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FIVE STUART PRINCESSES

"THEY ARE FOR LITERARY
HISTORY NOTHING SHORT OF
TREASURE TROVE."—*Athenaeum*.

LUSUS REGIUS

A Volume of Hitherto Unpublished
Autograph Works by

KING JAMES

THE FIRST OF ENGLAND AND
SIXTH OF SCOTLAND.

Edited by ROBERT S. RAIT
Fellow of New College Oxford.

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Dedication of the Volume scarcely
a month before her lamented death.

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Athenaeum.—"Kings counted for so much
in early Scottish literature as to suggest
the conclusion that from the fourteenth
century to the seventeenth the Court was
the literary centre of the land. James VI.
and I. came of a line which had begun by
encouraging Barbour, Archdeacon of Aber-
deen, who added to his 'Bruce' a poetical
history and pedigree of the Stewarts, never
then miscalled 'Stuarts.' Mr. Rait has
before now fairly won his spurs as a student
of history to whose supervision the august
shade of the wisest of the Stewarts might
not have disdained to commit his Royal
and somewhat tender reputation..."

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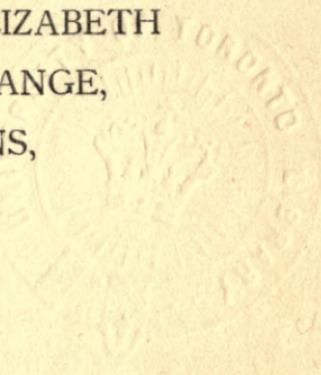
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*Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans,
From the Versailles collection.*

R1617

FIVE STUART PRINCESSES

MARGARET OF SCOTLAND, ELIZABETH
OF BOHEMIA, MARY OF ORANGE,
HENRIETTA OF ORLEANS,
SOPHIA OF HANOVER



EDITED BY

ROBERT S. RAIT

Fellow and Lecturer of New College, Oxford

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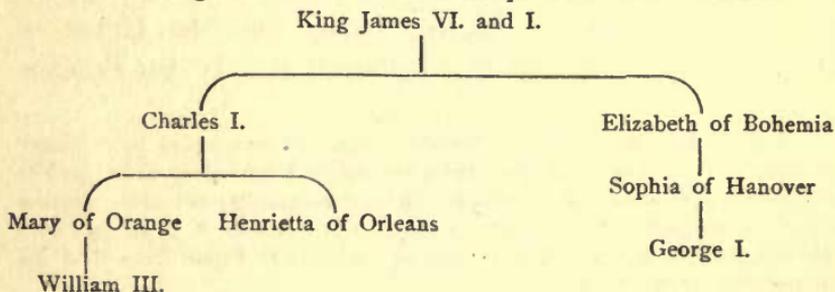
FOR the nature of the present work, no apology would seem to be required. The personal aspect of history is at once important for the proper appreciation of its lessons and attractive to the majority of readers, and both considerations go far to justify the existence of biographical studies as a legitimate expression of the results of historical research. For the immediate choice of subject some further explanation may be required. Of the five Princesses of the Royal House of Stuart¹ who form the subjects of this volume, four were nearly related, and their lives find a connecting link in the position in which they stood to the succession to the throne of this country. Elizabeth of Bohemia was the eldest daughter of King James I. and VI., and the mother of the Electress Sophia, the illustrious lady who was destined to become the acknowledged heiress of the British Crown, and the ancestress of the present Royal House. The Princess Mary of Orange, as the daughter of Charles I. and the first Princess Royal of England, while also the mother of William III., supplies the link between the ancient family and the House of Orange which immediately supplanted it. To the Princess

¹ Historically, the spelling "Stewart" was not superseded by "Stuart" till the 16th century, and it is, therefore, slightly inaccurate as applied to the Princess Margaret of Scotland. In her biography, the older spelling has been adopted, but "Stuart" has become so familiar in connexion with the seventeenth century, that it seemed pedantic to depart from it as the general title of the book.

Henrietta,¹ the negotiator of the fatal Treaty of Dover, which may be taken as the beginning of the Revolution of 1688, there came the nemesis that her descendants, the nearest branch of the Royal family, should, along with the direct male line itself, be rendered incapable of the succession by those difficulties of religious faith in which the secret clauses of the Treaty of Dover definitely involved the restored Stuarts.

Not only is there in each life a point of contact with the domestic struggle of the seventeenth century, but the four princesses, as they appear on the stage of European politics, supply almost a continuous history of the foreign policy of this country. The life of Elizabeth of Bohemia is a pathetic commentary on the attitude of James I. to foreign affairs—wise and statesmanlike in his aims, but incapable of understanding how impossible was their realization. As the Thirty Years' War became merely a duel between France and Spain, the troubled monarchy of Great Britain counted for less in the arbitrament of the affairs of Europe; but the career of Mary of Orange illustrates at once the last despairing efforts of Charles I. and the policy of his uncrowned successor. Oliver Cromwell and Mary of Orange disappeared together from the scene, and, with the Restoration, the favourite sister of Charles II., and the beloved sister-in-law of Louis XIV., became an

¹ The following table shows the relationships of the four Princesses.



important factor at a great crisis in the history of Europe. For Great Britain, for Holland, for France and Germany alike, the direct results of the Treaty of Dover were of European importance; the English Revolution, the temporary greatness of the Dutch, and the rise of Prussia are all connected with the struggle against the aggrandisement of France, in the interests of which Louis sent Henrietta to treat with King Charles. Finally, it was in the interests of the Protestant Succession as represented by the Electress Sophia, that Marlborough was sent to create the military power of this country in the War of the Spanish Succession, and the alliance of the Hanoverian House was valued alike by King William and by the advisers of Queen Anne.

In each of the four lives there is also much of personal and social interest. The beautiful Queen of Bohemia, the heroine of Protestant England, in whose behalf so many English prayers were uttered and so many English lives were spent, and Mary of Orange, whose life was almost tragic in its long struggle and its brief triumph, alike possess the interest of high-spirited and strenuous endeavour. The story of the fascinating Henrietta, the centre of the Court of the Bourbons at the moment when French prestige was highest, affords us many glimpses of the life at Saint Cloud and Versailles in the early years of Louis Le Grand, and its pathetic, and, to contemporaries, mysterious ending contributes the aspect of sadness and melancholy which was inevitable in the life of a lady of the House of Stuart. It may, at first, seem questionable whether Sophia, Electress of Hanover, by birth a Princess Palatine, and a Guelph by marriage, could reasonably find a niche in a gallery of Stuart Princesses; but the lady who unites the elder with the younger branch, who, in virtue of her Stuart blood, was declared Queen Anne's successor, and from whose relationship to King James, the reigning sovereign

of these realms, like his six immediate predecessors, derives his claim under the Act of Settlement, may surely be granted such a title. Sophia was, moreover, a Stuart by birthright, and long before the English succession could have appeared possible for herself, she regarded herself as an English Princess. Her lively memoirs and her sprightly letters make her a real and vivid personality, and illustrate the social and intellectual life of her period.

The remaining biography, which stands first in order of date, it would be impossible to associate in any way with those of which we have spoken. Nearly three hundred years separate the birth of Margaret of Scotland and the death of Sophia of Hanover. Nor is it possible to connect the Princess Margaret with any great national movement, as the other four may be connected with the struggle for constitutional liberty. Her life possesses many points of interest in the relationship of fifteenth-century France and Scotland; it is one of those episodes in history which can never fail to appeal to the imagination and to the emotions; and it is a story little known. Only common Stuart blood and a common Stuart fate connect Margaret with the seventeenth-century Princesses of her House, and the short sketch of her life is included here only because it is a convenient opportunity to relate a story worth telling again.

How far this book has succeeded in taking due advantage of the possibilities just indicated, it must be for readers to decide. But the editor may be allowed to say, on behalf of his contributors, that each biography has been written after a careful study of authorities, contemporary and modern. Each article aims at presenting its subject in relation to the political and social circumstances in which she was placed, and at producing a character-sketch which may enable the reader to realize the personality of the

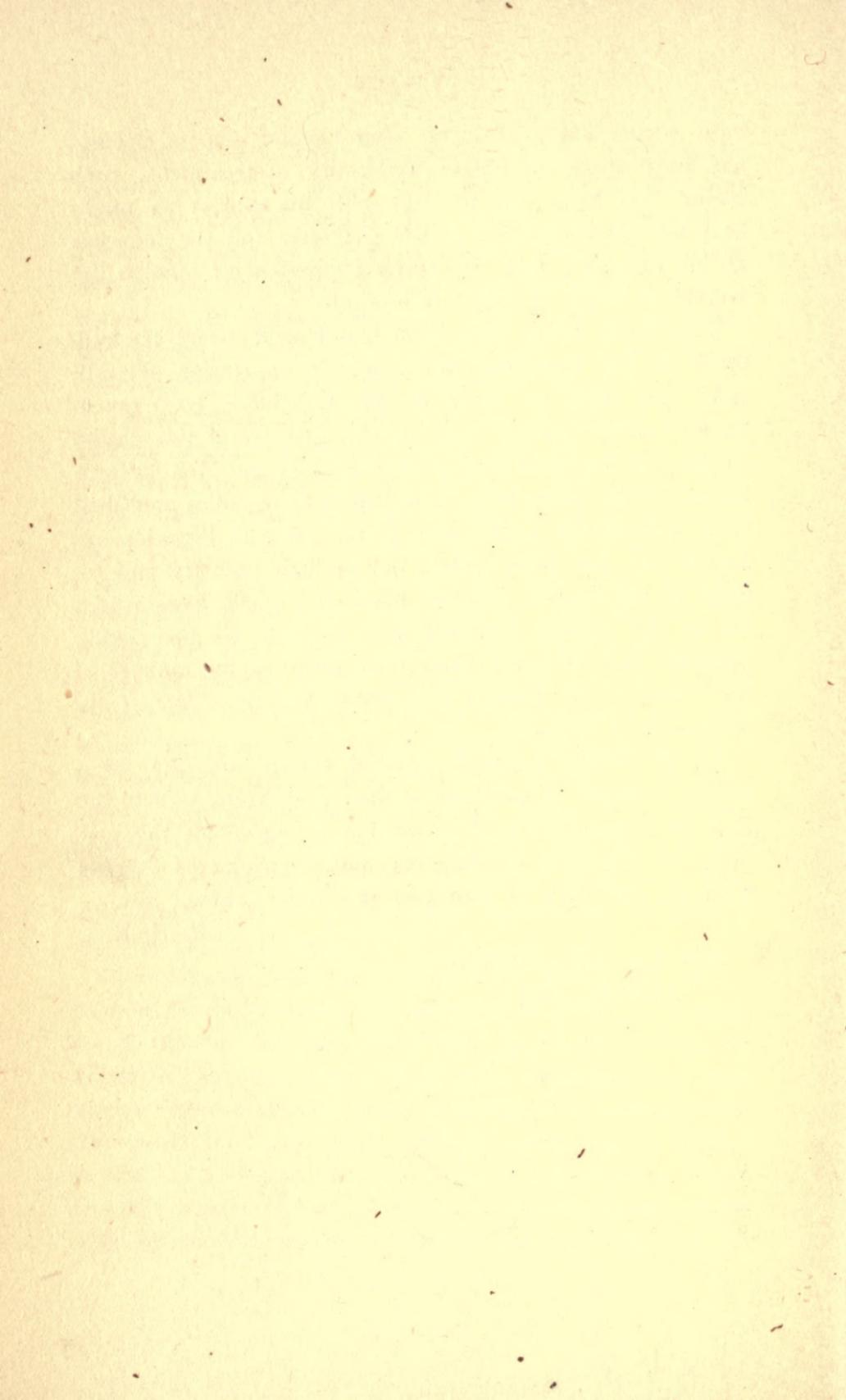
lady whose life it narrates. But beyond this no attempt has been made to obtain uniformity of treatment; each author has been left to deal with his subject as might best suit his conception of her character and the materials at his disposal; and for every expression of opinion the individual writer is solely responsible.

