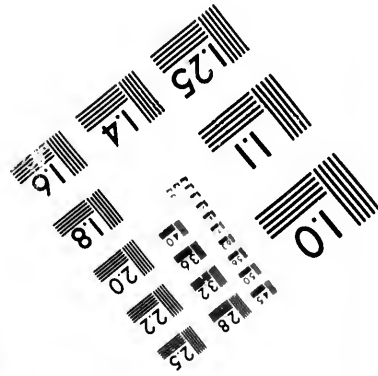
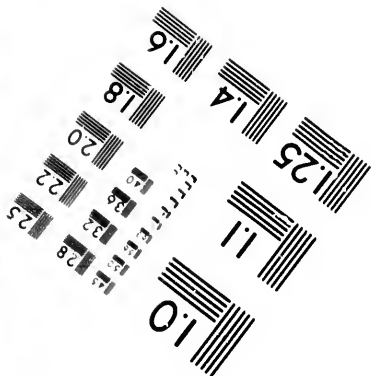
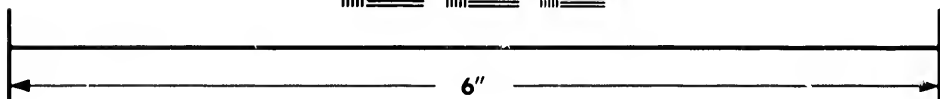
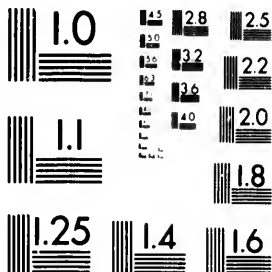


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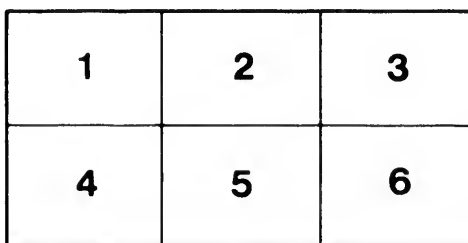
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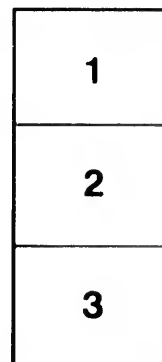
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Oh, let our country prosper 'neath her sway;
Save her from enemies or foes unseen,
Thou, the great God of Battles, save our Queen.

Watch o'er our sons who have gone forth to war.
May they march on victorious as of yore;
Help them who fight for home and fatherland,
O'er them, O Lord, hold Thy protecting hand.

Save our Dominion from rebellion's scourge;
Let songs of triumph drown the funeral dirge.
May the land prosper; let forevermore
Peace and contentment reign from shore to shore.

O, Thou who rulest over land and sea,
Help all in peril when they cry to Thee;
Comfort the sad; grant aid where want is seen;
God save our country, and our country's Queen.

THE LITTLE PRINCESS.

IN the year 1819 the Royal Family of England was not in a happy or prosperous state. Seldom before or since has there been less comfort in the prospects of the House of Hanover. King George III. was in seclusion, bowed down with incurable disease; and of all his large family, fifteen sons and daughters, most of whom are still living, not one had a successor to come after them, a legitimate heir to the Crown. It is needless to

enter into any description of the state of things which had caused this—the sons of the reigning House, when they had loved at all, had not loved as they ought. Willful young men, brought up in a house which, though virtuous, was dull, by arbitrary parents making little allowance for youthful fancy, they had either plunged into dissipation, or had fixed their choice upon unroyal ladies who could not be received as their lawful wives, possibly the mothers of a future sovereign; and for twenty years the

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THE LITTLE PRINCESS.

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sole hope of the Royal House had been the Princess Charlotte, the only child of a most unhappy marriage, but in herself a sweet and promising young woman, with many claims upon tenderness and sympathy of the nation. So long as she lived all national requirements were satisfied on the points of heirship. She married wisely and happily, not only making an admirable choice for herself, but bringing forward unawares, out of the obscurity of princely life in Germany, and from amidst a crowd of petty princes, equally distinguished and undistinguished, a family which has had a greater place since in the affairs of christendom than perhaps any other—the family of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. Prince Leopold, the husband thus chosen, should the family faculty of combining the greatest and most ostentatious for all life, with great devotion to public affairs, and that political penetration and sagacity which make a statesman, as much as an eye for form and color make an artist, and everything bid fair for the happiest Royal life that England perhaps had ever known. The historical student looking on after these events, might well pronounce this brief chapter to hold the place of a sketch for a great picture, as if the mighty artifices of the world had tried the combination first in a momentary episode before touching the larger, more permanent cause. As Victoria and Albert were a generation, so were Charlotte and Leopold in 1817—good, true, honest and noble-minded, setting up a pure household, a high standard of life, in the midst of the careless England of those days, in which dissipation was more wild, and vice more undisguised, than now. The spectre of conscientious Royalty working hard at its

noble occupation, without ambitious thought or desire either for aggrandizement or added splendor in its own person, was something new to the world—too fine an experiment, perhaps to be worked out all at once. But in a little more than a year the essay ended, the young household was broken up, and all these beautiful hopes were at an end. Princess Charlotte died, and the Royal house found itself childless. There were still many brothers, it is true, but they were beyond their prime, and all unmarried except the two eldest, who had no surviving children. The situation was a startling one, all the more for being so unexpected, for the happy marriage of the Princess Charlotte seemed to have settled matters in the most satisfactory way. Within a few months of her death, however, several marriages took place in the Royal family, the most important of which was that of the Duke of Kent, the fourth son of George III., who married a sister of Prince Leopold, the Princess of Leiningen, a young widow with two children, in the month of May, 1818. Of this marriage was born Victoria, the happiest and most popular of English Queens—against whom no sedition has ever risen, nor evil whisper ever breathed; whom her severest critics would stand for to the death as stoutly as her dearest friends; and who could at any time of her long reign, from her accession to this day, even when crowns were falling around her, and all the demons of revolution raging, have passed unattended from end to end of her country, secure of nothing but universal homage, and honor, and loyalty, and devotion. It is doubtful whether as much could be said of any other monarch who has ever reigned.



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THE LITTLE PRINCESS.

