the dead man. At the corner of a street a carriage was waiting. The Governor and his adjutant stepped in, and off started the horses at full gallop, so that none but a really skilled marksman could have hit him. Meanwhile the funeral procession moved slowly and solemnly along the street, the sorrowful music grew fainter and fainter in the distance, and finally the white uniforms disappeared from sight.

The Governor, General Parkan, was amiability itself, and amid all the tumult and disorder by which he was surrounded exhibited the utmost *sang-froid*. But it was evident to me that his charming wife, and still more charming daughters, were very uneasy on his account, and they did not leave him out of their sight even when he retired to his study, for he was overwhelmed with work. He was a man who would die at his

post with unperturbed serenity of mind. He was, however, exposed to far greater danger than anybody else. The threats of the terrorists are directed in the first place against the military and the police, the hapless instruments of a wretched tyranny.

But time will not allow me to dwell upon further episodes of my stay in Batum. My chief concern was by hook or by crook to get safely to Teheran; but day by day, though I still waited, the railway station remained deserted and without sign of life, but always inflexibly guarded by the soldiery. The bridge over the River Rion had been blown up, and the rails torn up in numerous places. Company after company of sappers were despatched from Batum to Tiflis to repair the line and the bridge; but whilst they were making good the damage at one spot the rails were destroyed at another. A heavy military train was sent from Kutais to Poti, but it left the line before it reached the first station, eight persons being killed and twenty-three severely injured, while a colonel had both his legs cut off. The preparations for the catastrophe had been made with diabolical cunning. The rails were in their places and everything appeared to be in perfect order; but over a distance of about 200 yards the iron bolts which fasten them to the sleepers had been removed. The engine and some of the carriages passed the danger in safety, but the rest of the train was wrecked.

Under these circumstances we could not expect a very pleasant or very comfortable journey to Tiflis, nevertheless we were fully resolved to risk it. Every day there came news of this or the other body of engineers having been attacked whilst at work, and of bloody encounters between them and the strikers. The first train that was to be despatched to Tiflis would be protected by a strong body of military, and we were informed that 5000 men had been sent from Tiflis to keep guard over the line.

On the evening of November 4 I went to see the Governor again, and he assured me that a train would probably be able

to start within about three days, but that it would be a long time on the road, and at every stretch of broken line and at every ruined bridge we should have to change trains. With the view of confirming this opinion he telephoned to the engineer-in-chief in charge of the railway; the reply was that the connection between Poti and Kutais was restored, and that it would probably be possible to get on from Kutais to Tiflis. I at once made up my mind to proceed to Poti with the steamboat which was to start that same evening for Odessa, and the Governor very kindly gave me an authorisation to travel with the first military train that should leave Poti for Kutais.

I hurried off, hunted up the other two "musketeers," and we had only just time to get our baggage packed, our hotel bills paid, and to scramble on board. At midnight we landed at Poti, the night pitch dark and the rain coming down in torrents. Here, however, we found cabs at least. The Colonel and the Consul drove up into the town, which is a good mile and a quarter from the quayside; but I had to stay behind to look after my mass of baggage (nearly seven hundredweight altogether) and get it safely under cover in a shed. When I at length set off to follow them, the rain beat upon the hood of the carriage and splash-splashed in the slush on the road. But we got safely over the two bridges that span the Rion, notwithstanding that here and there a plank was wanting. In the very first street that I entered I was stopped by Cossacks; but when they found that my papers were all in order they allowed me to proceed. Every hotel was packed full of travellers wanting to go on to Tiflis; and it was not until well on towards morning that we succeeded in finding a wretched room in a fourth-class hotel, situated on an island surrounded by marshes, from which fever-breeding miasmas were being exhaled.

In that horrible hole we were detained four days, having for company rats as big as rabbits. Nevertheless, we kept our courage up and were in excellent spirits; in fact, as merry and

sportive as students. One advantage I enjoyed, in getting a few good lessons in Russian, though I will swear the other two "musketeers" did not learn a single word of Swedish during the whole of the four days. The station-master of Poti, M. Lopatin, who had married a fascinating Swedish lady, was the only railway official left on duty; all the rest had gone on strike. He, however, lived in a state of perpetual siege, and his life was in danger. It was quite touching to witness his wife's anxiety on his account, and good reason she had to be disquieted, for four of the station-masters between Poti and Tiflis had already been murdered. M. Lopatin advised us to wait; he believed a strong military train would arrive at Tiflis in a day or two; he could, he said, send us as far as Samtredi at any time, for as far as that point the line was clear. Every day we visited these excellent and hospitable people, one of them a Swede, the other a Russian, and yet so happy together.

At noon on November 8 I went to pay my usual visit at the Lopatins. A soldier directed me to a goods' shed in the vicinity, in which the railwaymen were holding a meeting. It began at 9 A.M. and did not close until 1 P.M. It was rather interesting to listen for nearly an hour to the exposition of their political opinions. Some of the speakers put forward absurd demands and impossible proposals for the distribution and redivision of all property. A violent attack was made upon Lopatin because he had held aloof from the general strike and refused to participate in it, and one unblushing scoundrel proposed to kill him on the spot. But another speaker took the station-master's part, and reminded the meeting that Lopatin had always championed the cause of the workmen. Finally a couple of Georgians came forward; but as they spoke in their mother-tongue I understood nothing of what they said, except a few borrowed words, such as *revolutsii*, *liberalnii*, *parti*, *politika*, *autonomiya*, *socialdemokrati*, and other similar significant and encouraging expressions. It was dark and stuffy in the shed, the floor of which was strewn with straw. Those of the audience who stood near the two doors were

alone in the light, all the rest were wrapped in almost fuliginous gloom. But I saw that they were of mixed races—wild Caucasian types—Georgians, Gurians, Lesghians, Emeritians, Mingrelians, and all the rest of them. The discussion was still being continued with unabated vigour when I and Lopatin left the meeting; the only resolution upon which they could come to any agreement was, that they would not work.

On the whole there appears to be an absence of method in the agitation, and a study of only a few days is insufficient to give one a clear idea of what the real tendencies of the movement are. In great part the impelling motives are economical, agrarian, and social democratic; but, as far as I was able to judge, it is the political character which predominates. It is no longer of any use to attempt to moderate these breaking seas of revolt by liberal manifestoes: the people just laugh at them. It is too late to offer the right of public meeting and freedom of the press: the people now demand full political freedom and the eradication of autocratic government; they are determined to participate themselves in the work of government. And there is also a third movement, which profits from the general confusion, namely, that fomented by the purely revolutionary and insurrectionary elements, who have roused certain Caucasian tribes and put them on a war footing. The leaders of this movement aim at complete separation from Russia, an ambition for which they will sooner or later have to pay pretty smartly. The Georgians are a warlike race, who were involved in incessant feuds with their neighbours, with Persia, Turkey, and lastly with Russia. They are delighted, after the long spell of peace, at the present opportunity to try their weapons again: they are wild mountain tribes, brave warriors, who live in the saddle, despise death, and set little value on human life. In Guria, the southern half of the Russian government of Kutais, they are at this present time in open revolt against their conquerors; and so far as I can gather, the only prospect of a return to peace is the separation of Caucasia from Russia, the alternative being a bloody war on

the part of Russia and the extermination of tens of thousands of the rebels.

Is it not civil war when a body of a hundred and fifty Cossacks are surrounded, as they were lately at Osurgeti, by a couple of thousand of well-armed Georgians? The captain of the little force sent off a messenger to Batum to ask for help. The messenger never arrived. A second who was sent after him was captured, and a third and a fourth disappeared. At last the fifth messenger, a Mussulman, succeeded in getting through and in reaching Batum in safety. A reinforcement of about two hundred men with four machine-guns was sent out from Poti. But my friend the colonel considered that they were bound on a desperate errand, for they would have to force their way through narrow passes and defiles, where they could be ambushed by marksmen hidden in the woods that crown the heights above, and so be shot down one after the other without a chance of defending themselves. Meanwhile intelligence came in from various quarters that the beleaguered Cossack force had been killed to the last man. All this time the detached parties of sappers who were engaged in repairing the railway line were being continually attacked, and every attack cost some soldiers their lives. A guerilla war surely, if ever there was one!

The latest information that Lopatin had to give me contained but the coldest of comfort. The railway which had hitherto been intact as far as Samtredi, had been torn up again between the latter place and Poti. We discussed together the various routes that were open, or rather closed to me, between Poti and Teheran. I saw it was hopeless to wait for a train for Tiflis and Erivan. How would it be if I were to try the route *viâ* Novorossisk, Vladikavkas, and the Georgian military road, or go to Petrovsk and Baku? No, that would not do. The strike no doubt extended as far as that, although it was impossible to obtain any certain information in the matter. The colonel proposed that we should ride from Batum to Arvrin and Kars, and thence make our way along

the frontier to Erivan. But one or two Georgians earnestly dissuaded me from attempting it, for I should be certain to be plundered by some band of robbers or other; in these unquiet times these gentry were much more active than usual. I had nothing I knew to fear for my life; but what use should I be without my scientific instruments and without money? It would no doubt be interesting and romantic enough to plod back to Batum in rags and tatters, but I could not afford the time for such risky experiments.

All at once I made up my mind to turn my back upon this inhospitable land of Colchis and make for Trebizond, and thence journey to Teheran by way of Erzerum, Bayazid, Khoi, and Tabriz. That route was, it is true, not safe, but it was a great deal better than any route through Caucasia. It would take three weeks longer than the route through Erivan; but, on the other hand, it would give me an opportunity to learn something of Turkish Armenia, the mountains of Asia Minor, and proud Ararat. Once past Bayazid I should be past all danger, for I had with me an autograph letter from the King of Sweden to Muzaffer ed-Din, Shah of Persia, and the frontier authorities had been informed of this by Mirza Riza Khan, who moreover had himself given me letters to the Valiad or Crown Prince of Persia, and to the Governor-general of the Province of Uzerbaijan.

All I required therefore was to secure permission to land at Trebizond. When in Constantinople I had taken no steps to procure such permission; I had in fact not seen the necessity for it, because I had then no intention of touching Asiatic Turkey. I sent a wire *viâ* Novorossisk and Odessa to Baron Ramel, our Minister at the Sublime Porte, asking his kindly assistance. Fortunately he had already introduced me to Tewfik Pasha, the Foreign Minister, and to Ferid Pasha, the Grand Vizier. They would consequently know that I should prove no menace to the power of the Crescent or the stability of the Sublime Porte. My resolve taken, I hurried down to the steamship office in Poti to find out when the next

boat started for Batum. The agent was unable to tell me, he had had no telegrams lately, and believed that the boats had ceased to run because of the strike. But whilst we were still talking a messenger ran in to say that the steamer *Alexei* was just entering the harbour. We hurried down to the pier. The captain told us of the horrors which had been perpetrated in Odessa. He proposed remaining at Poti all night; so that, after seeing all my luggage stowed on board, I had time to dine for the last time with the other two "musketeers," who had decided to try the route *viâ* Novorossisk. At dusk I went on board, and spent a peaceful night in a magnificent cabin.

At 8 A.M. on the morning of October 9 I once more steamed southwards, bound for Batum. The captain of the *Alexei* told me I should have to wait there ten days for the next boat to Trebizond, and that foreign steamboats no longer touched at Batum, owing to the impossibility of getting their cargoes discharged. But there were, I knew, several vessels lying in the harbour waiting to be unloaded, and as I could not, and *would* not, lose any more time on the coast of Colchis, I resolved to try and hire one of them, though it would cost me at least £50. Another plan would be to engage a Turkish sailing-boat, though that would require several days longer to reach Trebizond, and if a storm were to burst from the north the voyage would be dangerous. Anyway, let the cost be what it would, I was now bound for Trebizond. The *Alexei* glided slowly into the harbour, greeted by three shots from one of the streets of the town. As we entered we brushed past an Austrian steamboat, the *Saturno*, from Trieste. I hailed the captain and asked him when he left Batum? "In two hours' time," he answered!

Well, I must go with him. But I had no passport for Turkish territory. Away I hurried on foot—there was of course no cab to be got—to the Austrian consulate, to the police-station to get my passport *visé'd*, to the office of the Russian steam-boat company, to the office of the Austrian Lloyds, and there I learnt that in consequence of a Russian

police regulation the *Saturno* would not take any passengers with her. I besought the Agent by all the powers to let me go with the *Saturno*. At last he gave way, and promised to report my departure to the police, but he urged me to hurry up; there was only half an hour left before the boat started. If the police refused to let me go I should just have to submit to my fate.

Back I hastened to the *Alexei*. But how in the world was I going to get my heavy packages transferred from the Russian to the Austrian steamboat in that blessed port? there wasn't so much as a dog to help one. A fine fellow that captain of the *Alexei!* He let his sailors lower a boat from the davits and row me and my baggage across to the accommodation ladder of the *Saturno*. At the foot I was met by her captain, a weather-beaten sea-bear. He roared at me like a lion, and told me, literally, to go to the devil, for he was forbidden to carry passengers. I replied that my papers were all in order, and that smoothed him down a bit, and he condescended to allow his men to get my baggage on board, and a ticklish job it was, owing to the swell that was on. It was quite a relief to me when I saw the last package safely hoisted on deck, and, once established there, I felt pretty certain that nothing but the crane would get me and my belongings overboard again. During the two hours or so that I had been racing about Batum I had heard that a police officer had just been shot and that the revolutionaries were planning a general massacre of the citizens, who were on the point of hiring an English steamboat to carry them to Trebizond. I had had quite enough of that hole of a place, and was eager to get to a fresh and better country. Strange that one should long to get away from Russia amongst Persians, Turks, and Tartars in order to secure safety for one's life and property!

Meanwhile the captain of the *Saturno* was pacing the deck growling like a Polar bear. "What was the object of my journey?" "Geographical discovery." "Oh! indeed; and do you take any interest in philatelic discoveries?" "No, but

I have just bought some Persian stamps; would you like to see them?" "Of course, he would." He put aside those he did not already possess and asked if I would sell them to him? I offered to make a present of them, and after sundry "Ohs" and "Buts" he accepted them. After that we were on the best of terms, I and the captain of the *Saturno*. What a stroke of luck that I should have come across those Persian stamps and bought them out of mere caprice.

My ticket, which I bought on board, cost me 13*s*. I had saved not only ten days but also £49 7*s*.! One minute after I got on board the *Saturno* was off. When my passport came to be examined, it turned out that I had forgotten the most important thing of all, namely, the *visé* of the Turkish Consul. "You won't be allowed to land without it," declared the captain. "The Turkish authorities at Trebizond are wonderfully strict." "Here's a nice fix!" thought I; "but it will all come right somehow, I've no doubt." And I became too engrossed with watching the houses and minarets and churches of Batum disappearing in the distance to worry very much about the difficulties of the future.