The books which have been found most useful are indicated in the footnotes; but a general expression of gratitude may here be made to Mr. Gardiner's great seventeenth-century history, and to the writings of two earlier workers in the same field, Miss Strickland and Mrs. Everett-Green. Fifty years have passed since these ladies published their well-known books, and, in the interval, historical research has not been silent; but to their industry and insight all subsequent inquirers must owe much, even where (as in the present instance) their interests are less purely personal and domestic than were those of the authors of the *Lives of the Queens of Scotland* and the *Lives of the Princesses of England*.

To M. Alexis Larpent, grateful thanks are due for a careful criticism of portions of the proof-sheets, and to the Earl of Craven for kind permission to reproduce the portraits of Elizabeth of Bohemia and Henrietta of Orleans from his collection of paintings at Combe Abbey.

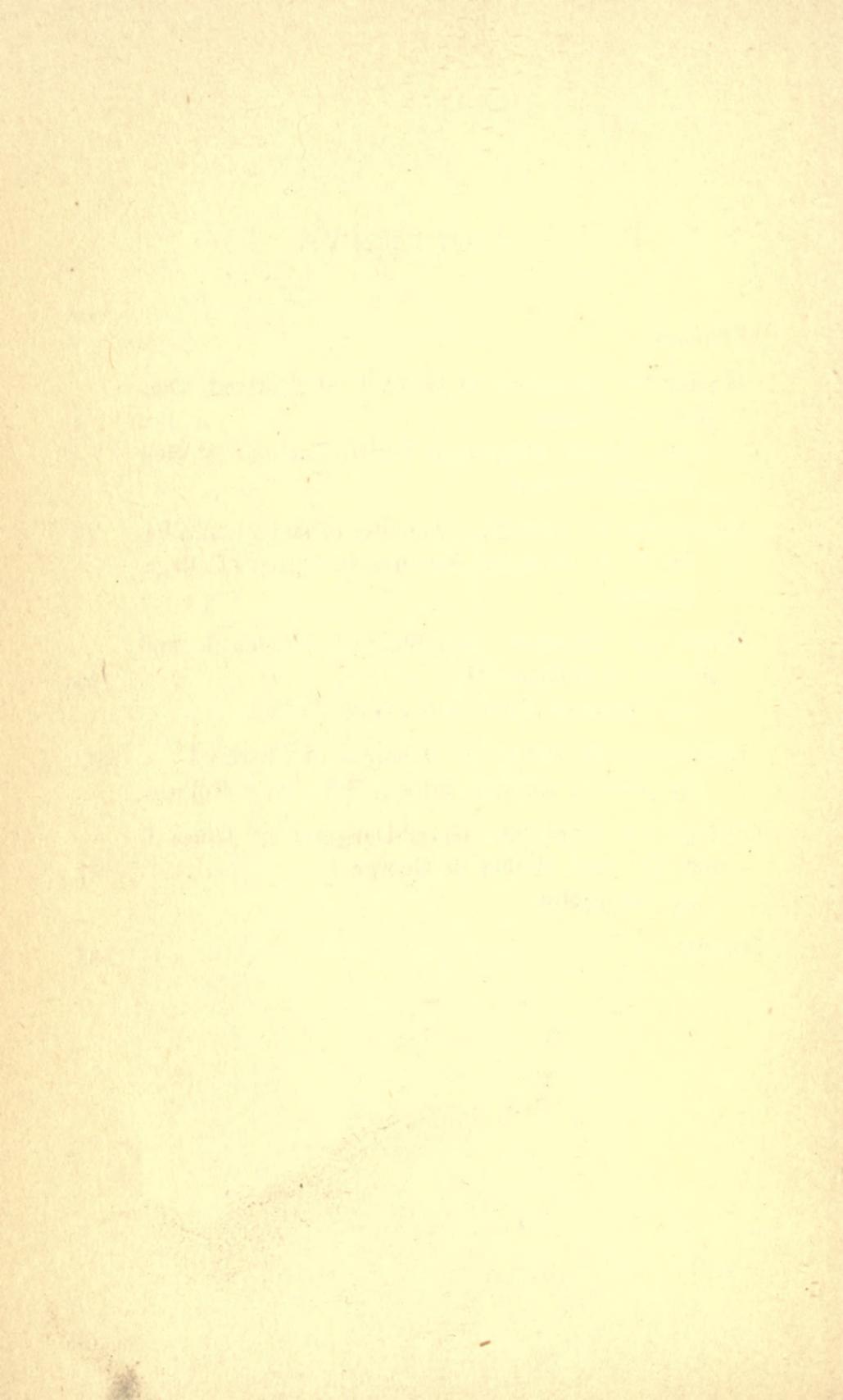
R. S. R.

NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD,
October, 1901.



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THE PRINCESS MARGARET OF SCOTLAND

DAUGHTER OF JAMES I.

I

THE PRINCESS MARGARET OF SCOTLAND DAUGHTER OF JAMES I.

Heu proh dolor! quod me oporteat scribere, quod dolenter refero de ejus morte, cum mors eandem dominam brevi dolore eripuit. Nam ego qui scribo haec vidi eam omni die vivam cum rege Franciae et regina ludentem et per novem annos sic continuantem. Postea vidi eam in casula plumbea in ecclesia cathedrali civitatis Calonensis ad cornu magni altaris ex parte boreali.

Liber Pluscardensis.

AN enthusiastic Frenchman, in one of those eloquent and rapid generalisations in which our neighbours so greatly delight, has recently assured the world that the Scots are the French of England. It is an opinion which perhaps comes with somewhat of a shock of surprise to the benighted Southron; but it is also perhaps a fanciful reminiscence, not without its pathetic aspect, of the old days of the Franco-Scottish alliance, when many a Scottish adventurer fought and died for France in desperate battle against the common hereditary foe. But it is coloured with a sentimentality which should not be allowed to lead us too far into the rosy mists of romance. For though in truth, from the days of that most tragic of queens—who passed the springtide of her life as queen of France, and for whom in the stormy summer and autumn of her career, “many drew swords and died,” nay, for whose honour historians of to-day yet wage a scarcely less embittered conflict—though from this epoch down through all the stirring

Jacobite period resonant with the sound of half-hopeless strife, and the laments of the weary who "never come to their ain countrie," there lies a warm glow of romance over the relations of France and Scotland, in the earlier days it is far otherwise. There is less of sentiment; the alliance wears a sterner aspect.

There was in truth little in the severer genius of the Scot, in his rugged moorlands, his wild hills, his stormy climate, to attract the lively Latin nature, the warm spirit of the South. Nay, if we may believe a French writer of the XVth century, *Écosse la Sauvage* was the favourite residence of the Prince of Darkness, and it was thither that the would-be sorcerer of the continent was sent to receive his marching orders. It was in Scotland that Jean de Meun placed the abode of *Famine*, while other writers rejoiced to trace a fanciful resemblance between the Scots and Judas Iscariot, though it is true that this comparison was based on physical rather than on moral grounds. In fact, to leave the province of the romancers, the picture given by Froissart may be taken as representative of the foreign opinion concerning this little known and much abused kingdom.¹ "En Écosse ils ne virent oncques nul homme de bien, et sont ainsi comme gens sauvages, qui ne se savent avoir ni de nulli acointer: et sont trop grandement envieus du bien d'autrui, et si se doutent de leurs biens perdre, car ils ont un povre pays. Et quant les anglais y chevauchent ou qu'ils y vont—il convient que leurs pourveances, s'ils veulent vivre, les suivent toujours au dos, car on ne trouve rien sur le pays. A grand' peine y recuevre l'on du fer pour ferrer les chevaux ni du cuir pour faire harnois, selles ni brides. Les choses toutes faites leur viennent par mer de Flandres et quant cela leur default, ils n'ont nul chose." (II. 128). And

¹ See also the picturesque and amusing experiences of Aeneas Sylvius as narrated in "*The Romance of a King's Life*" by M. Jusserand.

if to Froissart's testimony we add the remarkable words which St. Louis, as he lay ill at Fontainebleau, used towards his son, we shall have said enough and may pass to matters alike more palatable and more profitable. "Mon fils," cried the King, "je te prie de te faire aimer du peuple de ton royaume, car si tu devais mal le gouverner, j'aimerais mieux qu'un Écossais vint d'Écosse et regnât à ta place."