5

The Princess Victoria was born within the homely brick walls of Kensington Palace, on the 24th of May, 1819. She alone of the little group of Royal children born in that year was English by actual birth. The present Duke of Cambridge and the son of the Duke of Cumberland, now ex-King of Hanover, were both born in Germany, and so was a hapless baby which would have stood first among them had she lived—a little daughter of the Duke of Clarence, who stood next in succession to the throne. It would seem that Providence had decided one way or other that England was certainly to have a Queen, for the children of King William IV., too, were all girls. These children, however, all died; and though it was by no means sure at the time of Princess Victoria's birth that she would be the future Queen, yet she came first in her generation, though with many possibilities against her. For it was not unlikely that George IV. might marry again on the death of his acknowledged queen, whom he hated; and as a matter of fact, second children were born to the Duke of Clarence, afterward William IV., after the birth of the Princess Victoria. There was however, sufficient probability of her succession to fill the minds of all belonging to her with a thrill of excitement beyond that which greets every unborn child when the little Princess came into the world. In the letter of her mother's mother, the old Duchess of Saxe-Coburg, written on hearing of this event, this sentiment is very apparent. "Again a Charlotte," she writes, "destined, perhaps, to play a great part one day if a brother is not born to take it out of her hands. The English like Queens." No happier augury could be said over the cradle of a

sovereign, and nothing more true. The English have cause to like Queens; for England has never been greater, more famous, or full of genius than when her monarchs were women. And though George III., with his domestic virtues, had been a popular king, he was the only one of his race who had any pretensions to his name. The House of Hanover had not been beloved. It wanted a woman to conciliate and charm the heart of the nation, and to call forth that chivalry which is so good an auxiliary of loyalty. Princess Charlotte had already done something. She had made herself dear and sacred, if by nothing else, by her death. The country had mourned for her as for the child of its hopes. And now again there was hope in its present fortunate shape—reborn

The Princess Victoria's training, however, was very different from the irregular, unhappy education of her unfortunate cousin and predecessor. Except the splendid prospects, there was nothing happy in the external circumstances among which her life began. When she was only a few months old her father died, closely followed by his father, poor old King George, whose life for some time past had been of little value to himself or any one. Before this, it is recorded that "The Regent was not kind to his brother," and when the Duke of Kent had left his family deprived of all means of existence, "thus the position of the mother of the future sovereign, a young German Princess so soon left alone in this strange, and not always very genial country, was far from consoling. Her brother, Prince Leopold, hastened to her in her distress, and stood by her in all her future difficulties, few women have had a severer piece of work to un-

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THE LITTLE PRINCESS.

7

dertake. But for that wise and kind brother, the Duchess of Kent, though the mother of the future Queen, was all but unfriended in a home with which she had as yet but little time to get acquainted. She was a foreigner, accustomed to different ways of living and had not even the easy elasticity of youth, which accustoms itself to anything, for she was already over thirty when she married the Duke, and while occupying so great a position, she was comparatively poor. Had she withdrawn with her child to her own country, to bring the little princess up among her own people, cheaply and kindly, far away from the criticisms and extravagancies, the late hours and bustle of English life, who could have wondered? but the Duchess had the temperate Coburg blood in her veins, and shared the sound sense and judgment of her race. She never forgot that her eight-months-old baby was the first princess of the blood, English above all things, and imperatively requiring an English education. And she began her long career of self-denial by steadily remaining in England, though far from her friends and everything that was most dear to her, at the little palace at Kensington, where the child had been born, and there the early days of the Princess were chiefly spent. More happy than most children in her position, the little heiress of England had the society of an elder sister, whose superior age must, in those innocent days have neutralized the immense difference of position, and given something of the sweet natural humility of a younger child in a well-regulated household to this most important member of the family all unconscious of her own greatness. This sister, Princess Feodora, afterwards Princess Hohenlohe, was

the tenderest of friends, and companion to the Queen during her whole life. They were brought up together in quiet old Kensington, in the sweeter solitude of Claremont, the house where Prince Leopold had spent his short married life, which belonged to him, and in which he often received his widowed sister and her little girl. They were there in the summer of 1824, and so bright must that have been, that its brightness still lasts in recollection, though the little Princess was but five years old. "Those days of Claremont," the Queen herself tells us, "were the happiest days of her childhood." In the quiet, retired from all the observation and bustle of London, in that domestic peace which affords a certain compensation to such imperfect households for the loss, of the husband and father. Of all the noisier parts of life the most careful education was given to the royal child. In no other kind of a home are the children so entirely the centre of life as in that of a tender mother who is a widow. It does not require the superior importance of a future Royalty to secure this concentration of all interest in one, but here was every inducement, public and private, to make the mental and moral training of the Heiress of England the first object of all surrounding her. Over this training Prince Leopold watched with all the interest of a statesman, and in all the tenderness of a father. He introduced less disturbance than a father would have done, for all his own larger life was wiser than most fathers, and took the largest view of the trust thus confided to his hands, and all that the kindest and most watchful care could do he did for his sister and her precious charge--al-ready, too, other visions of the future were drawing before the far-

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seeing eyes of the man who, with the sincerest desire for the welfare of England, and a longing, no doubt, made all the stronger by the melancholy failure of his personal hopes, to give to the country which had received him a kindly and noble sovereign, had at the same time a natural wish to advance his own family, worthy by constitution and character as it had already proved itself. Another child, standing to him in exactly the same relationship as the little Victoria, had been born just after her in the little Ducal Court, at Saxe-Coburg, in the cheerful country-house of the Rosenau—a child occupying exactly the same position to which he had been himself born, as the little Princess did that of his young wife. So early lost, what wonder if the heart of the young Statesman, still sore from that wound, pleased itself with the thought of another union which should carry out all his abortive hopes, while the children were still in their cradles; this idea seems to have communicated itself to all about them; the family were in constant communication, the young mothers exchanging those pleasant experiences and bits of nursery news, as mothers will do as long as the species last. All the doings and growings of "The little Mayflower," as the Princess was called, by the kind German kinfolk, were recorded with fond simplicity for the pleasure of the old grandmother at home. The good German nurse, who passed from one house to another as her services were wanted, "could not sufficiently describe what a dear little love" the baby at Kensington was, and the baby of the Rosenau had the enthusiastic pen of his mother to do him full justice. Albert was of extraordinary beauty—this impartial historian declared; he had

great blue eyes, dimples on each cheek, three teeth, and at eight months old was already beginning to walk." Great news—enough to make the other nursery thrill with emulation as these notes were compared; what a compensation lies in this sweet babble of children, for women's ears at least, for both the poor ladies who wrote had troubles enough; the one in England had to hold her own modest courage in face of the criticism and doubtful friendliness of a whole foreign society, in face of poverty and loneliness; the other was on the brink of a separation from home and children altogether; a dark back ground full of human trouble and sorrow comes behind the two angelic heads, that look out, wondering, with blue eyes wide open at the spectator. But could anything be more charming and touching than this baby pair?