Next day the *Saturno* anchored in the roads of Trebizond. The police made no end of fuss; my passport was not *visé'd!* They treated me as if I were afflicted with the plague. But I stopped their mouths by citing my acquaintance with the late Osman Pasha and Mumi Pasha, with Tewfik Pasha and Ferid Pasha, and several other distinguished pashas, and swore that I had been a guest at the table of Abdul Hamid himself at Yildiz Kiosk. But the thing which impressed them most was the fact of my being a countryman of Temir Bash or Charles XII. of Sweden. This was not the first time his name had helped me at a pinch in the Orient. I was allowed to land; but the little hand-bag which I carried with me was turned inside out even to the very tooth-brush, and two or three French novels by Alphonse Daudet and François Coppée were confiscated, as well as a map of Persia. One hour later I was safe under the protection of the English and French

consuls, who overwhelmed me with kindness and hospitality. The bells are tinkling underneath my window: they are those of the caravans about to start for Persia with the goods that were refused a landing at Batum. The lamps are being lighted along the balconies of the minarets; the muezzin is crying his musical "La illaha il Allah!" into the peaceful afternoon of Ramadan. The Turks are gathering for their evening meal. Peace and prosperity reign in this beautiful seaside town, with the Black Sea rolling in against the foot of the promontory on which it stands. But here I must stop for the present.

SVEN HEDIN.

INDIAN FEUDATORY STATES AND THE PARAMOUNT POWER

ATTENTION was recently called, by a telegram to the *Times*, to the fact that of the first fifteen hundred miles travelled over by the Prince and Princess of Wales in India about two-thirds were within the territory of Feudatory States not under direct British administration. Many hundreds of miles remain to be traversed in similar territory before the visit is concluded in March next. In respect of the number of native capitals to be visited, and the extent of native territory to be passed over, the royal tour of 1905–6 far surpasses that of 1875–76, and, though the King, when he visited India as Prince of Wales, made the personal acquaintance of a very great number of princes, his son will be able to see many more in their own homes, and a still greater number at convenient points in British territory. The cause of the difference is to be sought chiefly in the immense increase of the facilities of travel, and in the obliteration, by means of railway extension, of the barriers of distance which formerly equally prohibited visits by the Prince to out-of-the-way places like Udaipur, and the attendance of the less wealthy chiefs on the far-off line of route. The line followed thirty years ago generally skirted native territory, merely throwing off, here and there, short branches to Bhartpur and Jaipur, to Gwalior and Indore. This year the Prince of Wales will be able to devote between one-fourth and one-third of his whole time in the country to

visits to the Feudatory Princes. A still larger proportion would have been given but for the unfortunate prevalence of drought, necessitating the curtailment to the tour in States which must devote their surplus revenues to the relief of their afflicted subjects, and could ill afford the heavy expenditure inseparable from the reception of the Heir Apparent in a manner worthy of his dignity, and that of his hosts.

As will presently be explained, the King's visit of thirty years ago was the first great landmark of a new departure in the relationship between the Indian States and the protecting Power. At that time, the position was not generally understood even in India; by the majority of stay-at-home Englishmen it was not understood at all. The average official in India, serving in a district anywhere near the borders of a native State, was apt to regard it as a sort of misgoverned Alsatia, a refuge for the criminals of his own charge, and a convenient base for their future operations, in the shape of predatory descents on a territory which was no longer safe for their permanent residence. The only good point which he saw about his neighbour lay in the possibility of holding him up as an object lesson to those who were not satisfied with their lot under a more enlightened government. Such views were, perhaps, far from uncommon in quarters much higher than the office of the district magistrate. There they have now given place to a truer conception of the functions of the States, and of the chiefs who rule one-third of the whole area of India, containing one-fifth of its total population. For that we have to thank a series of far-seeing Viceroys, the last of whom has but now relinquished office. With ever increasing zeal they have sought to lead the chiefs in the direction of government based on modern ideas, without forcing on them the rigidity of Western theories of finance and administration, repugnant to the princes, and out of harmony with the ancient traditions of their predecessors and their subjects. Moreover, whilst maintaining clearly that the chiefs are not independent sovereigns, free to give or withhold their alliance, it has been

sought more and more to impress upon them that their position is that of honoured coadjutors in the work of Empire, having almost as large a stake in the maintenance of a strong and peaceful paramount Power as we ourselves have. It has been alleged that, in 1876, the Prince of Wales found occasion, in some cases, to complain of the attitude of the Government's agents towards the chiefs to whose courts they were accredited. Whether the statement be well- or ill-founded, it is certain that the so-called Political Service has been much improved of late years, and that appointments, which formerly were often due to interest and patronage, are now invariably bestowed only on officers of tried capacity and tact.

In order to understand clearly the position of the great body of States, it is necessary to glance briefly at their existing condition, and at the lights which are thrown on it by their past history. The by no means satisfactory term " feudatory " is not meant to apply to those frontier States, such as Nepal or Bhutan, towards which the British Government holds the position of a powerful ally, guaranteeing their autonomy and never interfering in their internal concerns. Nor does it apply to the fluid tribal organisations which are to be found on parts of the frontier, from Baluchistan to Burma. Of the principalities geographically situated on the borderland, Kashmir and the Himalayan States between it and Nepal alone come within the description.

The States referred to number in all, great and small, 690, which gives to each an average area of something under 1000 square miles, with a population of about 100,000 souls, But these figures are deceptive, for ten of the larger States alone account for nearly half the total area, and for more than half the population of the whole body. Even amongst these ten there is a variation from Hyderabad, with its 83,000 square miles, inhabited by 11,000,000 of people, to Kolhapur, with a population under 1,000,000, settled on less than 3000 square miles. The 680 remaining States dwindle down to include microscopic principalities, sometimes hardly

distinguishable from private estates, which bear about the same relation in magnitude to Hyderabad or Mysore as some of the very smallest German principalities of the eighteenth century bore to Prussia or Austria. Widely as the States differ from one another in area and population, their variations in compactness or dissemination are at least as great. A glance at the map of India serves to show how widely they are distributed over the continent, but no map of manageable dimensions could indicate the internal complexity of such groups of States as those included in the Central India Agency, or the 363 supervised by the Bombay Government. Not infrequently, half a dozen adjoining villages will be found to belong to as many different States. The only familiar map giving an idea of a similar interlacing of territories in Europe is one showing Germany as it was at the beginning of last century. Beginning at the north of the map of India Kashmir comes first, a compact State with definite boundaries. The Himalayan States east of it, and those interspersed with British territory in the Punjab, form a geographical connecting link between Kashmir and the great central area stretching across India, from the Indus nearly to the Bay of Bengal. It interposes a great belt, containing the majority of the 690 States, between Northern and Southern India. A narrow strip of British territory flanks it on either side; otherwise, there is but a single continuous band of red cutting through its centre near Jhansi. South of this belt, in the peninsular area, are the large blocks of Hyderabad and Mysore, both completely surrounded by British districts. Lastly there is the extreme south-west corner of India, where Travancore and Cochin lie between the ocean and the Madras Presidency. All these represent, on the map, fairly continuous patches of the colour indicating countries beyond the direct control of the Viceroy and his lieutenants. But there are many places in which the impression is conveyed of a careless colourist allowing splashes from his brush to fall outside the boundary. All along the outlines of the great areas of native territory,

there is a ragged ill-defined edge, where State villages form enclaves in the red area, or where British villages lie within the general border line of the States. Yet again, there are larger islands, as it were, of native territory in the midst of the ocean of the British dominions, as where Rampur is surrounded by districts of the United Provinces, where Kuch Behar and Hill Tipperah break the continuity of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, where Pudukota is isolated amongst the territories of Madras, or where fragments of Sivaji's kingdom still remain in the midst of the Bombay Governor's charge. But there is a more important difference than mere size and position in the relationship of the ruling powers towards their subjects, a difference based on the history of their rise. Some chiefs, just as much as the English themselves, are aliens governing a subjugated population, with the bulk of which they have no ties of race, or religion, or even of language. Others, again, are the hereditary heads of warlike clans who form the majority of their subjects. Nearly all trace their descent from a conqueror, but in the last-named class the conquest is of an antiquity so great that it has long been as completely forgotten, even by the displaced aborigines, as the Saxon or Norman conquests have been in England. Elsewhere, the conquest was still in progress when the East India Company was fighting its way to Empire. Here, as in Kashmir, a Hindu governs a population mainly Mahomedan; there, as in Hyderabad or Bhopal, a people, of whom more than nine-tenths are Hindus, acknowledges a Mahomedan dynasty. There are princely houses whose unbroken succession is lost in a dim mythical antiquity; there are others who date their royalty from the rebellious Viceroy casting off the loose fetters of an effete Empire; some can claim no nobler progenitor than the Afghan adventurer, building up hi kingdom on the ruins marking the line of his devastations. Few can claim that the consolidation of their power, in its existing extent, is of greater antiquity than the British. Mysore owes its restoration to a Hindu dynasty to the

destruction of Tippu Sultan's power by English arms. Tippu had already been compelled by the same Power to disgorge what he had annexed in Travancore. Ancient Rajput States were still being plundered and dismembered by Mahratta, or Pindari, when a greater Power than either stepped in to crystallise the existing territorial distribution.

Sir William Lee-Warner has divided the history of the relations between the British and the native powers into three periods. Up to 1813, the East Indian Company, itself engaged in a bitter struggle to fix its foot firmly on the vast territory which it was still acquiring, had its hands too full to interfere with its neighbours, except where treaties of alliance were necessary for the furtherance of its own designs. It stood aside from their quarrels, indifferent to the fall of Rajput principalities before the onslaught of the Mahratta, and to the contest of Hindu and Mahomedan, so long as the conqueror did not threaten its own power. By 1813 its strength had enormously increased, its territories had spread around many areas of disturbance, and it became clear that a continuance of fighting within the geographical boundaries of its dominions must, sooner or later, re-act on its own subjects. From 1813 to 1857 its policy was, to quote Sir W. Lee-Warner,

> one of isolating the Native States, and subordinating them to the political ascendency of the British Power. The expressions of "mutual alliance" and "reciprocal agreement" are exchanged for the phrases "subordinate alliance," "protection," and "subordinate co-operation."

The policy was, however, largely tempered by annexation. To this period belonged the annexation of the Nagpore State and of Oudh, the former as an escheat, the latter on the ground of misgovernment of an intolerable type. The annexations of Sind and the Punjab stand on a somewhat different footing, seeing that they represent expansion beyond the then existing outer limits of the British dominions.

With the final restoration of internal tranquillity after 1857, the third period of policy was initiated. Annexations within the frontiers of India ceased. The free grant to the chiefs of the

right of adoption of a successor, a concession on which the most liberal interpretation has been generally put, goes far to prevent lapses of States for want of a direct heir, and it is only in the event of failure to exercise this power, on the part of a childless chief, that the onus of finding a successor falls on the British Government. It is not a burden that it seeks, or desires, to bear. It much prefers to see the succession determined by birth, or, failing that, by the decision of the chief himself. Cases must still occur where the Viceroy is called upon to select a successor, but it is beyond all possibility of doubt that the last course he would wish to pursue is the enforcement of lapse to the paramount Power. That annexation, on any conceivable ground, is entirely foreign to modern British policy, has been gradually borne in upon the States by numerous object-lessons since 1857. It is safe to say that none of them have now any fear of it. There have been plenty of opportunities for it since the absorption of Oudh, but advantage has never been taken of them. When Mulhar Rao, Gaekwar of Baroda, was deposed, in 1875, for continued misgovernment, and crimes as atrocious as those which sealed the fate of Oudh, a child from another branch of his family was nominated as his heir. When the Maharaja of Jhallawar was deposed, a few years ago, his possessions were divided between the parent State, from which they had sprung sixty years before, and a representative of his own house. The refusal to annex Manipur, after the rebellion of its ruling family, and the treacherous murder of British officers in 1891, was a still more notable instance. The sense of security was not weakened by the conquest of Upper Burma, for King Thebaw was recognised by the Indian chiefs as holding a position in no way analogous to their own.

The establishment of this feeling of security was the first great step towards the closer drawing together of suzerain and feudatory. The events of 1857, whilst allaying in some cases unfounded suspicions, still left doubts and distrust in others on both sides. The attitude of the States in the midst of the

great danger had been almost universally friendly to the British, and, that being so, their geographical position itself had been of great assistance in the restoration of peace. Lord Canning has indicated this by writing "these patches of native government served as a breakwater to the storm which would otherwise have swept over us in one great wave." The great central belt of States played a specially marked part, for, so long as its general attitude was favourable to British dominion, there was little chance of the seditious elements of the North filtering through the bulkhead to corrupt the South. The Rajput States, of which it contains so many, were bound by every tie of interest and of gratitude to us. With those whose rulers maintained their power over a conquered race by means of mercenary armies, the case was different, for the disappearance of the controlling Power would mean to them fresh opportunities of aggression against their weaker neighbours. The chiefs themselves remained loyal, though in many cases their armed forces broke loose, to join the Northern rebels, Nevertheless, though the British Power emerged triumphant from the great struggle, there had been a time when the result hung in the balance, and for years afterwards there remained, in the minds of some chiefs, doubts as to whether the ruling power was absolutely invincible. One of them, a man ruling a conquered population by force of arms, was asked whether, in the event of the elimination of European Power, he would turn against a neighbour whose position was similar to his own, or would march to the plunder of another, the ruler of a people in sympathy with his own house. The promptitude of the answer showed that the hypothesis was not regarded as altogether absurd. "I should," he said, "destroy —— first, since there is no room for two tigers in one jungle." He had indicated the Power similar to his own, and he continued, "then I should be free to plunder ——," naming the State in which the ruling house was not foreign, like his own. These suspicions of the British "Raj" stability are probably now almost, if not quite, extinct.

On the other side, too, notwithstanding the part played by the chiefs in 1857, it took some time to allay suspicions of the genuine loyalty of rulers whose interest lay, perhaps, in a return to the old days of adventure and war. As doubts gradually died down, it became clear that the true policy was one which should bind the subordinate States to the sovereign Power by a common interest, an interest which might replace the excitement of personal ambition, and afford some scope for the exercise of those martial qualities which, with the restoration of internal tranquillity, had no opening in India itself. The first great steps in this direction were taken when the Prime Minister of England was a statesman whose imagination and origin specially qualified him for dealing with Orientals. The ancient States, dragooned into submission to the Moghul Empire, had long been accustomed to the idea of the personality of an Emperor at Agra or Delhi, who, to their minds, was very inadequately represented by the corporate entity of "John Company."