But if in the eyes of the peoples of the continent Scotland was the abode of devils, cursed with poverty and starvation, if its inhabitants were regarded as little better than savages, nevertheless it had also its value. The proverbial disposition of the Scot to roam abroad was early noticed by the peoples of the continent, as is testified by du Cange's comment on the words of St. Louis just quoted. He refers to "the strange humour of this nation which delights so greatly in much travelling, that there is hardly a kingdom in the world to which they have not spread in large numbers." And the same statement is reproduced in more forcible if less polite language by Pierre de Jolle.

"Vous saurés qu'on dit en proverbe
Que d'Écossais, de rats, de poux,
Ceux qui voyagent jusqu'au bout
Du monde, en recontrent partout."

It was this roving tendency that in great part supplied France with her trusty Scottish mercenaries, while it was powerfully supplemented by the fact that in France, above all other countries, it was possible to meet the hated English on the field of battle.

It is therefore little to be wondered that the rulers of France set a high value on the friendship and alliance of Scotland; and, above all, this value was further enhanced by the fact, that by timely demonstrations on the borders Scotland had it in her power to weaken the English pres-

sure upon France. And if France valued Scotland for this reason, so also Scotland valued France. Thus a strong bond of union sprang up between the two nations. Often actually allied, their community of interests never suffered them to drift far apart. However, it was pre-eminently a utilitarian alliance: sentiment, if any, was to be found on this side of the North Sea. But the fact of their close connexion, and the importance popularly attached to it, is clearly indicated by the proverb current in later days throughout England.

"If that you would France win,
Then with Scotland first begin."

The story of the Stewart princess, with which we are here concerned, forms but a tragic episode in the history of these close Franco-Scottish relations. It would seem as though when one of the royal blood of Scotland left her own land for a new dwelling in the friendly court of France, by that very act a fresh curse, a new doom was called down to increase the burden of the sorrowful inheritance of that ill-starred house. Here, however, we have none of the greater tragedies of history; it is a domestic rather than a royal tragedy, and several of its acts have been lost. Yet though it lack the stronger contrasts of light and shade, which characterize some of the better known calamities of the race of the Stewarts, it has something about it of "pathetic light," investing the slight outlines of a brief story and the dimly seen figure of the unfortunate Dauphine with an interest which the scanty facts, that have been handed down to us, perhaps scarcely deserve.

It is not here our duty to chronicle the interesting relations existing between Charles VII. and the Scotch nobility who flocked to his assistance in the almost des-

perate struggle against the armies of England. How welcome was their assistance appears from the fact that an earl of Scotland, Archibald Douglas, who followed his son-in-law the Earl of Buchan to France, backed by an army of 10,000 Scots, was named lieutenant-general of the armies of France and presented with the duchy of Touraine. Moreover, in 1424 when the fortunes of France were at their lowest ebb, and when the Constable of Buchan and his kinsman, the new Duc de Touraine, lay dead upon the field of Verneuil with the flower of the chivalry of France and Scotland, Charles the VII. appears to have contemplated taking refuge from his inexorable and seemingly invincible foes in that despised wilderness the kingdom of Scotland. But although his cup of misfortune was not yet full, though many years of hard fighting still lay before him ere he should come to his own again, it was not written in the book of destiny that he should be exiled from the scanty realm that still remained to him.

The temporary *rapprochement* of Scotland and England brought about by the restoration of James I. to his kingdom, and by his marriage to the beautiful and beloved Jane Beaufort, seemed, it is true, a fatal blow to French diplomacy, as far as Scotland was concerned. But in those days no Anglo-Scottish *rapprochement* could hope to be very durable; and it was with this in view, that Charles, driven to desperation by the continual success of the armies of England, and failing to find the assistance he had hoped from Castile, took the momentous step with which opens the first act of our domestic tragedy. In 1427, it was decided to send an embassy to James I. of Scotland. If the connection between the two countries had of late been somewhat strained, its bonds might once more be tightened by a marriage between the royal houses of Stewart and Valois. The Dauphin, the future Louis XI.,

was but two years older than Margaret, James' eldest daughter. What could be more suitable than that by the marriage of these two royal children—for at this point Louis was but five years of age, Margaret but three—should be renewed and strengthened, “the ancient alliances, leagues, and compacts, existing between the two nations, as far back as the time of the Emperor Charlemagne.”

The ambassadors chosen for this important mission were three in number. First and foremost comes John Stewart of Darnley, who alone of the great leaders of the auxiliary army had survived the disasters of Verneuil and Cravant, and the dreary series of battles by which they were succeeded. From the glorious field of Beaugé down to the present time, he had given continual proof of his unswerving fidelity to the French cause; and as a reward he had received the titles of Seigneur of Aubigny and Count of Evreux—though it must be observed that Evreux was still at this time in the hands of the English. Further, in February 1428, just before his departure on this mission, he had been honoured with the yet more glorious privilege of quartering the arms of France on his own escutcheon. He, Constable of the Scots in France, headed the embassy to his native land, where he had left “wife and children that he might remain in the service of France.” But such a delicate task was not to be entrusted to the sole direction of a skilled and trusted warrior. Two tried diplomatists were given him as colleagues, Regnault de Chartres, archbishop of Rheims, and Alain Chartier, the poet, “the father of French eloquence.” It was, as M. Jusserand points out in his charming little work, “The Romance of a King's life,” far from unusual to employ poets as ambassadors. Where the honeyed words of the poet had failed to effect the desired result, who could hope to succeed? Consequently, Alain Chartier preceded his colleagues to Scotland

to strew the path of the statesman with the flowers of eloquence.

Once arrived at the court of Scotland he delivered a solemn oration. It was a wonderful piece of work. It may raise a smile on the face of the modern reader: it is true that it is stilted, full of conceits of language, tricks of formal logic, and ridiculous etymologies; but it has nevertheless a certain dignity of its own, a swing and rhythm of diction and a genuine pathos, which it would be affectation to ignore. Stripping it of all its absurdities it remains as a noble panegyric of the two nations. He recalls the antiquity of the Franco-Scottish alliance, written not on parchment, but "graven on the hearts, on the living flesh of men: its characters are traced not in ink, but in blood." He proceeds to render the most splendid homage to the true and enduring loyalty of Scotland towards her suffering neighbour. He touches on the prospects of ultimate success. "*Jam divina misericordia,*" he cries, "*in melius dedit,*" and concludes with a pathetic asseveration of his trust in the everlasting mercies of God. He will not abandon His faithful people, "that house dedicated to the Lord, that nation which is so profoundly religious, so steeped in humility, piety and justice."

He had done his work well. Half bound though he was to England, James was moved by considerations of the soundest statesmanship, and touched perhaps by Alain's delicate allusion to the political situation—he had quoted Ecclesiasticus, "*ne derelinquas amicum antiquum, novus enim non erit similis illi.*" He received the ambassadors of Charles VII. with all the pomp and splendour of which he was capable. They were sumptuously entertained at Linlithgow, fairest of "Scotland's royal dwellings," and on the 17th of July, 1428, Henry Lichtoun, bishop of Aberdeen, Sir Patrick Ogilvy, "*justicier d'Écosse,*" and Edward of

Lawder, archdeacon of Lothian, were appointed to treat with the French ambassadors on the questions at issue.

On the same day a treaty was signed, by which James bound himself to respect the ancient alliances existing between France and Scotland, and two days later, on the 19th of July, it was arranged that Margaret should become the bride of Louis, Dauphin de Viennois, that the King of Scotland should provide for her escort to France, and that she should be accompanied thither by an army of 6,000 men. The one point that remained to be settled was the nature and amount of the dowry of the infant princess. The Scots demanded for her, the province of Saintonge, and exacting though the demand was, and provocative of some discontent, it was finally acceded to in November 1428, though always with the reservation, that it should not be carried into effect save only on condition of the promised military contingent. A few days previous to this arrangement, a formal treaty had been agreed upon, certain of the terms of which are worth noticing. For among other less significant details it contained the callous proviso that "if the Dauphin died before the consummation of the marriage, the second son of the king—God granting him one—should take Margaret for his wife, and so on until the marriage should finally be realised." In like manner, should Margaret die, one of her sisters should be substituted, although in this case the French king reserved to himself the right of choosing his daughter-in-law.¹ Truly, if the marriage of the poet king and Jane Beaufort, the heroine of the "King's Quair," forms one of those rare instances of a royal marriage in which true love rather than cold political

¹ It was actually proposed in 1445 that Eleanor, Margaret's sister, then in France, should in due time marry the widowed Dauphin. The refusal of the Pope to permit this union, and Louis' strong opposition to this proposal caused it, however, to be dropped.

considerations formed the most potent factor, a nemesis was to overtake the royal pair in the marriage of their daughter whom they had bartered away in such a heartless fashion.

The unhappy child, according to the terms of the treaty, was apparently to have sought her new home and boy-husband oversea in the course of the following year. Indeed we read in the English State Papers, that the English Government actually equipped a force to intercept the Scottish fleet which was to transport the auxiliary army and the Dauphin's betrothed to the shores of France. But for various reasons, some years were allowed to elapse before the treaty was in any way to be carried into effect.

Not the least of these reasons was the miraculous intervention of Joan of Arc, which rendered the advent of the Scottish Army unnecessary, and thereby spared France the much grudged cession of the province of Saintonge. And it may well be imagined that James and his Queen readily laid hold of any excuse to retain their little daughter in that home, that charming family circle, of which such picturesque accounts have reached us. Indeed Joan of Arc seems to have come near saving Margaret from her martyrdom. For while Charles VII. ceased to have any pressing need of Scottish assistance, James was deeply occupied in the reorganisation of his distracted kingdom, in the repression of the feuds and tumults of the Highlands and the not less disturbed border districts. Further, since the 6,000 Scots were not to sail for France, England and Scotland might still be considered at peace, and in 1429 James renewed his negotiations with the English government.