Naturally there are but few records of this early period left. The Queen's own amused recollection, when she first takes travelling with her another little Princess Victoria, her eldest child, and sees herself once more bowing to the spectators in baby state from the window of the carriage, is almost all the little twinkle of reminiscence which we have. "It put me so in mind of myself when I was the little Princess, she says, with frank simplicity which has made Her Majesty's friendly confidence to her people so popular. Still, however, though an ever-growing interest accompanied the little Princess wherever she went, her position was not assured. Once more in the back-ground behind the little figure, yet threatening to eclipse her, was the shadow of another family in which things did not go so well with the children when the Duchess of Clarence, afterwards Queen Adelaide, lost her second

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THE LITTLE PRINCESS.

11

daughter. She wrote to her sister-in-law in words of the most touching resignation, "My children are dead," said the poor lady, "but yours lives, and she is mine, too." So many griefs, so many dyings, went to make the throned estate and great fortune of the little Victoria. Her infantine face, all innocent and fearless—the same face which had come down from generation to generation through all the line of Brunswick—was the first countenance for many years upon which there was no shade.

A few years later, when she was nine years old; Sir Walter Scott records in his diary that he had dined with the Duchess of Kent, and had been presented by Prince Leopold "to the little Princess Victoria—the Heir-Apparent to the House as things now stand. This little lady," he adds, "is educated with much care, and watched so closely that no busy maid has a moment to whisper, 'You are Heir of England!' I suspect that if we could dissect the little heart, we should find that some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter. She is fair, like the Royal Family." Sir Walter's idea, however, had as little foundation in fact as such surmises often have. The little Princess neither at that time nor for many years after knew anything of her pre-eminence. She was brought up with the strictest economy and regularity; as children of much lower position rarely are, and was taught at an early age to restrain her expenditure within the limits of her income, even when that income was but a child's pocket money. Miss Martineau, an authority not likely to err in the way of enthusiasm, gives us in her sketch—the Duchess of Kent, an anecdote current at that time, which illustrates the careful-

ness of the training better than it does the abstract statement which precedes it, that the Princess "was reared in as much honesty and care about money-matters as any citizen's child." Very few citizen's children, we believe, ever were or could be so rigidly guarded from the extra shilling of expenditure. "It became known at Tunbridge Wells that the Princess had been unable to buy a box at the Bazaar because she had spent her money. At this Bazaar she had bought presents for almost all her relations, and had laid out her last shilling, when she remembered one cousin more, and saw a box priced half a crown which would suit him. The shop people, of course, placed the box with the other purchases, but the little lady's governess admonished them by saying, 'No; you see the Princess has not got the money; therefore, of course, she cannot buy the box.' This being perceived, the next offer was to lay by the box till it could be purchased, and the answer was, 'Oh, well, if you will be so good as to do that.' On quarter-day, before seven in the morning, the Princess appeared on her donkey to claim her purchase." This reads like a story out of Sandford and Merton. But the Princess Victoria came, by her father's side, of a lavish and largely spending race, and no doubt on this account the discipline under which she was trained became more severe.

A much prettier story, and one of the authenticity of which there can be no doubt, gives a description of the way in which her future rank was revealed to her. No one had been allowed, as is mentioned above, to breathe a word of this in the child's ear. But events now began to happen which changed her position, to a certain extent. King George IV. died, which

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THE LITTLE PRINCESS.

13

brought the Princess a step nearer to the throne, and there was no longer any reasonable prospect that King William could have children to succeed him. Thus the child of Kensington Palace became beyond all doubt the next in succession, with only an old man of sixty-five, of indifferent health, intervening. And she herself was only twelve, and her nearest English relative was not of a character to reassure her friends. In these circumstances a Bill was brought into Parliament to make the Duchess of Kent Regent in case her daughter should be called upon to ascend the throne before she became of age. When these public precautions were taken, it was thought necessary to inform the little girl herself of her true position—that she was not merely one of a band of Princes and Princesses, the younger members of the family, but the first among them—the future Head of the Race. She was in the midst of her lessons—somewhat surprised, it would seem, at the grave work required from her, which was not expected from the other Princesses—when this great intimation was made to her. The story told in a letter from her governess, the Baroness Selwyn, to the Queen, written in 1854, and apparently recalling to her the incidents of her youth:

"I ask your Majesty's leave to cite some remarkable words of your Majesty's when only twelve years old, while the Regency Bill was in progress. I then said to the Duchess of Kent that now, for the first time, your Majesty ought to know your place in the Succession. Her Royal Highness argued with me, and I put the genealogical table into the historical book. When Mr. Davys (the Queen's instructor after the Bishop of Peterborough) was gone, the Princess Victoria

opened the book again as usual, and, seeing the additional paper, said, 'I never saw that before.' 'It was thought necessary you should, Princess,' I answered. 'I see I am nearer the throne than I thought.' 'So it is, Madam,' I said. After some moments the Princess resumed; 'Now many a child would boast, but they don't know the difficulty. There is much splendor, but there is much responsibility.' The Princess, having lifted up the forefinger of her right hand while she spoke, gave me that little hand, saying, 'I will be good. I understand now why you urged me so much to learn Latin. My cousins Augusta and Mary never did, but you told me Latin is the foundation of English grammar, and of all the elegant expressions, and I learned it as you wished it, but I understand all better now;' and the little Princess gave me her hand, repeating, 'I will be good.'"

It is seldom that a little scene like this stands out so distinct in the early story even of a life destined to greatness. The hush of awe upon the child; the childish application of this great secret to the obtruse study of Latin, which was not required from the others; the immediate resolution, so simple, yet containing all the wisest sage could have counselled or the greatest hero vowed, "I will be good," make a perfect little creature. It is the clearest appearance of the child Queen in her own person that we can get through the soft obscurity of those childish years. The same hand which placed itself so solemnly in the anxious guardian's hand, to give weight to the simple vow, inscribed long after, in full maturity, a few words of recollection upon the margin of this narrative. "I cried much on hearing it," writes the Queen. No further words are needed to en-

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THE LITTLE PRINCESS.

15

hance the effect of this touching scene.