The visit to India of the Prince of Wales in 1875–76 first bore in clearly on them the existence of a new personality, occupying, in London, the same position towards them as had been formerly held by the Delhi Emperors. The idea was strengthened by the proclamation of the new Empire at Delhi, so soon after the Prince's visit that it was impossible for any one not to connect the two events. It was still further fortified by what was seen by the Princes who attended the two Jubilees of Queen Victoria and the Coronation of King Edward, as well as by those who have, of late years, so frequently visited England. This year the personality of the Emperor is being once more impressed on hundreds of the chiefs by the visit of his Heir Apparent. It is this side of the Prince's tour which perhaps gives it its greatest significance. On this appreciation of the personality of an Emperor is based the proposal, put forward at intervals in India, and again being ventilated there at the present juncture, that a member of the Imperial family should permanently represent its head in India itself.

Lord Dufferin's training had served to endow him, before he reached India, with a clearer idea of Oriental sentiment than is usually possessed by a new Viceroy. He was prompt to seize the opportunity, which came to his hand in 1885, for still further consolidating the growing conception of an Empire in which the Native States could play the part of partners and coadjutors of the Suzerain Power in defence of a settled government, in the maintenance of which they recognised their own best interests. When war with Russia seemed imminent, this sentiment, coupled perhaps with weariness of years of enforced peace, caused offers of money, of troops, and even of personal service to pour in upon the Viceroy from chiefs in almost every part of India. It was impossible to accept them under then existing circumstances, but Lord Dufferin, in proposing that such States as could afford it should contribute a small, but efficient, force towards Imperial defence, was able to gratify the desires of many. The Imperial Service Corps, trained under the supervision of British officers, whilst remaining still, necessarily and essentially, the troops of the States, and forming no part of the British army in peace, were fostered by their founder, and by his successor Lord Lansdowne. Lord Elgin was able to take another step in advance by actually employing part of them in the campaign of 1897 on the North-West Frontier, in which Sir Partab Singh, now Maharaja of Idar, was wounded. It was not possible to accept the many offers of service in the Boer War which were made by chiefs, for it had been decided not even to employ our own Indian troops. In the case of the expedition to China, and the operations in Somaliland and Tibet, it was different. Imperial Service troops, led sometimes by their own rulers, had an opportunity of emphasising the connection between the Empire and the States in fields beyond the limits of India.

Lord Curzon's institution of the Imperial Cadet Corps gives yet another opening for the warlike youth of the aristocracy of India, by offering, to selected and specially trained members of it, extra-regimental, but active, employment in the British

Army itself. The genuine interest of the chiefs in these matters is shown by their willingness to subordinate their own natural inclinations to the general good, in respect of the class of corps to be furnished. The combatant arms, a smart infantry or cavalry regiment or a battery of artillery, appeal to the descendants of the fighting clans; yet these very men are willing to convert their cavalry into camel corps, or their artillery into transport trains, when the Viceroy decides that that is the line in which they can render most useful service.

In the last thirty years, as the old chiefs of 1857 and the succeeding years have died off, there has been a great improvement in the average administration of Native States. Young men have succeeded them, holding more enlightened views of the duties of a ruler to his subjects. Many of them have been more or less successfully trained, during their minority, in the art of government by methods which, though not inconsistent with the best traditions of their predecessors and their people, are yet tinged with Western ideas of civilisation and humanity which found no place in the systems of the first half of last century. Chiefs like the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Gaekwar of Baroda, the Maharaja of Gwalior, and others have benefited their people, and linked their destinies more closely with the maintenance of a strong Empire, by the building of railways, the making of roads, the opening of schools, and the improvement of judicial or police procedure. They have realised that the ruler has duties to his subjects, and that the people are not created merely for the gratification of the pleasures or the ostentatious display of their master. But there is a reverse to this picture in the old-fashioned princes, and the corrupt ministers, who are still to be found, not infrequently, especially in the smaller States. The staid pages of a Blue-book, dealing with the decade ending in 1902, still record the deposition of two Rajas for proved complicity in atrocious murders, and of two more for persistent misgovernment. Not much longer ago an innocent man, who had incurred the displeasure of the minister who wielded

practically supreme authority in the State, was imprisoned for years in a desolate hill fortress, confined in a cage of little ease, in which his limbs withered and lost their power. A brutal murderer, condemned to death, received a free pardon for the sole reason that the head of the State resented a somewhat injudicious suggestion by the British Resident that public decapitation was not a civilised form of execution. Elsewhere, a murderer, with no defence on the facts, pleaded, as a bar to punishment, the orders of his prince, whose death alone saved him from being called to account. With examples such as these before it, it is clear that the Indian Government must continue to retain, and occasionally to exercise, its right of interference, even in the internal affairs of the Feudatory States. Of the extent of that right it is impossible to give any precise definition beyond the words of Lord Canning, who wrote that the Supreme Government

> is not debarred from stepping in to set right such serious abuses as may threaten any part of the country with anarchy or disturbance, nor from assuming temporary charge of a Native State where there shall be sufficient reason to do so.

In the case of the more important States interference is rare, and provoked only by flagrant abuses. As importance decreases, and the smaller States are found with less and less full administrative equipment, the control exercised from above becomes greater, until independence becomes almost nominal, and the princelet is little more than a landowner with the most limited sovereign powers. Hundreds of these liliputian principalities are of little intrinsic importance, and their claim to consideration rests mainly on the fact that, often, they represent the last unsubdued fragments of ancient kingdoms, shattered by Mahomedan or Mahratta, and that the memory of their origin merits for them a respect from their countrymen and fellow chiefs out of all proportion to what is left of their territories.

A part of the Indian press, enjoying under British protection a licence which it would certainly not be allowed under

native government, delights in preaching the superiority of that form of government to the one under which it flourishes. As a general proposition such statements may be dismissed with contempt. But it by no means follows that there is nothing to be learnt from the States, especially in the matter of tempering the rigidity of Western methods to the laxer ideas of the East. Recent measures, aiming at greater elasticity in revenue assessment and collection, show that the lesson in this respect is beginning to be understood.

F. Loraine Petre.

THE STORY OF A DEVONSHIRE HOUSE[1]

IF the "annals of the poor" are "short and simple," the annals of families in their passage from the middle to the upper classes of society are, generally, non-existent. Family letters between parents and their children, or between brothers and sisters, are seldom kept, and are hardly ever worth keeping. There is, too, an intermediate stage in the history of a family, where its "low beginnings" are too recent to be interesting or piquant, when the hereditary shop or cottage is an unwelcome, if not a painful, memory, and tell-tale records, somehow or other, perish and disappear.

The "Story of a Devonshire House" is a record of three generations of Coleridges, a family who were diligent letter-writers, who thought that their letters were worth keeping, and who seem, from the first, to have been well contented with such ancestors as they possessed. The record was begun more than a hundred years ago by the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who, in 1797, addressed certain well-known autobiographical letters to his friend and patron, Tom Poole of Nether Stowey, "compositions," to quote Dykes Campbell's "Narrative," "which as fully as any of his poems are instinct with the writer's extraordinary genius." It has now been expanded by the poet's great-grand-nephew, and brought down to the year 1836.

Lord Coleridge does not pretend to deal with the biography

[1] "The Story of a Devonshire House." By Lord Coleridge, K.C. London, 1905.

of the poet or of the poet's children, who were not "Coleridges of Ottery St. Mary," and the book ends before the brilliant career of his father, the late Lord Chief Justice, had begun. The "story" is concerned with other members of the family, of distinction and importance in their day, but who can hardly be said to be known to fame. None the less, as a picture of manners and as illustrating certain pages of history, the work is of considerable interest, and fully merits publication.

The family legend falls into two natural divisions, the struggle of the sons of the first founder of the family, parson and schoolmaster, to escape trade and to make their living as soldiers and clergymen, and the struggle of the sons of the second founder, the parson's third son James, to be persons of consequence in their profession, to get to the top of the tree. When the Reverend John Coleridge came to Ottery St. Mary in 1760, as master of the Grammar School and Vicar of the parish, he was rich on, perhaps, two hundred pounds a year, and, in rank or status, not much removed from the tradesmen of the town, or the farmers of the countryside. When his grandson, Sir John Taylor Coleridge, took up his residence at Heath's Court (now The Chanter's House) in 1839, he was a Judge of the Queen's Bench and a landowner of recognised position in the county—that is one strand, if not the thickest, in the thread of the "Story of a Devonshire House." Lord Coleridge has little or nothing to tell us of the absent-minded Vicar which is not to be found in De Quincey, in "Gillman's Coleridge," and in other lives and memoirs of the poet; but he publishes, for the first time, a pen-and-ink sketch of "The Reverend John Coleridge Mounting his Horse," which represents a prosperous and well-fed ecclesiastic not at all of the type of Parson Adams or the Vicar of Wakefield. Learning and oddity were supposed to go together, and as he was certainly an erudite scholar, it followed *par conséquence* that he was eccentric, and wanting in worldly wisdom. The respect which his elder sons paid to him, and their remarkable success

in life, suggests an exaggeration or misapprehension of his character. His eldest son, John the second, or, rather, John the third (for the Vicar entered himself at Sidney Sussex College as *filius Johannis textoris*), went out to India as a cadet in the Company's service in 1770, before his two youngest brothers, Francis and Samuel, were born.

Eleven years later Francis, who had sailed for Bombay as a midshipman in the Royal Navy, accidentally met his brother John, and through his influence, and at his expense, obtained a commission in the Army. Neither were long lived. John died of consumption in 1787, and Francis, who had been wounded in a night attack on the Sultan's Redoubt at the siege of Seringapatam in 1792, put an end to himself in the delirium of fever.

The main interest which attaches to their letters home is in the unconscious revelation of character. Both brothers were self-denying and generous, and gave largely of their savings to the family at home. The elder was grave, simple and modest; the younger, as Lord Coleridge puts it, "handsome, vain, fantastical, but virtuous and industrious." Is there thought, or turn of speech in their letters, to remind us that they were of the same stock as their brother the poet? In "*Würde*, Worthiness, Virtue," to adopt his own words—in "mastery over the sensuous and sensual impulses" they are to be preferred before him; but in respect of a kind of eager and impassioned tenderness, and in the freshness of their impressions there is the unmistakable likeness of affinity. Here is Frank's account to his sister Nancy of his chance encounter with his brother John:

> I went up shaking like an aspen leaf to the Lieutenant's apartments, where a gentleman took hold of my hand. I did not mind him at first ["mind" is the native Doric], but looked round for the Captain, but the Gentleman, still holding my hand, I looked in his face, and what was my surprise when I saw him too full to speak, and his eyes full of tears! Whether crying is catching, I know not, but I began a-crying too, though I did not know the reason till he caught me in his arms and told me he was my brother, and then I found it was paying nature her tribute, for I believe I never cry'd

so much in my life. There is a saying in "Robinson Crusoe" I remember well, viz., "Sudden joy, like grief, confounds at first."

And here is John's report of the twelve-year-old cadet in a letter to his brother James:

Little Frank is here with me; he behaves so extremely well that he has gained the love and esteem of every officer of Rank in the Army. The Commanding Officer of the Corps to which he belongs praises him to the skies, and says he commands a division better than most Subalterns in the Corps. He employs his time improving himself, and I don't doubt but he'll turn out a clever fellow—the young dog is as fond of his sword as a girl is of a new lover.

It is difficult to believe that we are listening to a true story, that the actors were not playing to a living audience, or to posterity, but it sometimes happens that truth is not only stranger, but more dramatic, than fiction. If either of these brave young officers had been reared "in the depths of the huge city," or if the "inspired charity-boy" had gone out, as his brother John intended, as a "cadet of the India House," it would have made a difference, if not all the difference, in life and character.

The Vicar's third son James may be regarded as the actual founder of the "Devonshire House." An ensign at fifteen, in ten years' time he purchased his captaincy with the assistance of his brother John, who provided a thousand pounds out of his savings. His marriage in 1788 with Frances Duke Taylor, a Devonshire lady of birth and fortune, enabled him to sell out of the army and to settle first at Tiverton, and afterwards, in 1796, to purchase a house and small estate hard by his old home at Ottery St. Mary. He did good service to his county and his country as magistrate, and as raiser and colonel of volunteers, devoting his wife's fortune to the improvement of his estate, and, with still less thought of himself, to the education of his sons at Eton and the Universities. A man of exemplary worth and unswerving probity, he had neither the large-heartedness of his eldest brother the soldier, nor the warmth and tenderness of his youngest brother the poet. He enjoyed life until his health failed him, and though his

lines had fallen in pleasant places, he "stood at attention" and did his duty before he took his pleasure.

One of the most interesting chapters of this work is devoted to the memory of the Colonel's third son, a midshipman in the Royal Navy, who fell from the topmast and was killed before he had completed his thirteenth year. It is difficult to believe that the letters of so young a boy should be worth printing, but, apart from any value which they may possess as the unconscious delineation of a brave and joyous temperament, they present a vivid picture of life aboard ship in the "brave days of old," while Nelson still lived to make himself and his country glorious. Early in June 1804 Bernard Frederick Coleridge, aged eleven years and eight months, was gazetted on board H.M.S. *Impétueux*, one of the Channel Fleet, at that time actively engaged in watching the west coast of France and Portugal, and keeping the French fleet at bay. Plymouth had been chosen as naval base, but was only used "to water and take in stores when necessary." Admiral Cornwallis was in charge of the squadron, [Sir] Byam Martin was captain of H.M.S. *Impétueux*. In a letter dated June 9, 1804, the "middy" relates his first experience:—

> We have twelve-shilling tea for breakfast, and biscuit, which is very good indeed, but rather maggoty. [Afterwards he found the biscuit not rather, but very maggoty—biscuit, in short, to "dream of, not to tell."] We play at marbles on the poop, and yesterday I lost ninety to Hood while we were in the boat. . . . I am asked into the wardroom by the officers almost every day, but I do not go much. . . . All the midshipmen are good fellows, but they swear rather; but I shall try what I can do, with God Almighty's assistance, to keep out of their example.

Three days later he writes:—

> The *Colossus* is cruising up and down with us, . . . and in the afternoon I was upon the quarter-deck walking when the signal was hallo'ed that there was a strange sail in sight; upon which the sentinels fired their guns, and everything was prepared for an engagement; the ship not answering or hoisting any flag, we fired a 32-pounder loaded with grape-shot at them, upon which they hoisted the American colours and sailed on. We have on board Admiral Graves, who came on board the same day in his ten-oared barge, and as soon

as he put his foot on shipboard the drums and fifes began to play, and the marines and all presented their arms. . . . We have a fine sight, which is the Grand Channel Fleet, which consists of 95 sail of the line, each from 120 down to 64 guns.