In the following year attempts were made to induce James to break definitely with France, and it was only the sturdy opposition of the Scottish prelates which availed to prevent the attempt from succeeding. As it was, in 1430 the truce between the two countries had been renewed

for five years, and during this period of truce the bonds uniting the two governments were being gradually tightened, until finally in 1433 and 1434 English ambassadors were charged to open negotiations for a marriage between the King of England and a daughter of James I.

It now became imperative for Charles VII. to intervene. The interests of France were gravely threatened, and without prompt action the treaty of 1428 would have become a dead letter. Accordingly, in the early winter of 1433, we find two French ambassadors at the Scottish court. They declared that while it was true that their master's affairs had become more prosperous, and that therefore he was enabled to dispense with the armed assistance of Scotland, he still, however, longed to behold the realisation of the marriage and begged that the princess might be sent to France without delay.

James was now in rather an embarrassing situation. He had promised his daughter to the Dauphin, but his paternal affection and the present state of his relations with England urged him to refuse. He received the ambassadors coldly. "I am ready," he replied, "to fulfil my engagements. I will send armed assistance to France the instant that it is desired. But my daughter is yet of tender years, and it is rude and wintry weather." Nay, he proceeded, there were rumours that another alliance was intended for the Dauphin, and it would be well that all the doubts thus cast on the good faith of France should be cleared away. As for his own negotiations with England, they need in nowise prejudice the alliance of 1428. But for financial difficulties, he would gladly give the English such cause for anxiety, that France would have little more to fear from them. But while he himself was always ready to fulfil his engagements, he desired to be reassured as to the intentions of the French King, and the drift of his policy with the

least possible loss of time. Further delay must prejudice either cause, perhaps to an even greater extent than Charles was aware.

Such was the barely courteous message with which the French ambassadors returned to their master. For unknown reasons, it took some six months to reach Charles. On its arrival, however, he realised the necessity of speedy action, and after hurried consultation of his council he selected Regnault Girard, Seigneur de Bazoges, and a Scottish gentleman named Hugh Kennedy, as ambassadors to the Scottish court. A curious account of the mission by the hand of the Seigneur de Bazoges still survives in the National Library at Paris. He, poor soul, fearing, not without just cause, the winter voyage, did his best to rid himself of his distasteful task. The embassy was, he pointed out, "bien dangereuse et périlleuse." To escape the perils of the sea he continued, "I was prepared to give four hundred crowns to him that would take my place as ambassador, and I had hoped that the King would consent thereto." But Charles was not unnaturally obdurate, and the reluctant ambassador set sail "not without tears and mourning."

His fears were to be realised. At an early stage in their voyage they were caught by a "marvellous great whirlwind," and driven westward into the pitiless ocean for five days and five nights. At last, the storm subsiding for a while, they succeeded in reaching the coast of Ireland, where yet once more they were to be delayed five days by "the said whirlwind." This time they were sheltered by a "very high and marvellous rock named Ribon, which is the most westerly of all lands and whereon no living thing dwelleth." Thus they escaped serious damage, and at length, after a dreary, if not unexciting voyage of 56 days, they arrived at the port of Dumbarton on the 8th of January, 1435. Hence they were escorted by

a whole host of Kennedys, whom Girard's companion had summoned to do them honour, to the court James was holding at Edinburgh. There they were worthily received and set forth their mission. There was no such dramatic scene as is depicted in Drummond's History of Scotland, where Lord Scrope and Regnault Girard are represented as declaiming against each other in the best Thucydidean manner and the most flowing Elizabethan style. It was in reality a prosaic business. After declining with thanks the renewed offer of six thousand men, (an offer the acceptance of which would involve the unpalatable surrender of Saintonge,) they made due apologies for the tardiness of their master Charles VII. in resuming the question of the stipulated marriage.

"The King," they urged, "had been too much occupied with wars and with the organisation of men and supplies, and so great were the difficulties and dangers of the voyage, that not only was it hard to find ambassadors, but even ships and mariners capable of such an enterprise. He knew well that so small and undistinguished an embassy was scarcely adequate for so great an occasion, but the great Lords and Princes of France were engaged in operations of war, and it had been impossible for France to provide a sufficient escort for the future Dauphine, owing to the difficulty of procuring warships. But the King prayed that the Dauphine might be sent to her new home as soon as possible, at least not later than the approaching summer. Meanwhile these his ambassadors would discuss the best means of securing a passage safe from the perils of the sea and the English warships."

James hesitated. The family life of the greatest of the Stewarts was a loving one, and for the period forms a most edifying spectacle. He interposed delay. "He could not," he said, "come to any conclusion for the present.

He must first come to an understanding with the Queen, before he could further discuss the matter." He therefore put off the ambassadors for a month, bidding them meet him on February the 21st at St. Johnston. [Perth]. There they found James, the Queen and the little princess herself; and there, after some five days' discussion, was signed a not very conclusive convention. The Dauphine was to sail for France by the following May; she was to have an escort of 2,000 Scots, and a fleet, which if the King of France had need of their services, would remain at his disposal.¹

But James was exacting in his demands, and the anxiety which he displayed for the future happiness of his little daughter is quite touching, more especially when we consider that incidentally these demands meant that he would have a year more of her company. For he showed himself most solicitous. A town of her own, garrisoned and commanded by Scotsmen, must be allotted to her; her servants and her ladies-in-waiting must be Scottish; although he admitted that she must be served by French attendants "*pour lui apprendre son estat et les manières par delà,*" and must move in the circles of the French court; moreover, Scotland could not provide transports for the two thousand auxiliaries in addition to the vessels of war already promised. He therefore begged that Charles would provide the necessary transport and, in addition, to make security doubly secure, send a galley fully equipped with rowers and crossbowmen.

Now Regnault and his comrades had no powers to grant such sweeping demands, and it was necessary to refer to the French court for further instructions. The month of May passed and no instructions arrived. James therefore, to his great delight, induced Girard to postpone the depar-

¹ Probably a last effort on the part of James to secure the province of Saintonge for his daughter.

ture of the Dauphine until the 20th of September. At last, however—probably in the month of July—the long-expected despatches arrived. Charles acceded to the greater part of James' demands. But he was silent about the proposed Scottish household for the Dauphine, and demurred entirely to the suggestion that a French town should be assigned to the Princess. It seemed to him to be neither "*chose honneste ni convenable*", that she should reside elsewhere than at the French court. The queen would treat her as her own daughter. No other arrangement could even be considered.

Accordingly, on September the 12th, the French fleet arrived off Dumbarton, bearing yet further despatches from the French King. He was clearly—small blame to him—becoming impatient. Without expressing any doubt of the good faith of the Scottish King, he protested strenuously against further delay. Once more he asserted that he and his queen would treat Margaret as if she were "*leur fille charnelle*", but added to this assertion a firm protest against the suggestion that a Scottish household should accompany the princess. It was indeed a very wise and necessary protest. At least, continued the French King, there should not be more than two or three Scotswomen and as many men. Otherwise, to quote Charles' actual words, "*Tant qu'elle aura avec elle des gens de sa nation, elle ne apprendra volontiers françois, ou l'estat de ce royaume.*"

James, however, was not to be beaten, and astounded the French envoys by calmly proposing further procrastination. The French fleet, he pointed out, had been very late in its arrival, appearing barely a week before the date fixed for the departure of the Dauphine. The season was approaching when "all marriage between persons of high station is forbidden." And not only etiquette, but also the

weather stood in the way. The queen would never suffer her daughter to be exposed to the perils of the wintry sea. Did not Regnault Girard, Seigneur de Bazoges, remember his own experiences at sea? The tables were turned. What more could be said? Girard had reluctantly to give way, to consent to a further postponement till the month of February, and face the prospect of wintering in "Écosse la sauvage".

James' canniness had conquered all along the line, and the father's heart was gratified by a year more of life blest by the presence of the little princess. Neither father nor daughter were to drink much longer of the well of happiness, nor either to meet again this side the grave. "Clouds and darkness closed upon Camelot." The king was to perish, but a few months after her departure, by the hand of the assassin. His daughter was to become the wife of a "heartless ruler of men," and to die of a broken heart, maligned and slandered, in the flower of her youth, far from her own country; and all that is left to record the early life of Margaret Stewart and the love her father bore to her, are the dry bones of state papers, which are perhaps at times clothed with a thin phantom of flesh and blood. Through all their stiff formalities we may at times trace not merely the working of the statesman's brain, but the naïve reluctance of parental affection.

The winter passed quickly by, and February the appointed month arrived. James could not with decency much longer postpone his child's departure, and summoned Girard and his comrades to a farewell banquet at St. Johnston. The following day they were once more summoned to the royal presence. Regnault shall tell what took place in his own words:

"Then did the said king and queen of Scotland bid my said lady the Dauphine come into their presence, and

spoke to her many fair words and notable, telling her of the high place of the prince to whom she was to be espoused and exhorting her to bear herself in all things well. And God knoweth how great weeping there was on both sides. This done we took our leave, and the said king, for the honour of the King of France, his said brother, bade me, Regnault Girard, to kiss the queen; and she of her great courtesy and humility did the like by me, which I esteem the greatest honour that hath ever befallen me. And thereupon we took our departure. And on the following day the king sent great presents to us in our said lodging at St. Johnstoun, and it must not be forgotten that from the time when we arrived in the said kingdom of Scotland and came before him in his town of Edinburgh—Jan. 25th, 1434,¹ down to the time when we took leave of him in the said palace of St. Johnstoun—Feb. 1435—he defrayed and paid our expenses in whatever part of the said kingdom we might be."

From Perth the ambassador proceeded to Dumbarton to prepare for the departure of the princess, and there he remained on board his ship for 15 days and endured "de grans malaises". The king still delayed. At last, however, the incorrigible procrastinator appeared, and was welcomed by Girard with gifts of a charming simplicity, concerning which the ambassador writes with an equally delightful naïveté. During the 15 days of "little ease", a ship had arrived from France bearing "un mulet bien gent, que j'avoye faict venir par le conseil de mondict seigneur de Vendosme, qui le me conseilla, quant il me mist à la mer, car il avait vue le mulet à la Rochelle, et pour donner au dict Roy d'Escosse; lequel mulet je lui feys presenter et en fut molt joyeux, et fut chose bien estrange par delà,

¹ Old style.