After this wonderful revelation the school-room routine began again, the lessons were learned, the happy monotony of the child's existence was resumed. All was as modest and retired, as quiet as ever. The little Heiress of England was not permitted to take part in pageant of her uncle's coronation, or brought forward too soon into the glare of day. After this date the course of her education widened, and she was made acquainted with various features of her own country, making a series of visits and expeditions throughout England to many of the most interesting towns, cathedrals, and other remarkable places. And whenever the little maiden went, as was natural, she was the centre of attraction. A creature so young and so highly placed, with already the shadow of a crown upon her, drew all eyes, and gave a charm of sympathetic nature which ennobled it to the ordinary curiosity of the crowd. Something kinder than curiosity, a feeling more warm and genial than the vulgar love of a spectacle, drew gazers out upon her path wherever she moved. And thus her mother accustomed her, unconsciously, to the multitude of eyes that were to watch her every movement, and to the often wearisome, if sometimes exciting, details of a public life. There does not seem any appearance that in her early days the Queen showed any of that distaste for the public observation which is the greatest reproach that any one has made against her in her elder days. Difficulties of all kinds, however, as was natural, beset her youth path. Her position was infinitely more delicate and critical than had she been the daughter of the reigning Sovereign holding a natural place

in his family. The revelations of the late Mr. Greville, questionable as they are, both in good taste and social fidelity, show painfully enough some of the early troubles to which the Princess, and especially her mother, was exposed. The King took dire offence at the wise restraint under which the young Princess was brought up, and so far forgot what was due to a lady, and his guest, as to upbraid the Duchess of Kent at his own table for keeping her young daughter as much as she could out of the unwholesome air of the Court. When we read of this scene, of the Queen's confusion and the Princess's tears and the painful family squabble revealed to all the gossiping, whispering world, we can realize better what difficulties must have been in the way of such a serious education, and such a seclusion from courtiers, flatteries, and Royal bad manners, as made the Princess Victoria, when she came to the throne, the admiration of all who surrounded her. Evidently, to her conscientious mother and guardian the charge of conducting her young mind safe and spotless through all these dizzy paths to the great elevation which awaited her, was inducement enough to bear all things, and follow steadily the course chalked out, whatever angry King or impertinent critic could say.

On the other hand, while the Duchess was blamed for keeping the young Princess out of the buzz of the Court, she was equally blamed for the little expeditions, so profitable to all parties, by which the young lady was made acquainted with her country, and become to some degree known, so far as the modesty of her girlhood permitted, to her future people. Almost every heir and heiress who is not the son or daughter of the

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previous possessor of the inheritance is liable to the same jealous watch and inevitable fault-finding. Her mother kept her child from all vulgar contact with the crowd; it was a "vigorous seclusion." She took her to see a beautiful cathedral or a historical beautiful house; it was an attempt at a Royal progress. So the critics contradicted each other. And in the meantime Kensington Palace held its own with a firmness not less remarkable than the purity and gravity of the aims which were pursued. The system of travel and intercourse with the world, which has been so largely adopted in the training of our present Princess, had not then struck the public mind as desirable; and the Princess Victoria never left England, notwithstanding the crowd of kind relations whom she possessed in Germany, and the interest which that country must have had to her as her mother's birthplace, and the home of the cousins of whom she had heard so much, and in one of whom she was soon to have so close an interest. Since the publication of the Prince Consort's life, the story of the young Prince in his early years becomes doubly rich and interesting. In it is a double existence that is thus set before us. Scarcely more were the interests of the Crown of England considered in Kensington than they were in Coburg, where, from his earliest youth, the boy Albert

was trained to help and strengthen the girl Victoria in the great work that lay before her. The Prince was more free to go and come, to mix with different classes, to learn and acquire experience among men, than his future bride could be. He was more free even than though he himself occupied the great position of heir to England. He could move lightly about the world, unencumbered by pomp, unattended by observation; and over him, as over his cousin, the wise supervision of his uncle was extended. So long as they were both children, nothing further could come of this; but it is very interesting now to note how entirely from their cradles the two were trained to form but one.

In the meantime the Princess progressed towards womanhood, in an atmosphere as nearly resembling the wholesale quiet and seclusion in which childhood is ordinarily allowed to develop as was possible, and amidst those natural relationships which make life sweet in all ranks and at all ages. Her rank forbade that entirely unrestrained quiet which is most favorable for the growth of the human faculties, but at least this sweet obscurity was pursued as far as might be, and the inevitable exposure to the public gaze was tempered by tender companionship, and by the consciousness of duty, the best means of neutralizing all necessary evil.



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THE CORONATION.



HE Coronation took place at Westminster Abbey on June 28th, 1838. The same authority whom we have just quoted—Miss Martineau—gives a rather graphic, though in many respects very disagreeable account of the scene. "The sight of the rapid filling of the Abbey was enough to go for." She says:

"The stone architecture contrasted finely with the gay colors of the multitude. From my high seat I commanded the whole north transept, the area with the throne, and many portions of galleries, and the balconies which were called the vaultings. Except a mere sprinkling of oddities, everybody was in full dress. The scarlet of the military officers mixed in well, and the groups of the clergy were dignified; but to an unaccustomed eye the prevalence of Court dresses had a curious effect. I was perpetually taking whole groups of gentlemen for Quakers, till I recollected myself. The Earl Marshall's assistants, called Goldsticks, looked well from above, lightly flitting about in white breeches, silk stockings, blue-laced frocks, and white sashes. The throne—covered, as was its footstool, with cloth of gold—stood on an elevation of four steps in the

centre of the area. The first peeress took her seat in the north transept opposite at a quarter to seven; and three of the bishops came next. From that time the peers and their ladies arrived faster and faster. Each peeress was conducted by two Goldsticks, one of whom handed her to her seat, and the other bore and arranged her train on her lap, and saw that her coronet, footstool, and book were comfortably placed.... About nine the first gleam of the sun started into the Abbey, and presentlyavelled down to the peeresses. I have never before seen the full effect of diamonds. As the light travelled each lady shone out as a rainbow. The brightness, vastness, and dreamy magnificence of the scene produced a strange effect of exhaustion and sleepiness.... The guns told when the Queen set forth; and there was unusual animation. The Goldsticks flitted about; there was tuning in the orchestra; and the foreign ambassadors and their suites arrived in quick succession. Prince Esterhazy, crossing a bar of sunshine was the most prodigious rainbow of all. He was covered with diamonds and pearls, and as he dangled his hat it cast a dazzling radiance all round.... At half-past eleven the guns told that the Queen had arrived; but as there was much to be done in the

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THE CORONATION.

21

robing-room, there was a long pause before she appeared. A burst from the orchestra marked her appearance at the doors, and the anthem, 'I was glad,' rung through the Abbey. Everybody rose—The 'God Save the Queen' of the organ swelled gloriously forth after the recognition. The acclamation when the crown was put on her head was very animated; and in the midst of it, in an instant of time, the peeresses were all coroneted.... The homage was as pretty a sight as any—trains of peers touching her crown and then kissing her hand."