To his mother, July 14, he writes :—

I will tell you a little news. We are at anchor with the *Foudroyant* . . . and *Tonnant* with three frigates and luggers and cutters in abundance, but one of the luggers getting a little too near Fort St. Matthew's, they began raking her fore and aft with 68-pounders for, I suppose, a quarter of an hour, until she sheered off. . . . O! for a draught of fresh water, I cry out, for our water stinks enough to poison a person, and we are generally forced to put two glasses of wine or brandy to take off the stink. . . . We have got fresh beef now and a cask of beer which is exquisitely nice, our general meat being salt horse, *alias* salt pork, which is a piece of solid fat, . . . and this is salted down to such a degree that I verily believe there would not be a maggot—but, then what is that? I have got a good heart and a clear conscience, and, as the saying is, a clean heart and a light pair of breeches go through the world together, so that I am happy as anything can be so long as you are.

He is sometimes off Brest, so close to the shore that "with Mr. Baker's glass" he "could see everything, even to perceive two boys riding across a gate on a plank," and sometimes he is as far south as Ferrol, where he hopes to go ashore and buy oranges, and have some fun with the Freneh officers, "such as bundling them out of windows." Once he was off Berry Head, and helped to save 561 officers and men from the wreck of the *Venerable*, who "struck on a rock and knocked three holes in her bottom. . . . It has blown very fresh ever since," he adds, "so much so that we were forced to let go another anchor, to clear away the sheet anchor and keep hard by it, and to strike lower yards and topmasts to prevent our meeting the same fate."

He does not rise above national prejudices with regard to the French. In April 1805, the *Impétueux* was

running across the Bay of Biscay, and chasing small craft every day. In one we found three French passengers, whom we brought aboard. . . . I had the best fun in the world with them, for as soon as ever they came aboard they fell to, all hands of them, cutting the oddest capers in the world about the deck, and I am sure if they made one they made fifty bows and scrapes to me. For

my part I thought they were mad, but one of them as he went out again looked very hard at a gun that was pointing out at the port, and, says I, "If you come across me in a lump of a big French ship, I hope you will let me go." But the fellow only made that horrid ugly French face of his the uglier by grinning like a Baboon.

Once, off Brest, in September 1805, the squadron had a "brush" with the enemy. The batteries of the French fleet "opened a tremendous fire of shot and shell, one of which struck the *Ville de Paris*," and a splinter of it striking the Admiral, he said, "Damme, we will have some of you out for this." The Admiral, it seems, unlike the good little midshipman, *had* learnt to swear.

Alas! the gay, innocent, "but dutiful and strenuous life" was soon to be cut short. He came home on leave in October, sailed from Torbay to Plymouth in Nelson's old flagship, the *Foudroyant*, was gazetted to the *Phœnix*, and on December 9, 1805, he fell from the topmast and was killed on the spot. Lord Coleridge has done well to preserve his story "from the effacing fingers of time," and to give him honourable remembrance in the annals of a remarkable family.

There is little space at our disposal to do justice to the latter half of the volume, which deals with the earlier life of the writer's grandfather, Sir John Taylor Coleridge. Readers of the "Life and Correspondence of John Duke, Lord Coleridge," which was published in 1904, will remember the beautiful and touching words in which the Lord Chief Justice paid tribute to his father's memory:

> His character was, I really think, perfect, his princely generosity, his large *boundless* charity, his tenderness which was never weakness, his noble trust in others, his severity to himself, his unfailing sweetness, his thorough unequalled *angelic* goodness, made such a man as I never knew before or since, and of whom I do not believe, before God, there have been many equals.

So he appeared, and such he was in middle life and in old age, not only in the partial estimate of a beloved and devoted son, but in the deliberate judgment of friends and contemporaries. In the "Story of a Devonshire House," he appears as

he was in the days of his youth, before a somewhat depressing gravity, fostered by temperament and reputation, robbed him of his natural mirth.

In July 1814, when he was just entering his twenty-fifth year, before he settled down to his work as special pleader, he started with his friends, Charles Dyson and Noel and Nathaniel Ellison, for a six months' tour on the continent. Three or four days' journey brought them to Paris. One of his first excursions was to the Palace of Fontainebleau, which remained in much the same condition as the Emperor had left it in the preceding April.

Seated [writes Lord Coleridge] in Napoleon's chair at the table at which he signed his abdication, John indites a letter to his father with the pen with which the abdication was signed . . .: "One may say of Napoleon, as bold men have said of the Regent, that he would make a good upholsterer. Nothing can be more splendid, more royal, and yet more comfortable. . . The bedroom Bonaparte slept in last of course attracted our attention, and I sat myself upon the steps and half threw myself upon the bed. But his own study in which he signed his abdication was, after all, the great object. . . . We drew out the writing drawers of the table, and it was covered with green velvet, on which were spots of ink. Our guide said that he had on the morning of the abdication served breakfast in the next room, and that he was still in the next room when Bonaparte signed the abdication. He laughed at the pistol story and at Bonaparte's passion, said that immediately after he came out and walked in a terrace outside his bust gallery and was very tranquil."

Later on, at Florence, he acquired, at second-hand, from inquisitive tourists, some interesting particulars of Napoleon's life at Elba, and reports some *obiter dicta:*

He talks of himself as a dead man with regard to France, but seems to consider the Bourbons as by no means secure. He says they will feel, what he felt always, the want of an English aristocracy. . . . The profession of Mahometanism he relates with great glee as a jocular expedient which answered well. . . . Colonel [Sir Neil] Campbell says that nothing could be more ridiculous than his attempt to make a drawing-room at Elba, in which he went through with the fishermen's wives all he had used to say at Paris. Colonel Campbell, it appears has neither regard nor esteem for him.

Long years after, when John Taylor Coleridge was Judge of the Queen's Bench, he "dined and slept" at Strathfieldsaye.

Did he, we are tempted to ask, find courage on opportunity to recall these anecdotes, and to question the great Duke as to whether *he* had any "regard or esteem" for "Bonaparte"?

The month of August was passed at Geneva, in "the pension of Dr. Odier," joint editor of the "Bibliothèque Britannique," and father of two daughters, Amélie and Junie, agreeable but not dangerous, and of a niece, Mdlle. Louise La Cointe, who would be a "most dangerous animal" if she were ten years younger. As it is, she is "very pretty and very interesting."

When he was at Geneva he visited Madame de Staël at Coffet, who talked to him a little, but only a little, about "Southey and my Uncle" (S. T. C.), and introduced him to Schlegel, who had a good deal more to say of the "latter personage." He does not tell us what Corinne said of "my uncle's" monologue; or whether Schlegel took any interest in Coleridge on Shakespeare. He sought out, at Madame de Staël's suggestion, Pestalozzi, at his Institut at Yverdun:

> We called upon him [he writes], and found a very dirty old man, in sad *déshabillé*, but still, whether from association, or really, a very venerable personage. His notion is that every human creature, of whatever age or condition, has *some* knowledge, and that to make education pleasant it should begin by developing in each individual knowledge which he already possesses. . . . Let no one say this is visionary till they have seen his school.

Tout vient à qui sait attendre, and the "very dirty old man" of Yverdun is a greater power in the world in 1905 than he was in 1814.

After Switzerland Italy, and, in due course, Venice and Florence. At Venice he made an excursion to the Mekhitarist Convent on the island of San Lazaro, where, not long afterwards, Byron was to spend his mornings, learning the Armenian language, "by way of divertisement." There the monks informed him "that there was a rebellion in England in favour of Bonaparte, that the King had been dead a long time, and that the *Courtiers* concealed his death (is not this so like the Arabian Nights?)"

The excerpts from this epistolary journal are, one and all, full of interest, and, unlike most "Lettres de Voyage," make us wish that more had been published. The "Story" ends with Sir John Taylor Coleridge's elevation to the Bench (in 1835), and includes the pathetic incident of the old "Colonel" taking his place in the Assize Court at Exeter as Grand Juryman, and standing up to make his bow to his son the Judge.

Mr. Justice Coleridge would have been the first to admit that more than one of his brothers equalled, and, in some respects, surpassed him in intellectual gifts. His elder brother, James Duke, was a dignitary of the Church, a writer of theological and devotional works once held in esteem. A younger brother, Henry Nelson Coleridge, has an assured reputation as critic, and editor of his uncle's "Table Talk and Literary Remains." Edward, the youngest, was the well-known "lower master," and, afterwards, a Fellow of Eton College. It was the tradition of the family to do their duty, to succeed in life. In the elder generation, indeed, there was a solitary instance of divergence from the type, the wayward unprospering genius whom his brothers regarded as a "humbling example." It may, however, be noted that whatever the author of "Christabel" and "The Ancient Mariner" did or left undone, he did not "humble" to any intolerable extent the native if natural self-confidence of the rest of his family.

À propos of the poet's commendation of his brother George, Lord Coleridge drops a hint that "his pen was not used to write in too favourable a strain of his relatives." In a letter to Poole, published sixty years after his death, he alludes, in jest, to his "relations by gore," but he would not have used his "pen" save in commendation of members of his "father's house." Possibly Lord Coleridge was thinking of one of the Chief Justice's "stories." "I have three brothers," said my Uncle Sam, "one of them [George] thinks of every one but himself, another [the Colonel] only thinks about himself, and the third [Edward] does not think at all!" Well, it is an epigram, and there is a proverb that a worm will turn.

Lord Coleridge's volume of family history is pleasant reading. It is long enough, but not too long, and it bears testimony to family honours and family merits with modesty and admirable good sense. We cannot refrain from quoting a few lines from his L'Envoi, "De Majoribus."

> Memorial Piety calls them from the past.
> The quaint old Scholar at the College gate;
> The orphaned exile generous to the last,
> So careful for his unknown sister's fate;
> The gallant stripling, scarce to manhood grown,
> Fall'n in the breach for his dear land's renown;
> On deck the Sailor Boy beneath the Stars
> Dreams of his home, his kin, his garden's breath,
> Or rocked aloft amid the reeling spars
> Clings, all unknowing of his coming death;
> . . . . .
> The Judge both wise and humble, last appears
> Crowned with the glory of our common Love!

A FACE OF CLAY

AN INTERPRETATION[1]

BY HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL

CHAPTER IV

MICHAEL OSSORY

The stir of fellowship in all disastrous fight.

THE sun was slowly sinking into the woods which lie to the north-west of Pont-Aven as Téphany strolled on to the small quay below the water-mills. It happened to be high tide; and the craft at anchor in the pool were reflected in a surface smooth as ice. Two red, white, and blue tunny boats from Belle Ile had sailed up the estuary to be scraped and painted. Now that the sardines had come back to Brittany, after a lamentable absence of two years, the big tunnies were to be left in peace. Téphany stood on the edge of the quay, admiring the lines of these boats, built expressly for speed, and sold for what they will fetch as soon as wind and weather have taken the pace out of them. Lower down in the pool lay a collier, loaded to the gunwale, a dismal-looking affair, black within and without, a veritable tramp. Téphany saw that the collier had been a tunny boat; but the masts with the once rakish cant forward were now perpendicular, her rig had

[1] Copyright, 1905, by Horace Annesley Vachell in the United States of America.

been altered: the racer, in fine, swift as a swallow in pursuit of the big tunnies, had become a sorry beast of burden, cracked of heel, mutilated, a Rosinante among vessels.

A few paces distant from Téphany stood a tall, gaunt man, who looked as if he might belong to one of the tunny boats. He wore the blue overalls and jersey of the Belle Ile fishermen. What could be seen of his face beneath his cap and through masses of beard and hair had been burnt a dark brown.

Téphany, turning to him, asked in French if he could tell her the price of a new tunny boat.

"Ten thousand francs," he replied. "And after five years' service you can buy them for a bagatelle of three thousand, or less."

"It's the pace that kills—always," murmured Téphany to herself, in English.

"Is it?" said the man, replying in English. "Is it, Téphany, are you sure of that? I say, not always."

"Michael?"

"Yes."

"You recognised me, and I—I never recognised you."

They shook hands, staring at each other, smiling nervously. Téphany's first thought was the joyous conviction that Michael wanted to renew the old friendship, or else, surely, he would not have revealed himself. Tempering the pleasure of this reflection was the sense of exasperation that she had not recognised him, despite his heavy cap and beard. Then again, in Michael's voice Téphany had detected an inflection—as a singer she had studied inflections—an inflection of satisfaction, of an expectation realised.

"Oh, Michael," said she, "I am so glad to see you again."

"If you had come back sooner——"

He silenced himself with acute abruptness. There was resentment in his tone, something far stronger than mere reproach.

"Come back sooner?" She repeated the words blankly, trying to fathom the expression in his eyes.

"Yes; you promised, you know. Your last words were: 'I shall come back, old Michael, as soon as I can.'"

"And you have remembered. Well," she spoke soberly, as if she had pondered the phrase about to fall from her mouth, "I have come back as soon as I could."

"After ten years!"

Something in his voice angered her.

"Perhaps I might have come sooner, if—if you had answered my letters."

"Forgive me," he muttered, without offering any explanation. "Ten years is a long time. And having held my tongue for nearly ten years, I have forgotten to wag it politely."

Téphany laughed frankly.

"You never did wag it politely, Michael; but you talked a good deal ten years ago. Good gracious! How you used to scold me. Who taught you to hold that tongue of yours?"

Before the words were out of her mouth, she would have given much to recall them. She saw Michael wince; then his face set.

"I had no right to ask that," she whispered.

"No, you hadn't," he replied roughly. "I have not asked you questions, have I? Why, I don't know yet whether you're maid, wife, or widow."

"I'm a maid," said Téphany softly. She felt angry with Ossory, but she admitted his supremacy. He still possessed the magnetism which in the old days had made him a leader in Gérome's studio.

"You're here," said Ossory, after a pause. "That's the main thing. And I'm here."

"You paint?"

She spoke nervously, afraid now to put the simplest questions.

"Oh, yes, I paint. Will you come to my studio and see what I am *not* doing?" He spoke scornfully. Then, in a different voice, almost pleadingly, he added: "Will you come?"

"Yes," said Téphany. "At what time?"

"Ten in the morning. The studio is on the old Concarneau road. I must go now."

"Good-night, Michael."

"My nights are never good."

He lifted his cap and swung away into the shadows. Téphany, standing still, tried to measure the difference between the old and new Michael, between the man who had held fame in his grasp, and the man who had let it go, the man of whom Yvonne had spoken as *lost*. Why that dreadful word "lost"? One thing was certain, Michael was still strong. And the word "lost" quickened her pulses. If the man, the finer spirit, in Michael, were lost—lost, not destroyed—surely he might be found. What an exciting quest that would be!

He was disappearing when she heard his voice singing. In the old days he had always sung, just like this, and evidently the habit clung to him. But words and music were strange to Téphany, strange yet fascinating. There was a halting lilt about the music which brought vividly to mind the once familiar Breton songs.