Et aussi feys présenter à la dicte Reyne d'Escosse trois pipes plaines de fruit, tant grosses chataignes poyres et pommes de diverses manières, pource qu'il n'en y a nulz; et aussi six pipes de vin, de quoy la reyne fust bien contente, car de par delà il y a bien peu de fruit."

These courtesies over, James, ever solicitous for the comfort of his child, demanded that the fleet should put out to sea, in order that he might see which vessel was the swiftest and possessed the best equipment. To the deep disgust of the French sailors, who were barely restrained from mutiny, a Spanish ship was chosen as most suitable, and at last, on the 27th of March—little more than a month late, which perhaps was creditable to all concerned—the Dauphine embarked. The king embraced his daughter for the last time; but now that the time of parting was indeed come, he felt that delay meant no longer joy, but merely pain. "Le Roy n'y demeura longuement, mais s'en alla à grans pleurs, du regret de madicte dame la dauphine sa fille." So we take leave of James, most human of kings, weeping bitterly over the last sight of his little daughter.

So also, some hundred years later, departed a little Scottish princess to become Dauphine of France, a princess whose fate was sadder far than that of Margaret, but whose sojourn in France was the sole happy portion of her life.

"Adieu, charmant pays de France,
Que je dois tant cherir,
Berceau de mon heureuse enfance,
Adieu, te quitter c'est mourir."

What Mary might have said of France, Margaret might well have said of Scotland. She was leaving a court in which life was, for that age, comparatively blameless; for if James was a Stewart in all else, as regards his family life, he was a shining example to the generality of Stewart

princes. She was leaving a household where the level of culture was high, where natural affection reigned supreme. She was seeking a court in a strange land ruled by a king, who was ruled in turn by his mistresses, graced by the presence of a neglected queen, and distracted by the darkest intrigues, in which the Dauphin was some years later to play not the least prominent part. The contrast was in every way a melancholy one. And, moreover, the poor child was no longer of such tender years as not to feel the full pang of parting. In truth it would have been kinder if James had performed his part of the original treaty of Chinon with alacrity, and the child had left him while she was yet too young to feel the full significance of the change.

Perils other than the ordinary perils of the deep awaited the Dauphine on her passage to France. A fleet of an hundred and eighty English vessels lay in wait for the little French fleet, as it steered towards La Rochelle with its precious burden. The English government harboured a not unnatural indignation at what it must have regarded as the perfidious conduct of the king of Scotland, and was still smarting under its diplomatic defeat. But in a happy hour a fleet of Flemish vessels laden with wine hove in sight. The spectacle was too tempting for the English sailors. They left their post and sailed in pursuit of that all too attractive cargo, and the enemy, whom they had been destined to intercept, crept by and moored safely in the little harbour of La Palisse in the Isle of Ré. It has been asserted that the voyage was full of great perils from wind and wave, and that the poor child reached the shores of France more dead than alive. But Girard disposes of the fable. "My said lady," he writes, "had—God be thanked—fair weather and a good passage." But a good passage in this case meant precisely three weeks, as the fleet sailed on

March the 27th and did not arrive till the 17th of April; so that all concerned may well have been weary of the voyage.

The following day the squadron proceeded to an anchorage at Chef du Bois, within a league of La Rochelle, but it was not till the 19th of April that the Dauphine set foot on dry land. She was received in great state by the king's chancellor, Regnault de Chartres, and other high officials, and was conducted to the priory of Nieul, hard by La Rochelle, to take what must have been a much needed repose. For a twenty-one days' voyage in the very primitive ships of the XVth century, must have been no small tax on the strength of a child of twelve. At last, on the 3rd of May, she made her state entry into La Rochelle, and proceeded on her way to meet her boy-husband and the long-suffering King of France. At length the long-postponed marriage was to take place. June 25th was fixed as the date, and the ceremony was to be performed in the Cathedral of Tours.

The Dauphine met with a loyal reception *en route*, notably at Poitiers, where crowds came out to meet her, and, to crown all, a child disguised as an angel was let down from the portal of the city and placed a wreath upon the head of "my said lady. Which thing was very genteelly and cunningly performed." Laden with rich presents—Poitiers alone had bestowed upon her silver plate worth two thousand "livres Tournois"—the princess arrived at Tours on the 24th of June, the eve of her wedding-day. Details of her entry have descended to us. A richly caparisoned palfrey bore her, and she was followed by a number of French and Scottish lords and ladies. On her reaching the gateway the Lords of Maillé and Gamaches advanced to meet her on foot, seized the palfrey's reins and so conducted her to the royal castle. Dismounting at the gate

she was escorted by the Earl of Orkney and the Comte de Vendôme, one on either side, to the foot of the great hall of the castle, which had been hung for the occasion with rich tapestries of Blois. There the Queens of France and Sicily, together with the Princess Radegonde, soon to be her sister-in-law, awaited her. Her two attendant earls now left her side, and Yolande of Aragon—Queen of Sicily—and the Princess Radegonde took their place and so led her to the Queen, who, rising from the *dais*, went forward to meet her, and, taking her in her arms, embraced her tenderly.

At this point the young Dauphin, attended by a multitude of knights and squires, made an appropriate entry, timed to the moment. The Dauphine was officially informed of his arrival and advanced towards him. Thereupon the two children—to quote the words of the old French chronicler—“*s’entrebaisèrent et accolèrent, et puis retournèrent devers la Reyne.*” These stiff formalities then came to a close, and the Queen taking the two children with her to her own apartments, richly adorned with cloth of gold, they “played together until it was time for supper.”

The king himself did not arrive till the following day “*ung peu avant la benisson.*” But if his arrival was late, he lost not a moment more, and hurried at once to see the daughter-in-law whose very existence he must almost have come to regard as visionary. He entered her chamber and found her being arrayed for the ceremony. Apparently he was in no wise disappointed in her appearance; for, says Girard, “*le roy fut moult joyeux et bien content de sa personne.*” But he had little time for an interview, for the ceremony was just about to commence; nay, he had not time to robe himself for the occasion, but attended booted and spurred, his grey travelling dress showing dull amid the blaze of colour. For all others were in royal

attire, and the little Dauphine was clad in "raiment most wonderful, precious and splendid. She was of comely figure and exceeding fair countenance." "It was," says another chronicler, "moult belle chose de voir les paremens et abillemens, en quoi elle estoit, les quelles elle avoit apportez de son pais." A long robe flowed from her shoulders and a crown of gold was about her head; while on that day her young husband was presented with the "sword of the King of Scotland," as it was known in after days, on the hilt of which were figures of the Virgin and St. Michael.

After these¹ solemnities "grant fut la feste." The company were divided between two tables. At the upper table were seated the king, the two queens, the Dauphine, and the archbishop of Rheims, with the Earl of Orkney and the great lords of France; while at the lesser table the Dauphin entertained the Scottish nobles. The little bride and bridegroom were thus at the very outset of their wedded life separated from one another. What etiquette now forced upon the Dauphin, inclination was in after years to render easy and habitual. It might be taken as an omen of the Dauphine's brief and joyless career. However, at present all was happiness. All dishes that the art of man could devise were to be found at the banquet: numberless heralds and pursuivants lent colour to the scene, while a veritable concert continued to the close; minstrels and players of "clarions and trumpets, with enough of lutes and psalteries" made music for the guests, and perhaps also in the midst of the softer music of the south rang the shrill music of the bagpipes. For was not "Jean Fary, natif d'Escosse, menestrel du roi notre sire," in France at this period? In the words of Jean Chartier, "to say sooth there was made great and good cheer."

¹ A special dispensation from the Pope had been necessary owing to the tender age of the children.

And now, as far as our authorities are concerned, there comes a blank in Margaret's life. There are a few scant notices and then complete silence. It is true that hitherto the story has been simply the history of the moves of a mere pawn in the game of politics. Personal touches have of necessity been lacking: such colour as may have invested the person of our heroine has been almost entirely reflected. But now we bid adieu to the picturesque if slightly tedious narrative of our good friend Regnault Girard, and our path for the next seven or eight years is lit only by very occasional gleams of light from the pages of Jean Chartier, Matthieu de Coucy, and here and there a state paper. Not till the tragic close of her life is a strong light cast once more upon this fragile and fleeting figure.

But we must return to our narrative, even if only to stumble in our goings. For the present the Dauphin and his bride were completely separated. It was not till 1438¹ that the two, being now of marriageable age, consummated their marriage at Gien-sur-Loire. In the meantime Margaret remained at the court. Her Scottish attendants for the most part returned to their native land. Some, however, remained behind and married into French families, while, according to a writer of the XVIIth century, there was a regular emigration of Scottish ladies to France (a hundred and fifty is the reported number) desirous of following the royal example and securing French husbands. Her early life must have been comparatively happy. All authorities agree that Charles and his wife were greatly attracted by the child, and treated her with the utmost kindness. Even to this day survive records of the gifts made by Charles to his daughter-in-law, from a costly mirror presented in 1437 to a gift of 2,000 livres tournois for silks and fans,

¹ Louis being then sixteen years of age, and Margaret fourteen.

for which we have Margaret's receipt, signed but a month before her death.

But, from the very first, sorrows were to overcast her life. In 1436 her father was assassinated at Perth and Scotland lost the best and greatest of all her kings; and in 1438 her married life began. It was unblest and full of unhappiness. Young as he was, the Dauphin had been caught up by the turbulent whirlwind of those stormy times into which he was born. He had in the very year of his marriage followed the king in his travels and his wars. In that very year he began to play an important part in the affairs of France, and we find him leading armies if only in name. And by the close of 1439, when he was yet but 17 years of age, he is found at the head of a rebellion¹ against his father. But if Charles had provoked this revolt by an unseemly lack of energy, he now acted with commendable vigour. Stung by the unfilial conduct of his son, he put himself at the head of his troops, and conducted the campaign with such success, that in 1440 we find the back of the rebellion broken, and the undutiful Dauphin suing for pardon from his injured father.