The glimmer of magnificence in this pageant might be greatly enlarged upon, but that will be better done by the artist than by the writer—though the one instance before alluded to, "the simultaneous self-coroneting of the peeresses" as the Queen's crown was put on, seems new to us, and a picturesque incident in the pageant. The Queen herself looked "small" though regal in the cloth-of-gold mantle, the center of all that glittering crowd.

While all these pageants were going on, however, and everything flashing in splendor, turning into gold at the touch of her small hand, the immediate circle of advisers and friends around the young Sovereign fed her with no flatteries or foolish exultation. Her mother, who had watched over her so closely, now withdrew, as etiquette and necessity required, from at least the constant companionship in which they had previously lived. But Baron Stockmar remained at the Queen's elbow, the private representative of his Royal master and friend, King Leopold; and that anxious guardian himself never abated his vigilance, watching over every step his young niece took, and always ready to counsel her.

And from this wise uncle to the young cousin setting out upon his travels, who had heard of her elevation with a beating heart, all the friendly princely circle breathed exhortation to duty and conscientious endeavor in the young Queen's ear. "Now you are Queen of the mightiest land in Europe—in your hand lies the happiness of millions," said young Prince Albert in his letter of congratulation. He was going to Italy, in the freedom of a life less burdened, less full of splendid care than hers, yet not without a thought that his very wanderings were some time to be of service to her. "May Heaven assist you," he adds, "and strengthen with its strength in that high and difficult task." Under no light aspect was the young Queen permitted to contemplate her new position, and no doubt this profound sense of the gravity of a great office produced "the astonishing self-possession" at which her anxious kinsfolk themselves wondered, and which the English statesmen regarded with such a unanimous impulse of honest admiration.

Of the short interval which followed of the young Queen's reign alone there is little record. She herself speaks of it with expressions of regret not unusual in an exceptionally pure and virtuous life, where a little youthful levity, looking back over the fair landscape of well-spent years, looks almost like a crime. The brighter that landscape is, the more profound looks the innocent shadow of the morning cloud. "The sudden change from the secluded life at Kensington to the independence of her position as Queen regent at the age of eighteen," might have been an excuse for many mistakes; but it is hard to see what there is to pardon. She was guilty of one little constitutional sin, which, we

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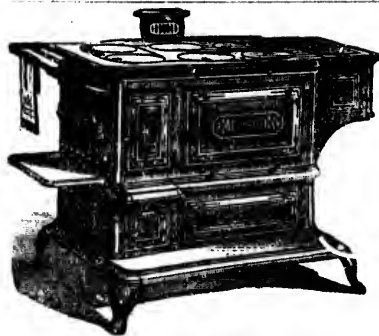
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THE CORONATION.

23

may make bold to say now, amused the nation fully more than it alarmed it. Lord Melbourne had resigned—who was the Queen's first Minister and devoted personal friend, besides being the head of the party to which all her training had inclined her—and Sir Robert Peel was prepared to take his place; but the efforts of the Conservative Premier were frustrated by the refusal of the Queen to change her Mistress of the Robes and Bedchamber Ladies—an unforeseen proceeding, which had the result of deferring the change for a short time.

But more violent demonstrations had taken place under the previous Kings, none of whom had professed that absolute impartiality in respect to the two great parties in the political world which the Queen's example and steady practice throughout her long subsequent reign has made familiar to us. But naturally the error of judgment, if it went as far, made by a girl of twenty, was pounced upon by critics to whom the pranks of an elderly King appeared justifiable. And, no doubt, had a wilful habit been established of this kind, and an English Sovereign taken up the irritable position of confounding all the plans of politicians, and baffling the wish of the country by such means, the situation might have become serious. As it was, a certain grateful sense of naturalness comes in, when we find the Queen's one public fault in her long career to have been of this character. It was in May, 1839, nearly two years after her accession, that the incident occurred. "It is well understood now," says Mr. Theo. Martin, in his "Life of the Prince Consort," "that there was misunderstanding on both sides; but the immediate effect was to exasperate the Tory party by

the feeling that a tottering Ministry owed its continuance in office to personal predilections of the Sovereign." Nowadays, however, nobody can suppose that there was any danger to the Constitution in the act, and the episode remains an amusing and characteristic one, lighting up the dullness of politics with a picturesque incident. Never again did Her Majesty depart from the Constitutional impartiality which looks upon Whig and Tory, Conservative and Liberal, with the same calm confidence and friendliness; and we confess, for our own part, that this one little "fling" of youthful impetuosity gives to ourselves a more affectionate realization of the character and difficulties of the Queen.

She herself, however, judged herself more severely, and has recorded her painful recollection of this moment of early freedom, when, perhaps her head was slightly turned by the splendor and absolute freedom of her great position. "A worse school for a young girl, or one more detrimental to all natural feelings and affections, cannot well be imagined." Her Majesty says, with profound gravity and feeling. Such being the case, as she tells, who can judge best, it is satisfactory that so little harm came of it. "To the pure all things are pure," even the delightful follies of youth. Miss Martineau, the most unfavorable of critics, who has something disagreeable to say of most people she mentions, and to whom the monarchy altogether was "unreal," says of the young Queen that she laughed and talked on all occasions when this censor beheld her—a pleasant fault. Another shortcoming of her Majesty during this interval of gaiety was that all ideas of marriage were put out of her mind by the whirl of busy life and independent action.

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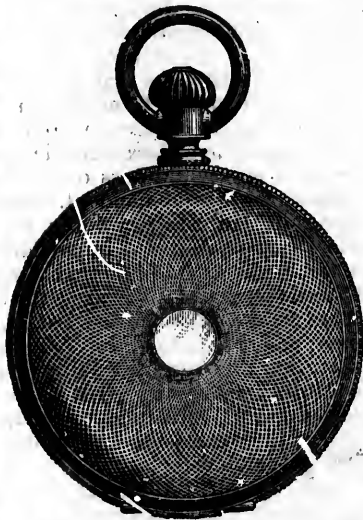
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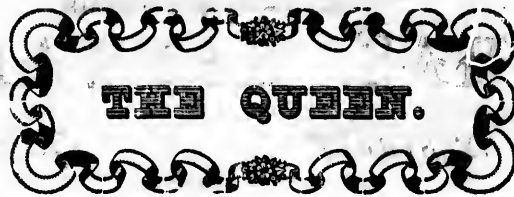
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Her girlhood had been so sober, her whole life so retired and quiet, that the dazzle and movement of the great world delighted her. In the revulsion of feeling she preferred London to the country—a preference curiously unlike the sentiments of her later life, though not remarkable, it must be allowed, between the ages of eighteen and twenty—a period at which few young persons of any rank prefer quiet to amusement. However, this gay interval was not to last

long, and in the same year (1839) there occurred the charming little romance—better known, probably than any romance of real life in this century, and delightful in its quaint variety of circumstance, so unlike, yet so like, the perennial love-tale which was to open to Queen Victoria the happy doors of home, and begin for her that domestic life in which her noblest influence as well as her first happiness lay.