Thus thinking she walked slowly to the end of the quay, which seemed larger. Yes; it was larger. It had been widened and lengthened; and half a dozen new houses spoiled the view of the wood beyond. Téphany turned her back upon the new houses and sat down, gazing at the river, which presented an uncanny aspect in the fading light. Upon the other side of the pool stretched the moorland of Brittany, covered with rocks, bracken, whin and broom, scrub-oak and heather: wild desolate spaces, unchanged since the days of the Druids. Through these the Aven rolled silently to the sea.

The sea!

Upon this moor brooded for ever the spell of the sea. And always, in winter or summer, above the roar of the gale, above the sigh of the breeze, may be heard the voice of the siren calling her lovers to her bosom. The children lying in their

cupboard beds behind thick granite walls hear that voice: to its music, however faint, are set dreams, fancies, hopes and fears, prayers and songs.

Téphany looked at the river hurrying past the stony places, but she was thinking of the sea. To her, as to every Breton and Bretonne, the sea was the *dulce monstrum*, which through the mists of past and future stands as Fate.

The long twilight of early summer came on slowly. The Aven once red, then golden, was now silver. Soon it would be lead. Téphany shivered, as she had shivered in the chapel of Trémalo, although the night was warm. For at that moment she apprehended the difference between the old Michael and the new. The river led her to the knowledge she sought. Did not the river flow to the terrible bay out yonder, beneath whose troubled waters sits Death, waiting for her victims? And does not every child of Finistère know full well that Death, on occasion, rises to the surface and glides towards the land? And then the shadow of her grisly head falls where the ancient oaks touch branches across those deep-cut lanes of the Province that lead away from, yet always return to the sea.

Téphany shared that fierce hatred of Death which lurks in the Breton heart. The priests have never been able to exorcise this belief in Death as a person who may be seen and heard and touched, and the belief, also, in Death's familiar, the Ankou,[1] who gleans the awful harvest.

In the face of the old Michael life had shone conspicuous. Ah! shone was inadequate. Téphany tried to find a better word. Glared expressed more accurately the vitality and energy of the man. It was as if Michael had drunk of the fountain of life, had steeped himself in its vivifying waters, and henceforth had become immune to disease and death. But the Michael of to-night, still strong, still young, and still

[1] L'Ankou est l'ouvrier de la mort; c'est le dernier défunt de l'année qui, dans chaque paroisse, revient sur terre chercher les trépassés. . . . — ANATOLE LE BRAZ.

passionate—who could doubt that?—had the appearance of a man who had looked upon, who had touched Death. Surely Michael had seen the Ankou—and virtue had gone out of him.

Next day Téphany woke to the delicious semi-consciousness of finding herself in some long-forgotten yet familiar and much-beloved place. Before she opened her eyes she heard the tinkle of bells from the collars of the horses drawing loads into the town, the clatter of sabots upon cobbles, the cries of the teamsters, and the sharp crack of their whips. To her nostrils came the fragrance of honeysuckle and new-mown hay, and the pungent smell of the estuary as the tide swept up to meet the river. Téphany rose refreshed after sound sleep, laughing at the fancies of the previous night, charmed to find herself in Pont-Aven, looking forward with ardour to what a new day might bring forth.

A pretty maid, one of the joyous band of young serving-women whom Yvonne had collected about her, brought coffee and brown bread and butter into the panelled dining-room.

Téphany sat down at the long table. The room was eloquent of the past, although not mute concerning the present: a shrine, indeed, of youthful ambitions, of which a few—how few!—had been realised. Nearly all the panels here were painted by Henry Lane's contemporaries, her *anciens*, as Yvonne called them, and each had its story—which Téphany knew. One or two had served as studies for pictures now famous. Then Yvonne came in, massive, genial, sound to the core, like a superb pippin, bringing Téphany some strawberries from her garden, freshly gathered, with the dew still sparkling upon them. She lingered for a moment whispering a few phrases of information concerning her guests. That thin yellow-faced man at the end of the table was a *littérateur romancier*, who had gained fame and lost his digestion. He was talking to a caricaturist, a capital young fellow, likely to go far if he left absinthe alone. *À propos*, had her dear child met Monsieur Carne? What a charming person—and of a

cleverness! Yvonne bustled away as Carne came in, followed by his friend, Johnnie Keats, whom Carne begged permission to present to Miss Lane. The Californians sat down opposite Téphany. She soon discovered that Mr. Keats played the part of Boswell to Carne's Johnson. He had been at the Berkeley University with Carne. Short, stout, freckled and prematurely bald, he had, notwithstanding, the attractiveness of a happy and contented temperament.

"Do you paint, too?" asked Téphany.

"I spoil a lot of canvas," replied Mr. Keats.

"Snow scenes are Johnnie's forte," said Carne.

"Eh?" said Téphany.

"Whitewashing barns," explained Mr. Keats, showing an excellent row of teeth in a wide grin. "So far the happiest and most successful incident in my art career has been the buying of a splendid outfit. I have the daisiest umbrella that ever came to Pont-Aven. Carne, of course, is a genius, you know," he spoke seriously.

"Pooh!" said Carne.

"You are," affirmed the Satellite. "As for me, I'm keen, and I like my own work, which is lucky, because nobody else does."

He laughed pleasantly, adding that a painter's life was a "bully" one, if he had independent means. Mr. Keats used strong Western slang very freely, so Téphany noted.

Then, in her turn, she told the Californians some anecdotes concerning Yvonne's *anciens*. One, a terrible dauber, and quite impecunious, had captured an enormously wealthy heiress; another, who had never learned to draw properly, now painted portraits of popes and emperors.

"That's the best thing here;" Carne indicated Ossory's panel.

"Michael Ossory painted it," said Téphany. Then she added curtly: "I met him last night; I'm going to see his studio to-day."

"It's a corker, that panel," declared Mr. Keats.

By this time the room was half full, and buzzing pleasantly. The doctrine of work proclaimed itself, not aggressively as in Anglo-Saxon countries, but melodiously insistent. Outside the peasants were assembling for the weekly market, driving before them the black and white milch cows and their calves, or spreading fruit and vegetables upon rough boards. Presently, Carne and Keats and Téphany walked amongst them, talking and laughing. About the booths women were chattering loudly, examining humble wares with keen eyes and restless fingers, commending those they had no intention of buying, depreciating what they coveted. Among the peasants were half a score of old friends. With these, much to Carne's surprise, Téphany exchanged Breton phrases.

"Why, you talk Breton, Miss Lane."

"I am Bretonne," she answered. "Here, at this very moment, I am Bretonne, Bretonnante."

"I should like to see you in the costume," said Johnnie Keats.

"So you shall," she replied. Then, in a graver voice, she added: "I must leave you now."

Mr. Keats expressed disappointment. "Say, Miss Lane, I shan't forget this morning in a hurry. What you don't know about these people isn't worth knowing. You'll pick this up again, where we leave it, eh?"

He indicated the Arcadian crowd. Téphany had been talking with a sympathy and feeling which, apart from her success as a singer, made her welcome in many and divers places.

"Why, yes," Téphany replied, smiling. "But," she sighed, "it's not easy, is it? to pick up anything or anybody just where you leave it."

"It's the same market every week," replied Carne.

"Oh, Pont-Aven doesn't change," said Téphany.

She nodded gaily, and walked on alone, across the bridge, past the church, and up the old Concarneau road. Michael's quarters were in an ancient farmhouse near the crest of the

hill. Téphany passed through a gate and approached a grove of walnut-trees which half concealed the house. To her left the ground sloped pleasantly towards the river. The quiet aloofness of the spot struck Téphany at once. Beneath the trees, ferns and moss and turf grew vividly green; here and there huge, grey, lichen-covered rocks gave to the grove character and a certain mystery. As a child Téphany had listened, open-eyed, to marrow-thrilling legends of mortals changed into monstrous boulders. Michael had had a score of such stories at his tongue's tip. Téphany glanced at the town below, at the river, at the moorland beyond; then she passed through an archway into a courtyard wherein was a stone wall. A farmer and his wife occupied the lower half of the house, and their little children were playing near the wall. Just inside the door, at the foot of a winding stone staircase, stood Michael.

"Mind your head," said he, not offering to shake hands, and leading the way upstairs.

"And you mind your manners," she retorted, trying to speak with the lightness of other days.

He pulled off his cap, shamefacedly, growling out apologies. Téphany laughed, for the spirit of the market-place still possessed her.

"I'm only joking, Michael."

"Here's where I live, Téphany."

He accented ironically the word "live." It might be assumed that elsewhere Michael existed in a merely vegetable way. Téphany looked about her with keen interest. The studio, of a pale grey in tone, with a ceiling slightly darker than the walls, was surprisingly large and well proportioned. An old oak dresser, with the date, 1624, carved on it, displayed some curious figures of Breton faïence, rudely modelled, coarsely painted, and yet informed with a simple, primitive grace and charm; upon the walls were innumerable charcoal sketches, names, scraps of verse, the memorials of previous tenants, some of them executed with amazing spirit and cleverness; in a corner,

near the fireplace, stood a sofa and a bookcase full of books. Téphany's quick eye noted that the pens on the writing table were rusted and broken; the ink had dried up in its pot; obviously Michael wrote no letters.

"Ah!"

The exclamation fell sharply from Téphany's lips. Upon an easel in the centre of the room was the study of a woman, admirable in tone, technique, and breadth of treatment.

"You remember that?" said Michael.

"Remember it?"

"Yes; I painted it years ago."

"Why, so you did; yes; I do remember it."

Ossory laughed.

"I keep it to show some idiots what I can do, if I try. Gérome liked that."

"I should think he did. It's magnificent."

Michael turned aside to pull out a bundle of canvases.

"These are sketches—nothing more. I expect you to be disgusted. Perhaps you will see—passages—a bit of colour here and there——"

Muttering to himself he untied the string, and submitted the first sketch.

"I go for colour," Michael explained.

"You used to say that art was the expression of an individuality."

"Fancy your remembering that! I talked a lot of rot, but this is the expression of a failure."

"Some of it is wonderful."

"You think I'm an impressionist?"

"Father used to say you were such a stickler for—for the truth."

"Truth? Truth?" He laughed harshly. "Honest work? That means staring at a thing till you're dazed and colour blind. That means," he grew excited, waving his thin hands, "seeing the outside, the mere rind, and letting the great thing escape."

"Not necessarily."

"I speak for myself. I paint to please myself. I sell nothing. I've enough to live on. I won't show you any more of my stuff. I never do show it."

"I want to see everything," said Téphany eagerly. "And if you think I'm going to condemn your methods because I don't quite understand them, you do me an injustice. Few have the courage to be pioneers. You are an honest artist, Michael."

But as she spoke she looked at the painter's face, not at his picture. Certainly, Michael had great qualities. He made no concessions, flouted compromise, and he had something of the air of a martyr. How thin and worn he was, poor fellow!

"You'll like this better, Téphany." He pulled out another canvas.

"Yes, yes; I do, I do."

The second sketch was a study of wind meeting tide. Half of the canvas was scraped out: a mere blur of dirty colour, but a great wave, with all the force of the Atlantic behind it, rushed roaring—one could almost hear the roar—against its furious enemy, a north-west gale. The wind, one could see, rent the top of the wave in twain and whirled it skyward in columns of spray, but the mighty volume of water rolled on, irresistible, omnipotent. The impact of these two tremendous forces had been transferred to the canvas by the hand of genius.

"I've seen that," said Michael, "ten thousand times, and I painted it here upon a sunny midsummer's morning."

He whipped it from the easel, deaf to Téphany's protest, and substituted another bit in startling contrast. Upon a stretch of sand a wavelet was breaking. Michael repeated de Musset's delightful lines:

> Où la mer vient mourir
> Sur la plage endormie.

The heavy languorous atmosphere, the calm after the storm, the ineffable peace of the picture, were soothing as a lullaby; but out of the placid surface of the sea bristled three splintered masts; upon the soft, golden sands lay wreckage and a corpse.

Téphany thought of the Ankou, whose grisly shadow dwelt in Michael's eyes.

"And I painted that, my dear Téphany, when a gale was raging."

She saw that half of the canvas was cruelly hacked by a palette knife.

"This might have been a great picture, Michael. It *is* a great picture."

The painter frowned, snatching it, as before, from the easel. Then he showed other sketches, more or less mutilated, as if the man had worked in futile rage against abysmal differences between promise and performance. Téphany noted with surprise that all were seascapes.

"Don't you paint the figure?" she asked.

"A male model or two, now and then."

"Now and then?"

"Just to keep my hand in."

He had sat down, and was filling a pipe. The keenness had died out of his face. Téphany saw other canvases leaning face against the wall.

"May I look at those?"

"If you like."

She turned them over, one by one. The expression of curiosity upon her delicate face deepened, Here, in Finistère, where the women were such ravishing subjects, Michael Ossory chose to paint men only. Téphany was about to ask the reason of this singular abstention, when she happened to find a last canvas, half hidden behind a big chest. She glanced at it, raised her brows, and turned to Michael, who had closed his eyes; he might be asleep. From his pipe, which he held loosely in his thin hand, a spiral of blue smoke ascended. Téphany set the canvas upon the easel and examined it attentively.

In a courtyard, cool and grey, stood a young girl in a coif not familiar to Téphany. She wore the plain black dress with velvet bands of the peasant, and a filmy lace apron. She rested

one hand upon a granite water-trough, the other upon her hips. The whole was a study in half-tones so subtly blended, so cunningly manipulated, that the primary colours, the yellow of the girl's hair, the red of her lips, the blue of her eyes, seemed to shine through them, as a rainbow may shine through a thick mist. The child was a child of the sun, lingering for a few minutes in the shade. These points, however, revealed themselves later. At the first glance Téphany could see nothing save the extraordinary delicacy and grace of the child's face. The pose of the head upon the slender throat, the exquisite modelling of the cheeks, the perfection of proportion, drew from her an exclamation of astonishment. At once Michael jumped to his feet. Then, seeing the canvas on the easel, an expression of surprise, anger, and suffering distorted his face. In a cold voice he demanded: "Where did you find that?"

"Behind the chest."

"Not in it?" Without appearing to wait for Téphany's "No" he crossed the room, and tried the lid of the chest. It remained fast, seemingly locked.

"I beg your pardon," said Téphany gravely.

Michael's face cleared. He approached the easel, and stared at the picture. Then he asked abruptly: "Now you have seen it, what do you make of it?"

"Is it painted from life?"

"No. As a matter of fact, it is more or less faked."

"Faked? I can't believe that. If you were anybody else, Michael, I'd entreat you to exhibit it."

"What do you make of it?"

Anxiety lent to the question significance.

"I say it's magnificent. But the child? Did she come to you in your dreams?"

"Yes, in my dreams. Now, tell me," his voice became very insistent, "is there happiness in that face?"

Téphany hesitated.