Among the various requests made by the penitent prince, there is one only which especially concerns us. "Since henceforth it is suitable and proper that my lady should be more continually with the Dauphin than heretofore, may it please the king to provide for the expenses of his son's estate, and that of Madame la Dauphine." Charles' reply was dignified. "When Monseigneur le Dauphin will come before the king in all humility as he ought, the king will treat him as his only son, and will provide for his estate and that of Madame la Dauphine in such a manner as should fully content him." We may probably conclude

¹ The well-known Praguerie.

from this that the Dauphine had not followed her husband in his rebellious escapades. But in any case it is clear that Louis' mind was quite sufficiently occupied with political intrigue at this early stage in his career to explain, though in no wise to excuse, his indifference towards his bride. And although now civil war for the time being ceased, though Dauphiné and a liberal revenue had been assigned to the repentant prince, there was still much to occupy him. Unhappy France was still disturbed by the slowly dying embers of the Hundred Years' War, and there were other expeditions, in which the Dauphin bore a not inconspicuous part. Switzerland and Lorraine, and the walls of beleaguered Metz all saw him at the head of armies. Rarely can the duties of royalty have descended so soon, or with so heavy a burden, on the shoulders of a prince.

But in addition to all this, he was without his due share of natural affection; nature had made him a ruler of men, and the turbulence of the arena, into which he made so early an entry, served only to increase his heartlessness. And when he was not engaged in the duties of his high position, he was occupied in making use of its opportunities, and burrowing underground to sap the power of others, even of his father. There was nothing straightforward about him, he was secret and tortuous. He can have seen but little of his bride, and those brief hours which he spent in her company brought him but little pleasure. It is true that we have what purport to be his own words of lamentation for the Dauphine's death, but he was supreme among hypocrites, and we shall see cause to view his grief with deep distrust. We may reject alike the courtly statements of chroniclers that tell us of the great love he bore his wife, and the very different assertion of a late English chronicler, that "the lady Margaret, maryed to the Dolphin,

was of such nasty complexion and evil savoured breath that he abhorred her company as a clean creature doth a caryon." There is, however, small doubt that the Dauphin had the strongest aversion for his wife. He was not only indifferent, but faithless to her, since he had at least one natural daughter during her life-time. We may abide by the words of Commynes: "He married a daughter of Scotland to his displeasure, and as long as he lived regretted it."

If, however, there was much that was sad in her brief life, it was not wholly bitter. She was young, beautiful, well-formed and, according to de Coucy, who is quoting from contemporary evidence, "provided and adorned with all those good conditions and advantages that a noble and exalted lady might well have."

Nor had she personal beauty only to render her attractive. To render herself worthy to be a French Princess and in days to come perchance a Queen, and doubtless also to drown her private griefs, she devoted herself to literature. She had studied French to good effect, and inheriting a portion of her father's poetic gifts, perhaps directly inspired by him in her infancy with a love of poetry on those winter evenings when James read aloud to his family by the fireside, she wrote roundels and ballads in the language of her adopted country and would spend whole nights in their composition, the passion of poetry driving away fatigue. Perhaps she formed the centre of a small literary circle at the French court,¹ but we cannot tell: all that we know is

¹ The long-accepted story of her invitation of the poetess Clotilde de Surville to the French court, of the latter's refusal in verse, and the gift of the laurel crown surmounted with 12 marguerites, in silver and gold, bearing the inscription "Marguerite d'Ecosse à Marguerite de Helicon," is undoubtedly false. The poetess is a figment and the whole story is part and parcel of a clever forgery devised to explain certain archaistic poems—perhaps by M. de Surville (died 1798)—published in 1803.

that among her immediate attendants she found rival poetesses.¹ And it is in connexion with this love of literature, that the best known and the most beautiful of the anecdotes of this princess has descended to us. Like so many picturesque episodes in history, it has recently been proved to be entirely fictitious, for the excellent reason that its hero, our old acquaintance, Alain Chartier, was dead before Margaret set foot in France; but no history of the Dauphine would be complete without this beautiful legend. "She loved greatly," says Bouchet, in his *Chronicles of Aquitaine*, "the orators of the common speech, and among them Master Alain Chartier, who is the father of French eloquence, and whom she held in high esteem, by reason of the fair and excellent works that he had composed. So that one day while she passed by a hall where the said Master Alain lay asleep upon a bench, she kissed him before all the company. But he that was escorting her took it ill, and said, 'Madame, I am amazed that you have kissed this man, that is so ugly.' / For in sooth he had not a fair countenance. Whereat she made answer: 'It was not the man I kissed, but that precious mouth from which so many excellent words and virtuous speeches have proceeded'". Baseless though the story be, it was an answer worthy of a Stewart princess and a poetess.

Margaret was in fact a woman of rare qualities. If she had the talents of her race, she had also its romantic temperament, perhaps some of its folly. For hearing that a simple squire, who had greatly distinguished himself in a tournament, lacked means to help him on the career for which gallantry and martial skill seemed to destine him,

¹ There actually exists a beautiful rondeau by Jeanne Filleul, or otherwise Jeanne Filloque, maid-of-honour to the Dauphine; but none of Margaret's writings have survived. (*Vide* Le Roux de Lincy's *Femmes Célèbres*.)

she sent him a large gift of money.¹ Such was the manner in which she took her pleasure; to religious exercises also she gave great attention, as was natural in a deserted and injured lady of imaginative temperament. But her charms, her rank and talent, were not sufficient to save her from evil report. The court of France lacked the simplicity and purity of the court of James the First. Chastity was not one of the virtues of Charles VII. or his son, and during the last year of Margaret's life Agnes Sorel ruled the heart, and perhaps was beginning to rule the policy of the French King. The Dauphin preferred the excitements of war and intrigue to the calm of domestic life; and the relations of France and Scotland had become less intimate during the stormy childhood of James the Second. She seemed drifting further still from the home of her childhood, while her striking personality and her unhappy relations with her husband inspired that interest which goes always hand in hand with scandal. Yet the few glimpses we are permitted of Margaret's life before the final tragedy are pleasant and attractive. In 1441 she was at last granted to set eyes once more upon one of her sisters. For though history is silent, we cannot reasonably doubt that she took part in the festivities at the marriage of her sister Isabella to the Duke of Brittany in the autumn of 1441; but the first certain information that we possess of her movements dates nearly three years later. On the 1st of May, 1444, we see her, at Montils les Tours, go forth accompanied by the Queen of France and a vast concourse of lords and ladies to "bring in May." Later in the same year we find her moving in the brilliant court of Nancy, and attending the

¹ Duclos says 300 crowns. But in the depositions given in the inquiry of 1446 we hear that she borrowed 600 crowns, apparently for a similar purpose, thereby causing some scandal. It is more than probable that these two incidents should be identified.

nuptials of Margaret of Anjou and our own Henry the Sixth.

France had not known the splendours of a genuine court for many years. Now there was truce with England, and the simplicity born of hard times gave way to the half-forgotten etiquette of the court. The king held once more the "fêtes du roi" that the Carolingian kings and even their *fainéant* predecessors had held of old. At Easter, Pentecost, All Saints' Day and Christmas, the king held his "cour plénière." At each "fête" robes of State were distributed to the princes and the high officers of the King's court and household, that each one might shine in appropriate splendour; while the king himself on each occasion appeared in fresh apparel, with all the emblems of royalty. Heralds crying thrice, "Largesse! Largesse! Largesse!" cast handfuls of money to the crowd admitted to the hall; musicians and jugglers made amusement for the court, and masques and mysteries provided entertainment till far into the night, when the guests retired each the richer for a present from the royal liberality. Here Margaret shone with a brief brilliance, a brilliance that perhaps ultimately had a considerable share in causing her death, and that certainly only serves to show off in a sharper and darker outline the tragedy so soon to centre round her. The court remained at Nancy till the 19th of March, 1445, when its festivities were rudely cut short by the death of Radegonde, the king's daughter, whom we have seen assisting at the splendid ceremonies of Tours in 1436. She was the first member of the royal house whom Margaret had met, and she was younger even than her sister-in-law, who was in the space of a few months' time to follow her to the grave.

The court broke up, and the Queen, the Dauphin, and Margaret departed for Châlons-sur-Marne, which they reached upon the 4th of May. There they were shortly joined by

the king and the Duchess of Burgundy, who arrived on a diplomatic errand from her husband. She, like the Dauphine and like the queen,—for Agnes Sorel was now in the ascendant—was a neglected wife. Her diplomatic errand was probably diplomatic in more senses than one, for the Duke was “le plus damaret de son époque”; and she found a sympathetic confidante in the queen. In the words of Olivier de la Marche, the two took occasion “pour se douloir et complaindre l’une à l’autre de leur crève cœur.” Etiquette, however, did not admit of the duchess dining with the king and queen, and she was thus thrown into the company of the Dauphine, for whom she conceived a great affection equalled only in intensity by her dislike for the Dauphin, with whom she had high words, perchance on the question of his treatment of his wife.¹ The Dauphine paid her frequent visits, often staying with her for two or three days together. She had indeed not a little need of sympathy, as we are soon to see.

For the moment, however, the presence of a distinguished visitor had brightened the mourning court not a little, and on July the 2nd, after a great banquet, we read of a ballet entitled the “Basse Danse de Bourgogne,” danced by the Queen of Sicily, the Duchess of Calabria, the Dauphin, and the Count of Clermont. But for Margaret the dark days were approaching. Her constitution was not naturally strong, and she had further impaired it by her long night-watches, passed with her friendly rivals Jeanne Filleul, Pregente de Melun, and Marguerite de Salignac, in the service of poetry. She was sick of mind as well as body, and it is hard to doubt that the slanderous tales that engendered this agony of spirit, assisted and intensified the rapid malady of which she died.

¹ It is thus represented in a picturesque little story with Margaret for its heroine. (*Les Marguerites du temps passé*, by Madame Darmestetter.)