Tis considered generally that such topics as love and marriage are not subjects to be discussed with young people, and consequently most of us acquire all knowledge on such matters from poetry and romance, which place them in front of all human affairs. How far this is a wise arrangement may be doubted. It is, however, habitual in ordinary English life, where the general feeling forbids such settlement by third parties of the most intimate relationship of life, as is usual among other races, and allows a general freedom of visiting and of social intercourse from which in other countries girls at least, if not boys,

are debarred. This ignoring on one side and opening up of the other, which is the traditional policy of English families, is, however, impossible on that exceptional level of life occupied by a queen, with whom all rules of courtship are reversed, and to whom it is essential to make her own choice, and signify her own pleasure in so important a matter—a circumstance which makes the slippery path of youth exceptionally difficult for a young Princess so splendidly, yet painfully, put aside by her great fortunes from the shelter of the common custom and gracious use and wont of life. When the Princess Victoria was seventeen, developing into womanhood, and the moment evi-



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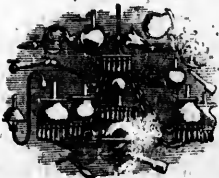
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THE QUEEN.

27

dently approached at which she must assume the crown, it became time to bring together the two who had been thus trained for each other. Whether any knowledge had yet reached the Princess's mind of this family hope we are not informed; but the young Prince, could not be entirely ignorant that his fate hung in the balance when, in the month of May, 1836, a handsome and nobly-gifted boy of seventeen, he came with his father and brother, with no fear of the event, but some of the sea and the terrible crossing which lay between them and England, to pay a visit to the aunt and cousin whom he had never seen. With what excitement and suspense the elder people must have watched this first encounter. The young people were of the same age, agreeable and attractive in looks--two blue-eyed human creatures, looking their great life frankly in the face, as hopeful, as unclouded, as became their years. What the Princess was will be seen from the youthful portrait with which by this time even those who remember it of old must have grown unfamiliar--losing the fair, young, candid countenance in the maturer face so familiar to us. What Prince Albert was is described by Baron Stockmar in a letter written, on the eve of the eventful meeting, to the anxious uncle, King Leopold, whose long-cherished plans were now to be put to the test.

"Albert is a fine young fellow, well-grown for his age, with agreeable and valuable qualities, and who, if things go well, may in a few years turn out a strong, handsome man, of a kindly, simple, yet dignified demeanor. Externally, therefore, he possesses all that pleases the sex, and at all times,

and in all countries, must please."

This was the external aspect of the youth; his mind, a more inscrutable subject, was largely discussed between the wise and interested counsellors who hoped to see in him the model prince, the typical man, at once hero and sage, who carry out all their hopes. But even to these penetrating statesmen the mind of seventeen was inscrutable, and could be regarded only with hope, not certainty. What will almost be more interesting to the general reader will be that the boy thus coming to our shores, with so many plans in his head, was merry and light-hearted, as became his age, full of youthful laughter as well as youthful wisdom, and as capable of keeping his fellow-students in a roar of genial fun as of winning the approbation of the elders who were bent on fathoming the deepest secrets of his being. There is so much gravity in the story that the mirth is doubly welcome when we hear of it, and no doubt was quite as much in the young man's favor as his well-developed figure and fine features. The Duke of Saxo-Coburg and his sons arrived at Kensington Palace in the end of May, and there is no record of the meeting except in the brief letters of the Prince, published to his Memoir, which gave few details. His aunt and cousin were "very kind" and "amiable." This is all the modest boy discloses, and probably there was not much to tell. The world had its suspicions that something more was meant than met the eye when the young cousins were thus brought together, but no gleam of consciousness shows itself in the kind, simple letters. They had known each other all their lives, though they had never met before, and ordin-

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any life has plenty of examples of the pleasant familiarity, yet strangeness, of such intercourse. Father and son stayed some weeks in London, and were at levees, and court dinners, and concerts, long prolonged, during which the young visitor had many "hard battles to fight against sleepiness," so young was he, and so untried in fashionable dissipations. On one evening, at least, there was "a brilliant ball at Kensington Palace," at which the young Germans, unused to such late hours, remained till four o'clock in the morning. The curious reader would like to know how often the cousins danced together, and if each threw a chance to the other, as happens sometimes over all the music and the mirth. There were stories going, of which we remember to have heard some cited, of flowers bestowed, and looks exchanged--the gossip of the ball-room; but these are not things likely to be specified in letters to the mother at home.

When the Prince left England, however, anxious King Leopold in the background, who was still, as always, watching over everything, broke the silence and wrote to his niece. The Princess replied warmly, with a frankness which must have made the heart of her careful and anxious guardian rejoice, entreating her uncle to take into his special protection "one now so dear to me." What a relief this must have been to the mind of the wise King, all who are aware of the perversions of youthful inclinations, and their readiness to direct themselves in unauthorized directions, and refuse the best way, will readily believe.

This, however, was not revealed to the world, nor even, it would seem, to the chief person concern-

ed, who still linked in thought and fancy to the pretty cousin of whom all his attendants had spoken to him all his life, thought of her still as he went forth upon his travels, sending her such tokens of remembrance as an Alpine rose gathered on the Righi, a book of prints to show his route from time to time; very natural, simple tokens of the delicate amity ripened into warmer emotions, such as pass every day between youth and maiden on the verge of love.

The simple mood, however, is soon interrupted by an event which looks all the more great and overwhelming from these simple surroundings. There was great din and bustle of contending political parties at the time when William IV. took his death illness. No struggle of great principles or great measures; no Reform Bill or other large public commotion in the way, but still more absorbing, though much less worthy, conflict of parties, embittered by the fact that the King had ranged himself on the Opposition side--an unconstitutional proceeding which has scarcely ever taken place since. All this made the accession more difficult to the young creature who was his successor. The present writer remembers, as one of the first public incidents that caught her childish eye, the broad black borders of the newspapers which announced King William's death. Princess Victoria was then eighteen, the age at which Royal personages attain their majority; so there was happily no question of a Regency. The King died during the night; and it is said that the official intimation was made to the Duchess of Kent and her daughter next morning before five o'clock, the news having been expected for some days. The account of

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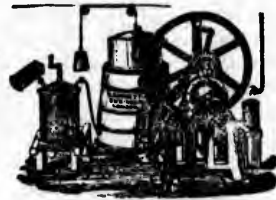
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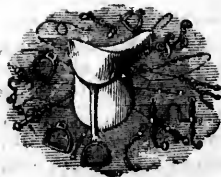
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THE QUEEN.