"Why, yes," she said presently. "Well, I am not sure. The shadows have touched her; she's in shadow, and I don't

seem to see her quite plainly; not yet——" she peered into the picture. "Happiness, you say? She has been happy, but——"

"Go on——"

"She looks out of the shadow——"

"Into the sun?——"

"I don't know, I——"

"Speak out, candidly!"

"She looks into deeper shadow. Yes, I'm sure of that. Oh, it's terribly sad, this face. You present pathos. Michael, it's the most pathetic thing I ever saw."

"The light is bad," said Michael.

He pulled up a blind and altered the position of the easel.

"There, that's better. Look again!"

Téphany looked.

"I declare the expression has changed," she said, after a long pause. "I seem to detect a smile."

"What sort of smile?"

"It is derisive."

"What? A child's smile—derisive?"

"My dear old Michael, the derision in a child's smile is the most amazing thing in the world. And you've painted it."

"No, no; it's not derision."

"It may be wonder. If this child lived—if she grew up——"

She paused. Michael had turned his back, and was looking out of the window. Téphany divined that he was profoundly moved, in pain possibly. She divined also that he wished her to go, to go—and to come back. Obeying this instinct, she moved to the door.

"When may I come to see you again?" she asked, pausing on the threshold of the studio.

"Come to-morrow, same time." His voice was harsh and strained. "I shall have something to show you, something I wish you to see."

Téphany descended the rickety stairs, and plunged with relief into the sunshine of the street below.

Once outside she breathed more freely, marshalling her unruly thoughts into something which at least approximated to order. Michael, she decided, was in straits, whirling to what? His nights—he said—were never good.

Ascending the stairs which led to her room she met Yvonne, who stopped for a word.

"Ah, my child," said she, shaking her capable forefinger, "it is time indeed you came back here. You are thin—much too thin; but I, mark you, am going to put on sound flesh."

"I saw Michael Ossory this morning and last night."

She beckoned the woman who had befriended both Michael and herself into her room.

"What is the matter with him?" she asked.

Yvonne shrugged her shoulders.

"He looks horribly unhappy. And there is something on his mind. One might help him, if one knew, if one had a hint——"

Yvonne's face became wooden. Then she said sharply: "My child, I do not meddle with what does not concern me.'

"There never was a woman like you, Yvonne. All the same, tell me this, I'm not a sieve, you know: Did he ever paint a child, a girl, in what used to be the old courtyard behind this house."

"Eh?"

Téphany repeated her question, adding: "I recognised the courtyard at once, and I should have recognised the child's face, had I ever seen it."

"What was the child like?"

Téphany began to describe it; then, foundering in a sea of vague adjectives, she clutched at a piece of paper and a pencil.

"There, there," said she, "that will give you a faint idea —eh?"

Yvonne's face softened, then it became rigid, as she returned the sketch.

"I never saw that child in my life."

"Nor in your dreams? Téphany hazarded, remembering Michael's words.

Yvonne flushed scarlet as she said angrily: "I have given you good advice in the past. The less you see of Monsieur Ossory the better."

She bustled out of the room, frowning and growling to herself.

"One thing is certain," Téphany reflected. "Michael has offended Yvonne. She hates him; I saw hate in her kind eyes; and there was a time when she would have cut off her hand to do him a service." Then she remembered the sudden flush. "Good gracious!" she muttered, "the face of that child *has* come to Yvonne in her dreams."

CHAPTER V

THE MASK

J'entendis le rossignol de nuit
Chanter le chant du Paradis!

After another delightful afternoon spent in rambling amongst old haunts, Téphany slept as soundly as before; but her sleep was not dreamless. The face in the picture came to her—as she had felt that it had come to Yvonne—with the strange smile curving the lips that shone red out of the shadows. The dream was singularly vivid, but not disagreeable. The child, it is true, eluded her, played hide and seek with fancy, luring her on to follow and then fading, vanishing. . . . Upon one of these occasions, even as Téphany grasped the shadow, a strain of music floated to her ears, and a voice, the voice of the child (she never doubted that), sang sweetly and clearly three verses of a song. When she awoke, Téphany could remember nothing save the sweetness and clearness of the child's voice. In a dream these crystalline notes had filled her with delight; awake, the pleasure lingered, suffusing itself genially, like the glow which succeeds a fine sunset.

"In my dream," said Téphany, "she was calling me."

When she presented herself at the studio, Michael opened

the door. From his appearance it was quite evident that he had passed a wretched night. The sun fell upon a haggard face, dishevelled hair, and tired eyes.

"You are late."

"It is just ten," said Téphany gravely.

"Well, come in—come in!"

The irritation in his voice, the restless hands, the weary eyes deeply impressed Téphany. Michael crossed the studio and disappeared into a small room beyond, a sleeping-chamber. Téphany felt an absurd wish to run away. She wanted to see the sun, to feel the strong west wind upon her cheek, to hear the familiar chatter of the street. . . .

Michael came back, carrying something white. At once his face reminded Téphany of another face. A scene took form out of the shadows of memory. She beheld the aisle of a great Gothic cathedral; the aisle and little else save the twinkling lights of the high altar beyond; for it was night. The huge pillars soared into mysterious darkness, out of which floated the notes of an organ. Far away the choir chanted a Latin hymn: a solemn invocation. Presently, out of the darkness, light drew near and nearer; a procession of priests and acolytes bearing tapers. Last of all came the arch-priest carrying a crucifix in his hands. The crucifix contained a precious and holy relic. Upon this the gaze of the man who bore it was fixed in an expression so rapt that Téphany had felt constrained to turn aside her eyes.

And now, in the cool grey shadows of the studio, Téphany saw the same concentrated expression upon the face of her old friend.

"Take it!"

Téphany held out hands to receive a plaster mask.

"Why, why, this," she examined it attentively, "this is the child grown into a woman. What a lovely creature!"

"Ah, you see it, the beauty, the perfection of form. Well, what else do you see?"

"You must give me time."

Téphany stared at the mask, while Michael gnawed his moustache.

"There's a look of Titian's *La Gioconda*."

"Ah! you have recognised that. I'm glad I asked you to come. If you see that——" he broke off abruptly, and then continued: "Turn it very slowly, so that the light falls on the left side of the mouth. There, there! Now she looks different—eh?"

Such anxiety underlay the sharp "eh" that Téphany hesitated before she replied slowly: "I don't see *La Gioconda* now."

"The smile is still there?"

"Yes, but it's the smile of the child: a derisive smile."

Michael made no reply. Téphany, glancing keenly at him, said interrogatively: "She is a girl?" As Michael said nothing, she continued, speaking half to herself: "One cannot mistake those contours, and the plaster always shows the lines unless—I take it for granted this is an original mask, taken from—yes, I am sure of that—taken from a living face."

"You are sure of that—eh?"

"No; not quite sure; one would like to know. Where did you get it?"

"In Paris," Michael answered curtly; then he added in an indifferent tone: "After all, if you have seen *La Gioconda*, you have seen what I wanted you to see. I am satisfied. You had better bid me—good-bye."

"Good-bye?"

"I cannot give you my confidence, Téphany. It would be well for me if I could."

He spoke so sadly that Téphany felt her curiosity oozing from her, leaving behind the desire to befriend and comfort an unfortunate fellow creature. Her voice had a warmer tone as she murmured: "I do not ask for your confidence. Give me as much or as little of it as you please. But if I can help you in any way, let me do so." She paused; then she touched Ossory's shoulder, and, with something of her old expansive-

ness and sympathy, burst out: "You want a friend, Michael, take me."

"Without explanations?"

"Certainly."

Michael hesitated.

"I'm sure you want a friend," Téphany repeated.

"Want a friend? My God!" He controlled himself with a tremendous effort. "Yes, I want a friend," he repeated quietly. "Why, the mere sight of one, after these years——" He added almost in a whisper, "I had made up my mind not to speak. Yesterday, in the chapel at Trémalo——"

"You—you were in the chapel?"

"Yes; I saw you and recognised you. Well, I accept your offer of friendship, Téphany. While you are here—you will be leaving in a few days, I suppose?" She made no answer, and he continued: "While you are here, think of me kindly, and come to see me sometimes."

She held out her hand, which he gripped. As she left the studio the last thing she saw was Michael standing with his profile sharply defined against the grey wall, staring at the mask.

Next day Mary Machin arrived. With her came an air, an atmosphere of comfortable English conventionality which Téphany inhaled greedily. Mary, however, was not quite as enthusiastic about Pont-Aven as she might have been. When Téphany led her into the Bois d'Amour and said: "There! Isn't it perfectly beautiful?" Machie stuck out a dubious under lip. She had seen prettier spots in England and Wales. And the Brittany landscape was, well, disappointing. The best parts of it, for instance, reminded her of Scotland with the tops of the hills sliced off.

"I should like to pinch you, Machie," said Téphany viciously.

"My dear," Machie smiled pleasantly, "I know that this is the loveliest spot in all the world to you. Why, I used to think St. George's Road, where we lived when I was a child,

the finest street in London." Then, with a change of voice and manner, she murmured: "I suppose you have heard nothing of Mr. Ossory?"

Her soft blue eyes met Téphany's with a deprecating interrogation.

"Michael Ossory is living here," Téphany replied.

"Oh!"

"He has changed a great deal; in fact I did not recognise him."

"Téphany!"

"Changed in every way," said Téphany, almost with violence. As Machie slipped her hand into hers, she added quietly: "It was not—money; he appears to be fairly well off; a woman came between us."

"Oh!" said Machie again. "Has there been an illumination?"

"A few sparks; but now, Machie, the flame is out, quite out, you understand. We have met, and we shall go on meeting as friends."

"You have told him of your success as a singer?"

"Not a word. How could I? As an artist he has failed."

Téphany closed her lips resolutely, as Machie leaned towards her and kissed her in silence.

A couple of days passed without incident. Carne and his friend Keats made themselves agreeable after the easy and free fashion of Bohemians, and certain expeditions to "Pardons" were planned.

"I had no idea there was so much to do and see here," Mary declared.

"To see?" Téphany smiled. "Ah, well, Machie, the things really worth seeing in Brittany are not easy to see. It takes years to see them."

"And some of them I don't want to see," Mary declared with emphasis. "Last night, when you were writing, those Americans told me ghost stories. Positively I was frightened out of my life when I went to bed. Mr. Carne says that Fantec, the porter, saw his dead wife regularly every night for a week."

"Fantec is too fond of cognac."

"Perhaps he was driven to the abuse of it," said Mary solemnly. "My dear, I must tell you his story, Perhaps you know it?"

Téphany shook her head. It seemed that Fantec had lost, some six months previously, a young and pretty wife. Upon her death-bed she had made her husband promise to bury with her the clothes she had worn upon her wedding-day—a not uncommon request. Such clothes are beautifully fashioned, particularly the aprons, which descend as heirlooms from mother to daughter. Fantec's wife owned such an apron; a gossamer cambric affair, exquisitely embroidered with silk. Fantec could not bring himself to sacrifice this valuable garment. Accordingly, he substituted an inferior apron. That night the spirit of his wife stood beside his bed and pointed a menacing finger at the ancient oak armoire where the apron lay hid. Fantec endured these visitations for a week; then, crazy with terror, he obtained leave from the authorities to exhume the coffin. The apron was placed in it. The spirit ceased to visit him.

Mary sighed as she finished her story. "The worst of it is," she added, "that I think the whole thing rubbish, and yet here, somehow, one is impressed by it."

"You have felt that?" Téphany murmured.

Mary blushed. "My dear," she whispered, "I was so absurdly impressed by it that I—fool that I am—asked Fantec this morning if the story were true. He confirmed every word of it, most solemnly, and showed me the chest where he had hidden the apron. He also confided to me—this is between ourselves—that he is so frightened of being alone at night that he is going to marry again."

"Oh, Machie," said Téphany, "I am glad I brought you here. Whenever I feel nervous I shall ask you to tell me about Fantec."

That afternoon, while Mary was sketching one of the mills

below the bridge, Téphany climbed once more the stairs leading to Michael's studio. He was painting furiously, working without brushes, using a couple of palette knives. He jumped up at the sight of his visitor.

"I thought you had chucked me," he said.

"Perhaps I wanted to let you cool down," she suggested.

He began to talk of his work, with an animation and fluency which reminded Téphany of the old days. Presently, wishing to amuse him, she told him about Mary Machin and Fantec. When she ended with a gay laugh, he growled out: "Perhaps she did come back." Then, without noticing her raised eyebrows, he added: "For that matter, I have had experiences, more than one. There was the case of Harbottle. He was at Gérome's with me, my intimate friend. We shared the same rooms. One summer, Harbottle went to Norway, and I to Gretz. I give you my word that I was painting hard, not thinking of my friend. But I woke in the middle of the night and saw his face."

"Yes," said Téphany, thrilled more by the narrator's manner than his words.

"I saw his face distinctly. It was—hideous. Swollen, discoloured, with ejected eyes and protruding tongue. Next morning I told myself that I had been tormented by a nightmare. The fact remains that, four days before I saw the vision, my poor friend met his death by drowning, and at the moment, approximately, when his face was seen by me, the body was found in a fiord by the search party. . . ."

Téphany said nothing; Michael concluded harshly, imperiously, as if he wished to impose his beliefs on his companion:

"I say, that the dead are continually about us. More, their presence affects us for good or ill. They inspire great thoughts, great deeds sometimes, and sometimes, Téphany, they inspire crime."

"Michael, you oughtn't to think of these things. I'm sorry I told you about Fantec, I——" She ceased speaking

for Michael was not listening. He had hurried into the inner room and returned with the mask in his hand.

"Forgive me," he muttered. "You know that I have always been the bond slave of my impulses. The other day you saw derision in this face; now I want you to examine it in different lights. Sit where you are. Now—now—what do you see?"

His anxiety struck Téphany as being pathetic. She remained silent, gazing at the white plaster, no longer quite white, she noticed: slightly yellow, as plaster becomes when exposed to the air and sunshine. Téphany jumped to the conclusion that the cast had been taken many years before. The girl, if she were still alive, must now be a woman; and if she were dead—Michael's voice interrupted her thoughts.

"I'm glad you're taking time to answer my question. I want you to take time. As a favour to me, interpret, if you can, that expression."

Téphany blinked and rubbed her eyes. The mask as she now saw it appeared radiant. This, of course, was an effect of light and shadow. Without speaking, she rose and stared at the face from half a dozen different points of view.

"It's wonderful!" she exclaimed.

"I will tell you this," he said abruptly. "The girl from whose face this was taken is dead."

"Poor thing!" Téphany murmured.

"Why do you say that?" He was becoming excited. "Why do you say that, Téphany? It may be better for her that she is dead. She died young." He hesitated, struggling, evidently, between a passionate desire to speak and a reserve which he deemed inviolate. Finally, the words broke from him: "It is a death mask, Téphany, do you understand?"