We must now retrace our steps to the court of Nancy or perhaps yet further still. Under the splendid exterior of the restored French court, all was not well. Dissension was rife. Taking no notice of cross currents, we may roughly state that there were two factions—for the King and for the Dauphin. The network of these intrigues is intricate in the extreme, and perhaps the death of Margaret is a mere episode in their history. It is a task for those who are treating a far wider subject than the present, to unravel the obscure story of the domestic factions at the court of Charles the Seventh. As far as can be seen in the confusion of this strange and fragmentary tangle, the King has upon his side the Dauphine and the Queen—for apparently no injury could vanquish or estrange that unhappy lady's loyal docility. Further, Margaret finds her worst enemy in Jamet du Tillay, the devoted adherent of her husband. How far the latter was concerned in the attack upon his wife's fair fame, which it is now our task to relate, will in all probability never be clearly ascertained. If he did not actually instigate the plot, he, at least, during his wife's lifetime, seems to have countenanced the very questionable proceedings of du Tillay. And it is very difficult to discover any motive for Jamet's conduct, other than the desire to please his master. The crafty Louis no doubt never committed himself to positive approval, but by refusing to disapprove worked his will.

But if Louis had a hand in the affair, what could his motive have been? It is a question the solution of which is entirely a matter of conjecture. The Dauphin was, we know, jealous of his father's power, and this jealousy seems to have been fanned to fury by the advent of Agnes Sorel and the influence she exercised with the king. And in addition to this there is a curious point to notice in the plot that came to light only a year after the Dauphine's

death. It is not necessary to enter into all its details. Louis had designs upon his father's person, and these designs were thwarted by the loyalty of the Scottish guard. "Il n'y a rien," he said, in an unguarded moment to a friend, "que de mettre ces gens dehors." Can it be, as M. F. Michel seems to suggest in his "Écossais en France," that Louis found the presence of his wife a bar to these dark designs? Clearly, while she lived and was in high favour with the king, the presence of the Scottish guard was secured, and its importance perhaps heightened. Her death or dishonour might well mean the disgrace or dismissal of the Scottish guard, whom he felt to be such a serious obstacle to his schemes. It is a possible and plausible theory, but it is no more than a theory. Many other explanations might equally well be advanced. The persecution of the Dauphine may merely have been the work of an inhuman husband, possessed by the strongest aversion for his wife. Ulterior motive there may have been none. Or it is even possible that Louis was guilty of no worse fault than heartless indifference. There is indeed but one fact that seems to lend definite colour to the theory that du Tillay was deliberately working for the Dauphin, and that is, the strong objection expressed by him to the presence among the Dauphine's attendants of certain ladies, who had been appointed through the influence of the queen and Agnes Sorel. But the general impression given by the evidence of the witnesses examined at the inquiry into the circumstances of Margaret's death, is, that she was the centre of a struggle of influences, and that Jamet du Tillay concerned himself actively in this contest, under a careful disguise of quasi-paternal anxiety for the Dauphine's welfare.

There is, we shall see, always underlying the expressions of anxiety for the health and fair fame of the princess, the persistent recurrence of the charge of slander, and the

bitter complaints of Margaret herself against Jamet seem to dispose of any idea that he was merely a good-natured and well-meaning, but utterly tactless busy-body. It is a difficult task, however, to trace with any clearness the precise course of events in this perplexing story. For evidence we are entirely dependent on the enquiry which we have mentioned. It is hard to reconstruct history out of the conflicting evidence given at an inquest. It is rendered doubly hard by the fact that there is a total lack of method in the official report, that dates are confused and that there are many irreparable gaps.

Though, therefore, to elaborate the story, and set it forth in all its twists and turnings be impracticable, and in view of the slender and unsatisfactory evidence, perhaps unprofitable, we can, without grave injustice, draw a general conclusion as to the situation in which the unfortunate princess found herself placed, and, if we cannot know all that transpired behind the scenes, can at least paint an impressionist sketch of the drama as enacted in the eyes of the world.

The first hint of trouble seems to take us back to a period some two years before the Dauphine's death. What precisely had happened we cannot tell, but Jamet du Tillay had already incurred Margaret's grave displeasure. More than once she said to Marguerite de Villequier,¹ one of her attendant ladies, that of all men she hated Jamet du Tillay most. Scandal, or the rumour of it, had already reached her ears; and it must have been serious to have excited such bitter words. But with the exception of this brief utterance—perhaps wrongly dated through some slip of memory on the part of the witness, we hear no more of

¹ Presumably one of the most impartial witnesses, as the king's party had, for reasons unknown, succeeded in having her removed from the Dauphine's household. She was, however, kinswoman to Agnes Sorel.

evil rumours till the following year, when, as has been mentioned, the court was at Nancy. Then occurred a serious incident.

One winter evening about Christmas-tide Jamet du Tillay, "bailli de Vermandois," entered suddenly and unexpectedly into the chamber of the Dauphine. He found the princess lying upon her bed, surrounded by her ladies. Leaning, as Jamet thought, somewhat too familiarly against the bed, were two young lords, Jean d'Estouteville and another whom Jamet failed to recognize. The room was lighted solely by the flickering gleam of the hearth, and Du Tillay professes to have been scandalized by the impropriety of the situation, and to have rebuked the *maître d'hôtel*, Regnault de Dresnay, with severity. As to his precise words on this occasion there is not a little doubt. According to his own version, he said that it was "grande paillardise" for the *maître d'hôtel* and the other officers of the household to leave the chamber of so great a lady without torches at that hour of the night. But the account given by other witnesses was different. They represented him as having said that such conduct was worthy rather of a *paillarde* than of a great lady. There are perhaps reasons for holding the latter version to be the more correct.¹ It is, at any rate, a good deal more than probable that such was the common impression, and we can hardly doubt that this version came to the ears of the Dauphine and perhaps also to those of her husband. For a little later² we find Margaret once more declaiming with great bitterness against some traducer, who, though not expressly named, is almost

¹ For the word "*paillardise*" is much more likely to be used of the indiscretions of a "*grande dame*", than of what was after all merely carelessness and bad taste on the part of the household.

² Later, for the date is indicated by the words "before the Queen left Nancy", clearly pointing to the end of her sojourn there.

certainly to be identified with du Tillay. "There is one," she cried to her ladies, "who is over light of speech, and whom I do well to hate. For he has ever striven his best, and is still striving to discredit me in the eyes of Monseigneur the Dauphin. It has given me, and gives me still, great sorrow of heart, for no man could speak worse words of a woman than he of me." There seems here to be an obvious reference to the unhappy episode of Christmas and the coarse words of du Tillay, while it at least shows that Margaret believed her persecutor to have for his aim a still further estrangement between herself and her husband.

At what period exactly it was that du Tillay first expressed his disapproval of the personal attendants of the princess, we cannot say. It was probably at some period of 1445, for Pregente de Melun, for whom he appears to have had an especial aversion, had been transferred from the household of the Queen to that of the Dauphine, largely through the influence of Agnes Sorel—whose ascendancy was of recent date; and we gather also from du Tillay's defence of himself that Margaret was already in failing health. Indeed Jamet was reported to have said that the Dauphine was sick of love, that her death would be of small loss to the realm, perhaps also that Pregente de Melun was her accomplice in her "*affaires de cœur*."¹

Jamet, however, protested that he had done no worse than remonstrate with Pregente, Jeanne Filleul and Marguerite de Salignac for permitting—nay, encouraging the Dauphine to keep such late hours. The doctors had told him that the princess ran grave risks of falling into a serious illness

¹ Du Tillay is reported to have said of Pregente: "*Je voudrais bien qu'elle ne se melât point du tout dans les affaires de Madame la Dauphine, car elle pourrait être cause de quelque malheur*". The importance that seems to be attached to these words and their context in the inquiry seems to warrant the above suggestion.

if she persisted in her long vigils. As to his having said that she was sick of love, he had no remembrance of saying anything of the sort; whilst concerning the charges that he had brought accusations of unchastity against her and had attempted to estrange her from her husband, he had never seen aught in her that he would not willingly see in his own wife, and whosoever taxed him with such dastardly conduct lied foully in his throat and should answer for it in single combat.

Whether Jamet's explanations were true or not, they were at least plausible. For, without doubt, Margaret was far too careless of her health. A lady of delicate constitution could hardly hope to make roundel-writing a satisfactory substitute for sleep. For, to quote a fragment of a conversation, which took place between du Tillay and the king during her last illness: "Madame kept such long watches, now greater, now less, that sometimes it was almost sunrise before she went to her bed, and often Monseigneur the Dauphin had been long time asleep before she withdrew to her chamber, and often she spent the hours of the night in writing roundels, as many as twelve perchance, in the revolution of one day, 'qui lui estoit chose bien contraire'". "That is bad for the head, is it not?" asked the king. "Yes," replied one present, "if it be indulged in over much—mais ce sont choses de plaisance."

But although her health may have been tottering, her condition does not seem to have caused serious anxiety, till some time after her arrival at Châlons. And even there, as we have seen, she was able to enjoy life. It was also at Châlons that the jousts took place, in connexion with which is told the romantic story of the poor squire, and the Dauphine's liberality. It must also have been during her residence at Châlons that she interceded with the king for the inhabitants of Metz, then invested by the armies of France.

Now, however, we are drawing very near the end. Margaret's sorrows seem to have awakened the pangs of homesickness, and she had obtained permission from the king for two of her sisters to come over to France and reside with her. But she was never to have the joy of setting eyes on them. Now, also, her friend and consoler, the Duchess of Burgundy, departed from the French court. She had perhaps been a peace-maker¹ in the disturbed atmosphere surrounding the Royal household; she had, at any rate, proved a comforter in some of its distresses. Nor was her departure the only blow that befell the Dauphine.² About the same time it is said, (though on what evidence is not quite clear) that an angry interview took place between Margaret and her husband. Perhaps it was in connexion with the episode at Nancy, which the officious du Tillay had reported to his master; perhaps in connexion with the bestowal of the six hundred crowns on the hero of the jousts. The story of this scene is not well authenticated and we can only conjecture.

The shock may have further weakened the tottering fabric. At any rate, on the seventh of August, as the result of a pilgrimage in company with the king from the Château de Sarry, near Châlons, to Nôtre Dame de l'Épine, she took a chill. The day had been very hot, and on her

¹ Such at least is a plausible interpretation of a passage in the lament for the Dauphine composed probably by her sister, Isabella of Brittany.