31

the proceedings that followed, and the demeanor of the young Queen, we take from the recently published "Journal" of Mr. C. E. Greville ---a book so full of posthumous indiscretions that its praise may be accepted fully as sincere:

"The King died at twenty minutes past two yesterday morning, and the young Queen met the Council at Kensington Palace at eleven. Never was anything like the first impression she produced, or the chorus of praise and admiration which raised about her manner and behavior, and certainly not without justice. It was very extraordinary, and certainly something far beyond what was looked for. Her youth and inexperience, and the ignorance of the world concerning her, naturally excited intense curiosity to see how she would act on this trying occasion, and there was a considerable assemblage at the Palace, notwithstanding the short notice that was given. The first thing to be done was to teach her her lesson, which for this purpose Melbourne had himself to learn. I gave him the Council papers, and explained all that had to be done, and he went and explained all this to her. He asked, too, if she would enter the room accompanied by the great officers of State, but she said she would come in alone. When the Lords were assembled the Lord President informed them of the King's death, and suggested, as they were so numerous, that a few of them should repair to the presence of the Queen and inform her of the event, and that their lordships were assembled in consequence; and accordingly the two Royal Dukes, the two Archbishops, the Chancellor, and Melbourne went with him. The Queen received them in the ad-

joining room alone. As soon as they had returned the proclamation was read, and the usual order passed, when the doors were thrown open, and the Queen entered, accompanied by her two uncles, who advanced to meet her. She bowed to the Lords, took her seat, and then read her Speech in a clear, distinct, and audible voice, and without any appearance of fear or embarrassment. She was quite plainly dressed, and in mourning. After she had read her Speech and taken and signed the oath for the security of the Church of Scotland, the Privy Councillors were sworn, the two Royal Dukes first by themselves; and as these two old men, her uncles, knelt before her, swearing allegiance, and kissing her hand, I saw her blush up to the eyes, as if she felt the contrast between their civil and their natural relations; and this was the only sign of emotion which she evinced. Her manner to them was very graceful and engaging. She kissed them both, rose from her chair, and moved toward the Duke of Sussex, who was farthest from her, and too infirm to reach her. She seemed rather bewildered at the multitude of men who were sworn, and who came one after another to kiss her hand; but she did not speak to anybody, nor did she make the slightest difference in her manner, or show any in her countenance, to any individual of any rank, station, or party. . . . She went through the whole ceremony, occasionally looking at Melbourne for instructions when she had any doubt what to do, which hardly ever occurred, and with perfect calmness and self-possession, but at the same time with a graceful modesty and propriety particularly interesting and ingratiating. When the



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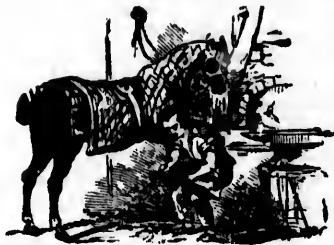
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THE QUEEN.

33

business was done, she retired as she had entered."

It is not wonderful that, after this remarkable scene was over, the statesmen, touched and charmed, should stand together in a murmur of conversation, talking, over this strange young apparition in the midst of them--a creature so different from the old King who had formerly claimed their often reluctant homage. A new sense of loyalty, mingled with chivalry and paternal tenderness and admiration, rose in their minds.

"Peel told me . . . how amazed he was at the manner and behavior, at her apparent deep sense of her situation, her modesty, and at the same time her firmness. She appeared, in fact to be awed but not daunted; and afterward the Duke of Wellington told me the same thing, and added that if she had been his own daughter he could not have desired to see her perform her part better. It was settled that she was to hold a Council at St. James' this day, and be proclaimed there at ten o'clock and she expressed a wish to see Lord Albemarle, who went to her, and told her he would come to take her orders. She said, 'I have no orders to give; you know all this so much better than I do, that I leave it all to you. I am to be at St. James' at ten to-morrow, and must beg you to find me a conveyance proper for the occasion.' Accordingly, he went and fetched her in state with a great escort . . . I rode down the Park, and saw her appear at the window when she was proclaimed. The Duchess of Kent was there, but not prominent; the Queen was surrounded by her Ministers, and courtied repeatedly to the people. . . . At twelve she held

a Council at which she presided with as much ease as if she had been doing nothing else all her life; and though Lord Lansdowne and my colleague had contrived between them to make some confusion with the Council papers, she was not put out by it. She looked very well; and though so small in stature, and without much pretension to beauty, the gracefulness of her manner and the good expression of her countenance give her, on the whole, a very agreeable appearance, and with her youth inspire an excessive interest in all who approach her, and which I can't help feeling myself.

"Conyngham, when he came to her with the intelligence of the King's death, brought a request from the Queen Dowager that she might be permitted to remain at Windsor till after the funeral; and she has written her a letter, couched in the kindest terms, begging her to consult nothing but her own health and convenience, and to remain at Windsor just as long as she pleases. In short, she appears to act with every kind of good taste and good feeling, as well as good sense; and, as far as it has gone, nothing can be more favorable that the impression she has made."

Higher testimony than this could scarcely be. We find another description from outside of the latter ceremony--the Presentation at St. James'--from a very different kind of witness. It is given by Miss Martineau in her lately published "Autobiography," and gives a different aspect of the scene. The reader will be amused to note the difference between the respectful enthusiasm of the first narrator, who saw and heard at first hand, and was in communication with all

those who had the best opportunity of judging and the patronizing approval of the lady, who had no more than a bystander's knowledge of the aspect of affairs.

"In the course of the morning," she says, "a friend came to invite my old lady to go with him to a place near where they could, at their ease, see the Queen presented to the people. They went into the park, and stood in front of the window of St. James' Palace, where, among other places, the Sovereigns are proclaimed and presented. Scarcely half a dozen people were there, for a very few were aware of the custom. There stood the young matron in the simplest mourning, with her sleek bands of brown hair as plain as her dress. The tears ran fast down her cheeks as Lord Melbourne stood by her side, and she was presented to the half dozen lookers-on as their Sovereign."