"Oh! I could not have believed it possible, because——"

"Yes, yes——"

"Because even the plaster seems to be alive. The expression has changed again and again in the last two minutes. What do I see?" His excitement, the excitement of the

Celt so contagious, so overpowering, communicated itself to her. "I see a sadness which clutches at the heart. She must have suffered—cruelly—*Michael!*"

The suffering she spoke of seemed to have transferred itself from the face of the dead girl to the living man. Téphany was sensible that she had plunged a knife into the heart of her old comrade. So distressing was this conviction that she dropped back into her chair, quivering with pity and dismay. Michael's face hardened.

"You have intuitions," he said slowly. "I knew it."

"But I wouldn't hurt you for the world."

"You have not changed, Téphany!"

The blood rushed to her throat and cheeks. She felt the warm tide mounting to her head, choking and strangling her. He had loved her once; and she had loved him. But he had changed; and so had she. The blood ebbed again. Michael, at all events, had not perceived her confusion, for he had turned his back. At the moment he seemed to be busily engaged in criticising his unfinished sketch, as if he were trying to fetter a rebellious mind to the pigments on the canvas. When he turned round he had become cool and calm. Téphany attempted to cicatrise the wound she had made.

"I spoke of sadness and suffering, Michael; but from here, where the light is best—and—and plays least tricks—I affirm, yes, affirm—positively——" she spoke deliberately, picking her words as a traveller may pick the stepping-stones in a raging torrent whereon he sets his feet, "that joy dominates the anguish. Oh, yes—it is unmistakable. At this moment the face glows with peace, patience, one might almost say triumph."

At each word the man, steadfastly regarding her, seemed to grow younger and happier. The change was so startling as to be uncanny. Again Téphany asked herself the inevitable question: "What was this girl to Michael?"

"Thank you," he said quietly. Then, lifting the mask very tenderly, he carried it back into his bedroom.

When he returned he displayed an interest, for the first time since they had met on the quay, in the change which the years had wrought in her.

"You are no longer the ugly duckling," he said. "And the fine bird wears fine feathers. Has Miss Lane been left a fortune? Téphany of Pont-Aven was poor."

"I have enough for my wants," she replied indifferently. Desiring to tell him everything, she was sensible that a recital of triumph would destroy the frail thread which still held them together. Let him suppose that she had inherited rather than earned the wherewithal to buy pretty frocks and hats. He began to talk, rather disconnectedly, of life in England as it is lived in the country by people of moderate means. Téphany had heard him hold forth on this subject before. She smiled to notice how little his views had changed.

"I complain of the stupidity of the men and women," he said. "As for the men, I suppose it's a physiological fact that the blood which ought to nourish the cells of the brain is used up in digesting their enormous meals. I thought of living again in England after——" He hesitated, stammered slightly, and began another sentence. "I t-tried it for a time, but I had to come back here. But I go away in the summer. A month from now Pont-Aven will be overrun by trippers. Throw a stone out of this window and you will hit not a Breton, but a Briton."

"Did you try living in London?"

"London? Bah! I can't breathe in London. The struggle, the ignominious struggle for existence chokes me. The ugly, unhealthy faces torment me. The failures are whining; the few successful ones grin superciliously. Oh, those successful ones! What a fool I am to talk like this! You are saying: He has failed; he is whining; he envies those he abuses."

"No, no," said Téphany gently.

"I might have succeeded," Michael continued; "it is my own fault—remember that—my own fault that I am obscure. But if I had succeeded, if I were rich, I think I should live

here in Brittany, because I love the place and the people. And even now, to-day, after what I have suffered and gone through, I can get more pleasure out of a bit of colour, out of one glimpse of a curling emerald wave before it breaks into foam, than I could find in all the cities of the world."

He became silent, compressing his lips. Téphany, realising that the man was actually suffering from the silence he had so long imposed upon himself, said quietly:

"In the old days you raved about form, Michael; now it's colour."

He snapped at her bait, and spoke most interestingly of colour and curious effects obtained by the use of certain pigments. It became evident that he had studied his subject exhaustively: experimenting with patience and ardour. Listening to him, conscious that the man had sacrificed, or at least had subordinated, personal ambitions to his desire for a wider and deeper understanding of his art, Téphany felt an immense pity flooding her heart. Very dimly she apprehended the truth that her old friend stood self-revealed as one of the very few who dare, knowingly, to abandon what the world calls substance for something ideal, ephemeral, to be seen, to be touched, but never to be captured.

"As for form," concluded Michael, "to you, Téphany, I will say this: I pursued it till it became my slave. I can draw anything I can see, but the colour in the simplest object defeats me."

"You succeed sometimes," she objected. "That child in the courtyard, for instance——"

"Oh—that?"

Her curiosity, rapidly becoming inordinate, impelled her to mention the child, through whom she might learn more of the girl, the woman.

"Yes—that. It is the best thing I have seen of yours: one of the best things I have ever seen anywhere."

He drew in his breath with a sharp gasping sound.

"If you had known—well, yes, you are right. But I

thought I told you it was not painted from life. I painted it from memory."

"Your memory is strong."

"Strong?" He echoed the word fiercely. "Yes, you may call it that."

"May I look at it again?"

Growling something she could not quite understand, Michael pulled out the canvas and set it on the easel.

"This is the face of the mask?"

She had put the question before, but it will be remembered that Ossory had not answered it.

"I painted an imaginary child from the cast."

"I have never seen that coif."

She flushed slightly, expecting a scathing rebuke.

"It is a Vannetais coif," said Michael.

"I saw the child last night," said Téphany.

"What? You *saw* her?"

"In a dream."

"Well, tell me about your dream. A good many people believe in the reality of the dream life, in the wandering of the disembodied spirit. Why, I myself—tell me about your dream."

"The girl played hide and seek with me, luring me on to follow her, as if she wished to get me alone."

"Go on!"

"Finally, I lost her, but I heard her singing. That, Michael, was the most vivid part of the dream. I heard her song most distinctly, so distinctly in fact that I think I——"

"Well?"

"I think I could hum it."

"I wish you'd try. I have a reason."

She hummed the air of the song, wondering whether the beauty of her voice would appeal to him. But the first bars of it had hardly passed her lips before he held up his hands with an ungovernable gesture of astonishment.

"Great heavens! you heard that? Is it possible?"

Téphany stopped singing. With a tiny shrug of her shoulder and a droop of her lips which signified disappointment and a sense that she had befooled herself, she said contritely, "Michael, you must forgive me. I played a trick on you. I did hear that song in my dream, and most vividly, but I heard it first from you."

"From me?" He stared at her stupidly.

"Yes. After you left me that first night, you whistled the air, which struck me as something totally unlike anything I had heard before."

"I see. It's a folk-song from the Morbihan country. The Vannetais women sing it."

He spoke quickly and with assumed carelessness, as if he were trying to obliterate what had gone before. Téphany swooped upon the truth which had leaked from his too eager lips. So then, some girl, some woman, who had played a stupendous part in the drama of Michael's life, had come from Le Morbihan, possibly from Vannes. Yet the cast came from Paris. Her eyes sparkled.

"The Vannetais women? You know, Michael, that my mother came from Vannes. And I have planned an expedition there, to find out, if I can, more about her."

She saw that he was eyeing her furtively, with a distrust which hurt. In an instant she fathomed his thought. He knew that he had betrayed a part of his secret. And the proposed visit to Vannes, which, indeed, Mary Machin and she had determined to pay, troubled him, nay more, alarmed him. Then the expression, so curiously compounded of annoyance and apprehension, faded, as he said lightly: "Vannes is a dear old place, but very, very unfragrant. And, after all these years, do you think it likely that you will find out more than you know already?"

Téphany realised that he had set his strong will against the proposed visit. Instantly, she defied his power, rising in arms against his lack of confidence in her, against this deliberate

attempt to block her path. But she answered, as carelessly as he:

"Probably not." Then some imp constrained her to add: "But one never knows. Searching for one thing I may find another."

She let her eyes meet his frankly, as if she wished to warn him that his desire to thwart her had quickened a desire as potent, on her part, to oppose him.

"True," he replied harshly. "But before now, simple people hunting for a needle in a bundle of hay have laid hands upon a viper."

"How am I to take that, Michael?"

"As you please. I will make my meaning plainer, if you like. Your mother, whom you can scarcely remember, is of the past. If you are wise, Téphany, you will leave the past alone, particularly," his voice was threatening, "particularly the past of others."

CHAPTER VI.

PÈRE HYACINTHE

Si je rejoins Jean-Pierre
Au dernier rendez-vous,
En me mettant en bière
N'enfoncez pas de clous;
Car ma pauvre âme en peine
Reviendra parmi vous.

TÉPHANY left the studio convinced that Michael loved her no longer. But when she tried to analyse her own feelings, she confronted vague, impalpable subtleties which defied intelligence. She knew, now, that she had remained faithful to the Michael of her youth. Even after her letters were unanswered, during that miserable season when she told herself that he had abandoned her, she still cherished the hope that he would come back, that he would write to explain, that, in the end, it would

be well with both of them. And during the years that followed, those laborious years when she was concentrating all energies upon her training as a singer, she thought continually of Michael and herself as two bodies whirled asunder by some mysterious force, but destined to come together again in obedience, perhaps, to the same inscrutable power. This cherished conviction stood between her and the many men who had desired to marry her, this and one other thing potent to keep a woman bond to the memory of a lover who has forsaken her. Of the men aforesaid, none was to be compared with Michael in mind or body. Henry Lane had remarked once that if Ossory had not been a painter, he must have proved a poet. Gérome, to whom Lane was speaking at the time, replied, with greater insight into his favourite pupil's character and temperament: "My dear fellow, if our friend were not a poet, he would not paint as he does." Looking back, Téphany saw clearly that Michael, as poet and painter, had won her heart. Now, another Michael, a different man, was challenging her sympathy, her pity, her friendship, but not her love.

Dominating these reflections, or shall we say rather percolating through them, was the further conviction that an identity between the old and new Michael could not be established. She had caught, it is true, glimpses of the strong, ardent youth who had picked her up in his arms and strained her to his breast, but these glimpses had but served to increase rather than diminish the size of the gulf which yawned between them.

She had moments, too, when she whispered to herself that it would be wise to return to Daffodil Mansions. Yvonne had warned her, Michael had warned her—to leave the past alone. But some spirit within bade her remain. A fellow creature was drowning in front of her eyes. Prudence, experience, modesty in her own powers, and a score of less obvious considerations told her that she might lose her life in attempting to save his; and yet it seemed to be predestined that she should make the attempt.

Upon the day after the events described in the last chapter Téphany met the curé of Pont-Aven; not the dear old man who had baptized her and listened to childish confessions of innumerable peccadilloes, but a stranger, père Hyacinthe. Obeying an impulse, Téphany entered into conversation with him. An offer to subscribe to a local charity challenged the village priest's attention, an attention which Téphany's personality soon quickened into a lively interest. The curé was of a type happily not uncommon in Finistère. Like most Breton priests outside of the big towns, he was born of the people, although he had received an admirable education at a theological college. But under his soutane throbbed the big heart, the sturdy muscles, the intense vitality and virility of a son of the soil. Téphany recognised this, with keen appreciation of such qualities.

For the first few minutes the talk fluttered about the changes in Pont-Aven. Téphany asked questions, M. le vicaire answered them. Then, an odd sparkle in the shrewd hazel eyes, a genial smile, the subtle assumption of a fatherly manner, told Téphany that she had been identified as the daughter of Henry Lane.

"You know who I am, Monsieur?"

"Yes." He added with a pleasant laugh which tempered the rebuke: "I thought you would have come to see me, my daughter, before this."

Téphany felt that her cheeks were hanging out signals of distress, but her voice was calm enough as she replied: "I understand you perfectly. But I no longer belong to your Church."

"You have ceased to be a Catholic, Mademoiselle?"

"I cannot call myself a Roman Catholic," she answered gently.

The curé opened his wide mouth and closed it. He had tact. With a humorous shrug of his broad shoulders, he murmured: "I am not unprepared for this. Yvonne told me you had spent the last ten years in England."

Téphany broke the ice which had formed between them with a smile. The curé's expression when the word "England" fell from his lips indicated accurately enough his limitations.

"You won't refuse English money?" said Téphany.

"I would accept alms for my poor people from the king of the cannibals, how much more from a young and charming lady. All the same, we must have some talks, you and I."

"Many, I hope," said Téphany, gravely.

As père Hyacinthe went his way Téphany reflected that here was a man who might help her. She thought with pleasure of his large sinewy hands, his square massive head. Head and hands indicated grasp, tenacity and power.

That evening Mary Machie and she were sitting in the big salon of the annexe with Carne and Keats. Carne was holding forth. Téphany listened half smiling, because in Carne's voice she caught echoes of what Michael had said long ago. Like Michael, the Californian seemed to have made a special study of the province, although this was his first visit to Pont-Aven.

"I met the curé to-day," said Téphany.

Carne had plenty to say about père Hyacinthe. Mr. Keats, too, put in a word:

"A good fellow, that. The big square peg in the big square hole. Of course the day of these fellows is drawing to a close."

"Just so," said Machie, nodding.

"I don't agree with you, Mr. Keats," Téphany said, with a slight emphasis. "The day is dawning. Their interference in politics has brought upon them heavy punishment—and I, for one, don't regret it. Now, they will attend to what really concerns them, to what they thoroughly understand. What threatens the soul of the province is not rationalism, nor Freemasonry, as some of the priests would have us believe, but drink. Let the priests fight that!"

"I'll step off my perch," said Keats cheerfully. "You've forgotten more about Brittany than I ever knew, Miss Lane."

"I know something of Bretons. I've seen very little of Brittany."

Carne began to talk of Tréguier, the Léonnais country and Lower Brittany. He had attended most of the great "Pardons," had paid a pilgrimage to Sainte Anne d'Auray, had sketched the huge menhirs and dolmens of Locmariaker. Téphany listened, on edge to ask a question, and yet shrinking from the first plunge. Finally, she said carelessly: "I dare say you sketched the different coifs?"

"Some of them, Miss Lane."

"This Pont-Aven coif is the prettiest I have seen," said Keats.

Carne considered.

"Well, I don't know. The coif the girls wear at Arles, in Provence, is quite charming. This Pont-Aven coif is rather too much of a good thing, eh?"

"You like the simpler forms?" said Téphany.

"Yes, I do, Miss Lane. I like to see a girl wearing a coif, not a coif wearing a girl."

"May I see your studies?" said Téphany, with a slight flush.

"They're out of sight," observed Keats, enthusiastically.

"They are," said Carne, "but I'll fetch them."

Presently he returned with a large portfolio, containing some drawings. Téphany looked at one after the other, very slowly and carefully. Half way through the portfolio, she said: "Oh, this is a very pretty coif."

"That? Why, let me see, where did I do that? Of course, Port Navalo. I'm not likely to forget Port Navalo. Yes, as you say, Miss Lane, a very pretty coif, not unlike the Auray coif. You know there is a symbolism about these coifs. An interesting subject that."

Mary Machin begged him to go on. While he spoke Téphany sat gazing at the study of the girl from Port Navalo, who wore the identical coif of the girl whom Michael had painted in Yvonne's courtyard. But, according to Yvonne,

who was a stickler for the truth, the girl had never stood in the courtyard. And Michael had said that the picture was painted from the mask. In exasperating contradiction to these statements rose the conviction that the girl's face, so remarkable, so perplexing in its expression and chameleon-like power of changing that expression, had haunted Yvonne's dreams. Téphany felt more or less certain that Yvonne had seen the picture, possibly the mask, and that she had reason to connect one or the other with some lamentable knowledge concerning Michael. These thoughts ran through her mind, while she listened to Carne's incisive, high-pitched voice.

"I have noticed," he was saying, "that the coif gives one a fairly accurate notion of the character and temperament of its wearer. The absolutely plain cap, for instance, bare of riband or frill, a mere bit of linen, is worn by the woman who works like a man in the fields, who has little vanity, no imagination, and no sense at all of what is beautiful. Millet put just such caps on the heads of his models. One could hardly conceive his peasants in the dainty, fluttering head-dress the girls wear here."

"That's right," said Keats, admiringly. "You're great this evening, Clinton. Isn't he, Miss Machin?"

"Please go on," said Mary. Carne had curly hair and a well-cut profile; young men with curly hair were very attractive to her.

"What I've said would strike any one," Carne admitted, with becoming modesty. "It's the A B C of the thing. But when we come to the ornamented coifs, it's not so easy to interpret them. Now the coif on the head of that girl, Miss Lane, the Port Navalo girl——"

"Yes; what do you make of that?"

"It's rather a long story."

"So much the better," said Miss Machin. "I like long stories. I like long novels, such as Sir Walter Scott wrote."

Thus encouraged the Californian continued fluently:

"I said just now that I was not likely to forget Port Navalo, and to explain that coif I must tell you why. I spent last summer on one of the islands of the Gulf of Morbihan, the Ile aux Moines; but I explored all the queer country about the gulf. Port Navalo is a fishing village, perched on the extreme point of the peninsula which faces Locmariaker. Between Port Navalo and Locmariaker is a narrow channel known as La Jument. When the tide is ebbing or flowing strongly La Jument becomes one of the most fearful races in the world. And what makes the place so awful and yet so fascinating is the fact that on a midsummer's day, when there's no wind and the gulf is like a mill-pool, La Jument seems to be possessed of ten thousand devils. At high tide and low tide the channel is not much more interesting than a canal. Then the boats sail up and down it in perfect safety. While you are doing this the change comes. The quiet water begins to bubble as if it were a sort of chalybeate spring; then it swirls; then it boils; then it transforms itself into a raging rapid, like the Niagara rapids—and from the same cause. Behind this narrow channel is the Atlantic, in front the Gulf. When the tide is ebbing, all the water in the Gulf has to pass through this Devil's Gate, when the tide flows the Atlantic drives these millions of tons of water back again. See!"

"I'd like to see it," said Téphany.

"From a safe place," added Mary Machin.

"I was describing the race in midsummer weather. Now conceive of it when a storm is raging."

"I'd rather not," said Miss Machin, with a shudder.

"It's horrible then," said Carne, in a voice that thrilled. "It's appalling, Miss Machin, blood-curdling! And, remember, La Jument, which yearly swallows up scores of lives, is set in the heart of Lower Brittany. Within two hundred years—I had this on high authority—human sacrifices have taken place near Locmariaker. The peasants are Druids still. Now what sort of effect would such a natural phenomenon as this awful race

have on their minds? You can all make a guess, a faint guess, at the terror it inspires in credulous superstitious souls, when I tell you that I," he laughed grimly, "an up-to-date Westerner, not easily scared, could never look at the thing without shuddering. . . ."

"I shan't sleep a wink to-night, but please go on," said Mary Machin.

"Every stick and stone in that country has its story," Carne continued; "and take it from me that the peasants and fisher-folk believe these stories, although they say they don't. But, apart from their superstition, they are a gay, pleasure-loving people, quite different, for instance, from the sort of men and women one finds near the Pointe du Raz.[1] Now, don't laugh, but my contention is that if it were not for La Jument and those horrible menhirs and dolmens, the Morbihan coifs would be as flamboyant as the coifs here and at Quimperlé, but the women don't dare to indulge in silk and streamers. What follows? Their fancy, which is exquisitely graceful, finds expression in delicate hemming and embroidery. You get the simple lines, rigidly restrained, as in this coif, and you will find in the girls, what you see in their head-dress, a sort of shy, restrained fascination, nothing to catch the eye at first sight, but something which allures tremendously. It's not easy to express what one means. But you're the daughter of a painter, Miss Lane, and you paint a bit yourself. Well, you know the delight of finding colour in semi-tones, in soft greys, which melt and shimmer into all the tints of the rainbow? Yes. Whistler ought to have painted some of those girls. I tried and missed what I was after. I don't know enough yet, but I'm going back. I've been giving you an a lecture."

"Clinton can keep it up all night," said Johnnie Keats.

Carne laughed, collected his studies, thrust them into the portfolio, and took his leave. Mary Machin said to Téphany:

"We must go to Port Navalo?"

"Perhaps," Téphany answered.

[1] Pointe du Raz guards the terrible Baie des Trépassés.

During the week that followed, she saw but little of Michael Ossory, being unwilling to visit his studio till she had resolved certain problems sorely perplexing her. They met twice, however, upon the old Concarneau road, where Ossory happened to be painting each morning. Téphany introduced Michael to Mary Machin, uncomfortably sensible that he might play the bear. To her relief, he behaved with courtesy.

"My dear," said Machie, afterwards, "he is the most interesting man I ever met who wears a beard. If he would shave, really, I——"

Téphany interrupted her.

"Machie, will you do me a favour? Please don't speak to Mr. Ossory of Port Navalo, and don't ask me any questions yet."

At table d'hôte, Miss Machin told Clinton Carne that she had met the Hermit.

"And if he'd only shave—— He is so very much in the rough."

"I've met him too," said Carne.

"Have you?" said Téphany, eagerly; then, checking herself, she added quietly: "Have you talked with him?"

"He was extremely kind, and a remarkable draughtsman. I was struggling with a foreshortened curve, and in despair, when he passed me. Somehow I seemed to feel that he sympathised. He stopped for an instant, and I had time to growl out something. He looked me square in the eye; then he said most civilly: 'May I show you how to do that?' His tone of assurance rather struck me, because I had come to the conclusion that there were just about four men in Paris, and four only, who could tackle that curve. 'I shall be much obliged,' said I. With that he took my palette, picked out a whacking big brush, and went to work. In one minute the trick was done. I tried to get him to talk, but he bolted. And ever since I've been asking myself, why the dickens he ain't at the top of the ladder?"

"Ossory looks at me," said Johnnie Keats, "as if he knew exactly the all sorts of a fool I am."

Everybody laughed except Téphany. She was angry with herself, because the recital of this tiny incident revealed the Michael whom, the day before, she was trying to forget.

In the afternoon of the same day she took a cheque to the curé, who looked at it in astonishment, confounded by the amount.

"You give me twenty-five hundred francs for my people?"

"They are my people, too, my father."

"True, true!" He put the cheque into a much-frayed pocket-book, slightly frowning, as if puzzled. Then, with the touch of humour which had so pleased Téphany when they first met, he added, chuckling: "It is strange that I should get two cheques from," he paused, and his genial smile took all the sting out of the next word, "from heretics."

"Two?"

"Monsieur Ossory, the English painter, is very, very generous, although, to be sure——"

"Although——"

"I am indiscreet, Mademoiselle." Then as Téphany shook her head, he added: "That is to say sometimes, but you won't betray me. Monsieur Ossory is very generous, as I say, which is the more remarkable because I am told that he is far from rich; but the money which he gives me must be spent as he directs."

Téphany perceived that he had something to tell, and, under slight pressure, might tell it. She wondered if a man of honour of her own class would use pressure. She was very human, as you will find out when you know her better. She nodded, with a delicate gesture of interrogation.

"My old people, who have worked hard all their lives and who can work no longer, have the first claim upon our charity —is it not so? Obviously. But Monsieur Ossory won't give a sou to me for them."

"Oh!" Téphany exclaimed. She knew now that she was on the brink of discovering another clue to the mystery which lay between Michael and herself. Her pride urged her to step

back. During the past few days, ever since, in fact, her last visit to the studio, she had told herself that a self-respecting woman must respect others. Michael had refused to give her confidence; nay more, he had warned her against curiosity. When he bade her leave the past alone she vowed to herself that she would obey him. And yet, she had been unable to withstand the temptation to listen to Clinton Carne; and now she was equally unable to turn her back on père Hyacinthe. She had the grace to blush, as she asked:

"To whom, then, does he give his money?"

"It is given to girls."

"That is certainly odd," Téphany murmured, with a little gasp.

"What I have told you is between ourselves, Mademoiselle. For the rest, it is not so odd after all, Monsieur himself said to me that the lives of the young are often spoiled for the lack of a little money, and the lives of the old have been lived." He sighed, and his shrewd eyes softened, becoming sombre and full of shadows. Looking at him now Téphany saw that he was a Breton indeed under his soutane. Upon the impulse of the moment she leaped barriers.

"My father," at the tone of her voice the Breton vanished, the priest, alert, inviting confidence, strong in his power to comfort and advise, smiled paternally, "it must have struck you that Monsieur Ossory, who helps others, needs help himself."

"Do we not all need help?" he asked keenly.

"Ah, yes; but he—in particular——" Her voice faltered.

"You know him well, Mademoiselle?"

"I knew him long ago, very well indeed. He was my father's friend and mine." She spoke warmly of Michael's kindness to her when she found herself an orphan. The curé nodded sympathisingly. "And now," she concluded, "I come back after ten years, and I am told by—by—I will be quite frank—I am told by Yvonne, who was once his friend, that he is lost—her word. *Lost!*"

They were sitting in the small reception-room of the presbytery, the same room wherein Téphany had been prepared for Confirmation. It had changed but little. The walls were whitewashed as of yore, the chairs were uncomfortably hard; but the view from the window revealed a tiny garden, gay with geraniums, roses, and some tall nodding hollyhocks. The garden symbolised the beauty of the world outside; the flowers might be compared to ephemeral joys, innocent and sweet, but destined to wither and decay within a few brief hours.

The curé hesitated; when he spoke his manner had changed subtly. Téphany realised that she had led him out of familiar channels into unknown waters. He had always dealt, sturdily and capably, with his like, peasants and fishermen. To such a man Ossory must seem a creature of another world. For an instant she feared that the priest would ascend his pulpit, and proclaim his gospel in obvious time-worn phrases. Her respect for him expanded enormously, her belief in his goodness and sympathy became impregnable, when he answered with humility:

"My daughter, if I could see my way, or any way, to help our friend, I should place myself at his service. From the day when we first met, some years ago now, he has had my prayers. Well, I," his voice became virile, infused with an extraordinary virtue, as he concluded, "I know that some prayers are answered, and perhaps for him the prayers of his friends are the only help they can offer."

Téphany twisted her slender fingers.

"Let us assume," she said abruptly, "that you and I divine that a shadow—ah! why should we veil our words?—let us assume, you and I, his friends, that some sin," her voice sank to a whisper, "stands between him and us——"

"Go on, my daughter."

"And if it be so, if one's intuition is not at fault, if this barrier shuts him from us, ought we not to pull it down, to destroy it—if we can?"

"That is well said; but how do you propose to pull down, to destroy what is invisible?"

"We must see it first," she murmured.

The curé rose from his chair and walked to the windows. Téphany was glad that he had taken time to weigh his answer. She wondered whether he guessed the little that she had left unsaid. Presently he turned, and faced her.

"I am not quick," he said. "I do not shoot my bird on the wing, you understand, but I have had experience, and I am patient. But you," again his voice softened delightfully, "are young and impatient. Yes, yes; that is so natural. And then, again," Téphany could see that he was laboriously fitting himself into her shoes, "you are a visitor to Pont-Aven; you are leaving soon, may be, and if you are to pull down walls, granite walls," he added with a shrewd allusion to the almost indestructible walls of the Province, "you wish to go to work at once. Is it not so?"

"Yes; you read me easily, my father."

"No, no; I cannot read you easily; it is doubtful if you can read yourself—*easily*. But this is plain to me: you ask me to help you to discover some secret which our friend has chosen not to reveal to us? You ask me to join you, first of all, in a hunt for some hidden sin—your own word, my daughter. Having found this sin, we unite to destroy it. Put bluntly, I am a blunt man, that is what you ask?"

"It sounds very dreadful," said Téphany; "and I think the case might be stated less bluntly. Yes; I ask your help to find, if it be possible, the brave, the gallant man whom Yvonne says is lost."

"You move too fast. Do you think that you and I can destroy a sin, my daughter?"

"The sin itself, of course not."

"Or its effects?"

"You force me to confess how badly I have worded my thoughts. The sin and its effects cannot be destroyed by human hands; but the barrier, the shadow—my first word was

after all the right one—the shadow which sin casts and which pride intensifies does vanish, not always, but often, often, beneath the light of knowledge. To know all is to pardon. And if one knows nothing, what can one do?"

The curé smiled; then he murmured: "I am sorry, very sorry, but I cannot help you, my daughter."

"You can at least do this," said Téphany, driven to the wall: "you can tell me frankly whether in your opinion I am justified in trying to find out all I can by fair means."

"By fair means?"

"I know already two facts of importance. These facts will lead me on to others. In a word, I can advance, knowing that not very far away is the truth, or I can turn my back on Pont-Aven for ever."

Her voice must have told the reader of many hearts that the issues at stake involved as much to the woman who stood before him as to the man whose salvation, perhaps, hung upon the answer he was entreated to give. Again he walked to the window and gazed out into the gay little garden beyond. It seemed to Téphany an eternity before he came back and took her hand between his large rough palms.

"You are a good woman," he said gravely, "good and pure." He stared hard into her eyes; but she met his glance without wincing. "You ask me a question which a wiser man than I would find hard to answer, but I am going to answer it according to my lights."

"One moment," said Téphany. He saw that she was trembling violently, that her eyes were wet. "Before you speak I wish to say this; many women ask lightly for advice, meaning to take it or reject it according as it pleases them. I—" she controlled herself, raised her head, and spoke proudly, without a quiver of voice or lips—"I am not one of those women, my father. I have asked for your advice because I—mean—to—take—it."

(To be continued)