Even this dignified description, however, though not intended to convey any favorable impression, is full of interest, and shows, though by another side, the universal touch of emotion in the mind of the country, small and great, towards this slight girl of eighteen, looking out loyally, if somewhat wistfully, upon the world of which she was mistress, in all the freshness and glory of that midsummer. The "old ladies" were not as much impressed by the dignity and calm, as the Statesmen were, and probably conjectured the tears, and felt themselves able to divine the fluttering of the heart within so young a bosom. The same witness describes the young Majesty as being "really pretty in the upper part of the face, and with an ingenious and sincere air which seemed full of promise"—the

same pensive, yet candid, open-eyed and straightforward expression, which makes the portrait taken at this period remarkable. There is a picture in the corridor at Windsor Castle, not of any great excellence in point of art, but affecting and interesting from the higher human charm which gives these public pageants of succession a quite new and peculiar attraction. It is called "The Queen's First Council," and shows us the girl-Queen, so young and slight and childlike in appearance, seated with grave simplicity among the veterans of the Council. It would be difficult to imagine anything more touching.

In the spring of the year 1861 the Queen lost her mother. It was her first sorrow—the first break in the family. But the Duchess of Kent had attained the natural limit of human life, and it had been in the power of her daughter to surround her declining life with every comfort and care. The loss was natural and inevitable. A very different affliction was soon to come. Before the year had closed, the husband who had filled the Queen's life with happiness, whom she had truly worshipped as her guide, and wholly trusted in, her own perfect friend, helper, guardian, and lover, was suddenly taken from her side. Afterward it was said that his constitution had never been strong; and throughout his life his occupations had been enormous and unceasing; but till he died it had not occurred to any one that such a man, in the prime of life, with all the security of virtuous life, and exemplary habits, and prosperity and happiness, still young, handsome, and with every appearance of vigor, would die. His illness was not supposed by the public to be even

serious till his death was very near; and the intimation of that death gave a personal shock to the nation such as a few public Courts of and kind have ever produced. One general sob and cry of sympathy rose everywhere for the Queen. She it was, being the first in the affections of her people, of whom England thought; and all that sympathy could do was little to sustain her in the inconceivable calamity which seemed likely to overwhelm her altogether. It was on the 14th of December, 1861, that Prince Albert died; and it is only since his death that he received the appreciation which his singularly perfect character deserved. This appreciation he had got from all who came into immediate contact with him in his lifetime; but to the mass of the people, who were not near enough to fall

under the personal influence, he was not sufficiently known to be beloved. Perhaps, if truth were told, he was too uniformly noble, too high above all soil and fault, to win the fickle admiration which is more caught by picturesque irregularity than by the higher perfections of a wholly worthy life. But since his death, and chiefly since the Queen's own generous and tender impulse prompted her to make the country the confidant of her own great love and happiness, the Prince Consort has had full justice. The record of their mutual life has interwoven the happiest and purest hours of existence with the national history.

Since this melancholy epoch the Queen's life has been entirely changed. She has suffered some things in consequence which were external and necessary, as well as

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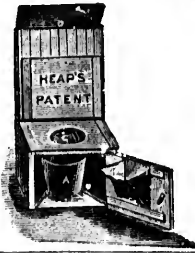
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THE QUEEN.

37

those which were inevitable. The country has complained of her for the first time; but the complaint itself has been the highest proof of love and honor. The one reproach that has been raised against her Majesty is that in her sorrow she has fallen out of that mutual intercourse with her people in which the country delighted. England has grudged her seclusion, her mourning, the true and profound grief of her widowhood; although at the same time, with very natural and thoroughly English perversity, the country has been proud of the faithful sorrow which would not be comforted. More and more, however, as it was known what the Prince was to the Queen, is the overwhelming grief of her widowhood understood. It has been said again and again, to her eternal honor, that she has never failed in her attention to business through all these years of sorrow. But her courage has failed her for the gaieties of life, the ceremonies of state, and that office of social leader and head which no one else can fill, but which it is so hard to undertake with a sorrowful heart. Even these duties, however, her Majesty has by degrees, as she was able for the exertion, to some extent resumed. And by this time the marriage of the greater number of her children, and the springing up of a second generation of children about the Royal House, has restored the atmosphere of cheerfulness and hope. The Princess Alice, the Queen's second daughter, who had been her mother's chief support in the terrible moment of her bereavement, was married shortly after in the very depth of the gloom, in the private chapel of Windsor Castle, the plainest and least attractive of all Royal chapels. The Prince of Wales followed in less than a year after, and was mar-

ried to his beautiful and popular wife with all the pomp that befitted such an event. The two younger Princesses, Helena and Louise, have followed—the marriage of the latter being characteristic of her Majesty's "love of love," and preference of that one sacred foundation of such marriage over every other; the Marchioness of Lorne being the first Royal Princess who, fully authorized and approved by the Throne, has united herself to a subject—a subject, however, be it said, with as genuine a title to be called Prince—had such been the fashion of these islands—as many a secondary Continental sovereign.

Many great events have happened during these later years. The American war which involved great sufferings to our manufacturing population—sufferings borne with much patience and heroism, and entirely free from any riot and disorder; and the great Franco-German war of sixteen years ago, which roused sympathetic feeling on either side to a very high pitch, yet left England untouched. It seems almost like the foolish adulation of courtship to speak of the almost mortal illness of the Prince of Wales in the year 1871 as of equal importance with these great conflicts, which cost the lives of thousands; but it is an undeniable fact that no such exciting anxiety has filled the public mind for years. The bulletins of the Prince's progress were looked for through England with a breathless suspense such as is generally reserved for the private anxieties of a family, and the whole nation may be said, with little hyperbole, to have watched at the bedside of the Queen's son with his mother and his wife. All the other monarchs of the world, we believe, might have died without producing anywhere such a

universal anguish of sympathy. The Queen has become by this time—she who began her Royal profession in all the innocence of girlhood, almost a child among her long-headed Ministers—one of the most experienced of statesmen, for the word, we believe, has no feminine, and it is the hope of all that her history will present to posterity the venerable picture of an aged sovereign, as it already has furnished the most charming and characteristic romance of royal love and youth, and we are sure there is no one in her Majesty's dominion who does not wish her a life as prolonged as human nature permits, and as many blessings as life, impoverished yet rich, can bestow.

God Save the Queen!

Sharers of our glorious past,
 Brothers, must we part at last?
 Shall not we thro' good and ill
 Cleave to one another still?
 Britain's myriad voices call,
 "Long be welded, each and all,
 Into one imperial whole—
 One with Britain heart and soul!
 One life, one flag, one fleet, one throne."

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