Adieu, duchesse de Bourgogne,
La mienne seur o cœur jolis;
Si vous povez par nulle voye,
Mettez pais en la fleur de lis.

² It is perhaps to this that Jeanne de Tucé alludes in her evidence. The Dauphine complained "qu'il l'avait mise hors de la grace du Roi et du monseigneur le Dauphin, qu'elle craignait plus en ce cas que nul autre." There may also be an allusion to the accusation brought against du Tillay, that he had written anonymous and slanderous letters to the king. These words are said to have been uttered at the beginning of August. But Jeanne's dates are inconsistent, and it was probably a little earlier.

return to the Château she had sat for some time lightly clad in a cold and draughty room on the ground floor, with the result that on the next day, to quote the grotesque bulletin of her physician, "a cold was engendered in her brain. And perchance from her said brain a portion of these corrupted humours may have fallen upon portions of her lungs, and caused the ulceration of her said lung." In other words, her imprudent conduct had resulted in inflammation of the lungs. Her condition rapidly became serious, but the disease appears to have fluctuated in such a manner, as now to give grounds for the strongest hopes, now to plunge her friends anew into the most profound alarm. She was removed to Châlons at the outset of her malady. The church bells were forbidden to ring for fear of disturbing her slumbers. The king was in great distress; he had just lost his daughter, he was now it seemed to lose his daughter-in-law, for whom he appears to have entertained a very genuine affection.

Meanwhile the Dauphine lying on her bed of pain complained rather of sickness of the soul than of the body. Though the actual cause of her disease was purely physical, the miserable state of her mind deprived her of "the will to live" and sapped her already lowered vitality. On the 10th of August Jeanne de Tucé tried to console her, and bade her be of good cheer and lay aside her melancholy. "I have good cause to be melancholy," replied the dying princess, "and to be sad at heart by reason of the words that have been spoken of me, words wicked and without cause. For as I have hopes of salvation, I have not done aught of that wherewith men charge me, nay, nor thought thereof." And a few days later, when the force of the malady increased, her complaints became yet more open. Often and in the presence of many witnesses she cried from her "couch of fire." "Ah! Jamet, Jamet, you have

attained to your end. If I die, 'tis by reason of you and the words that you have spoken of me without cause or justification." Then raising her arms to heaven she beat her breast and continued: "I swear by God Almighty, by my soul, and the baptism which I received at the font, that, though I die, I have never deserved aught that men have said of me, nor have I done any wrong to my lord the Dauphin." Pierre de Brézé, seneschal of Poitou, was so stirred by these piteous words, that he cried out, as he left the chamber, addressing du Tillay, "Méchant ribaud, c'est toi qui la fais mourir," and so departed "bien marry et dolent," saying, "c'est grand pitié de la douleur et courroux, que souffre cette dame."

Her strength gradually sank. Du Tillay, who, to use Margaret's words, felt "que son fait branlait," had made vain attempts even before her illness to obtain audience of the princess, and defend himself personally against the charges she brought against him. But Margaret would have nothing to say to him. Du Tillay adopted a politic attitude, and expressed profound grief on hearing of the illness. He played the part of sympathiser to the king, saying, "How many misfortunes, sire, have come upon us in so small a time; there has come greater sorrow upon this land than ever yet came upon any. We have had all these great lords quarrelling with one another, and now to lose this lady would be the greatest ill that could befall us." All his efforts, however, were of no avail. The princess was obdurate, and all the entreaties of her ladies and her confessor could not induce her to grant him forgiveness. At last, however, she felt her end very near at hand, and her confessor, Robert Poitevin, was summoned to her bedside for the last time. "Madame," he said, "is your heart full of thinking upon the God you must soon meet?" and she answered "Yes, Master Robert." "Madame, forget

Him not," urged the confessor. "Nay, nay," was the reply, "I will never forget Him!" Then after a pause—"Madame, have you pardoned all the world?" But to this she answered never a word. Then Marguerite de Salignac, taking Master Robert aside, said, "You must make her pardon Jamet du Tillay." He returned to the bedside and wrung the confession from her that there was yet one whom she had not forgiven. "Nay, Madame," said the courtly priest, "it must be that you have pardoned him for such is your duty." But three times the dying Dauphine reiterated that she had not done so. Then Jeanne de Tucé, Regnault de Dresnay and her ladies round her added their prayers to those of the confessor, saying that as she hoped for pardon from God she ought to pardon all the world and forgive him in all good heart. Then at last said the princess, "I pardon him, then, and with all my heart."

From this point she sank rapidly. A few hours before her death she was heard to murmur. "N'était ma foi, je me repentirais volontiers d'être venue en France." And soon after at 10 o'clock of the evening of the 16th August,¹ she passed away in the twentieth year of her age, surrounded by foreigners, a childless and neglected wife,² in a strange land, her kinsfolk far away. Her last words were, "Fy de la vie de ce monde, n'en parlez plus."

The king and queen were deeply distressed at her death. The queen fell sick of grief, and the king on the following day hastily quitted Châlons "dolent, courroucé et troublé de son trespas." Her crafty husband feigned the deepest grief—for we cannot, considering his known attitude to-

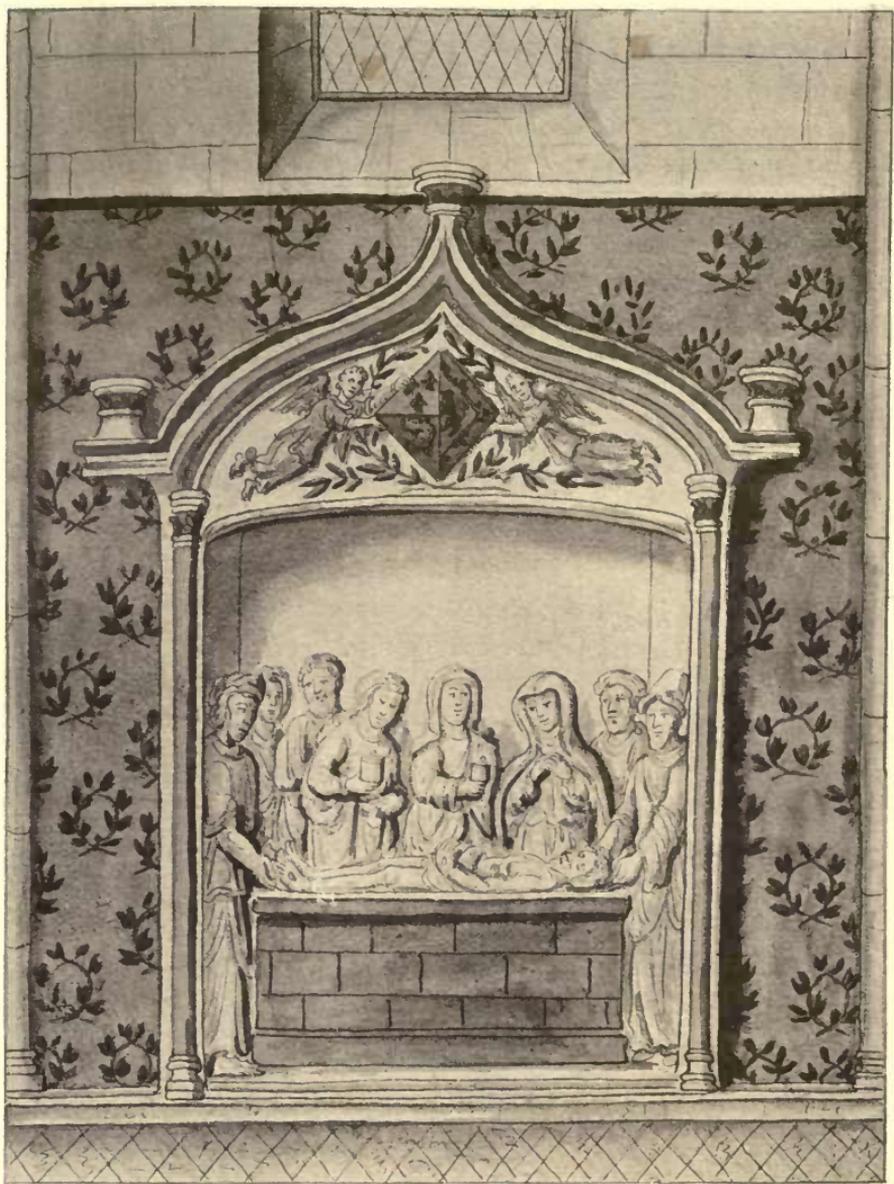
¹ She was born in 1424 and died August 16th, 1445. Her age has been erroneously given as 26 and the year of her death now as 1444, now as 1445.

² Her barrenness was apparently commonly reported to be due to her own imprudence in partaking overmuch of unripe fruit and vinegar.

wards his wife, and his habitual heartlessness consider it to have been genuine. However, the evidence¹ for his tears, although contemporary, is not first hand, and even if we suppose the narrative to be true, it has a melodramatic tinge about it, which scarcely accords with true grief. For Louis is represented as dissolved in woe, and moaning, "What a destiny has God given me! I have never had one happy hour of life. For, first of all, I was hated of my father, and later I was constrained to depart out of France, and make war in Germany, and last of all to besiege this town of Metz. And now God takes from me that which I loved best in all the world." Louis protests too much. His grief, however, did not in the least affect his political activity, and within an hour or two of his wife's death, he issued orders for the administration of Dauphiné as though nothing of moment had occurred.

Margaret's is a pathetic death-scene, and its pathos is intensified by the arrival in France on the very day of their sister's death, of the two Scottish princesses. They arrived too late, to find a double grief awaiting them. For on the same day they learnt the news both of their sister's death and of that of their mother, who had expired shortly after their departure from Scotland. "Una dies hæc omnia ademit." We may imagine Margaret, who had longed for their companionship, asking often as she lay dying, if her sisters had yet come. Now she was gone, and they could look but on her embalmed face. Whether she had been spared the grief of learning that her mother was dead we do not know; it seems probable that the news did not reach Châlons till shortly after her death.

¹ Chronique de Prailon, *Relation du siège de Metz.*



TOMB OF THE PRINCESS MARGARET.

She was buried in the Cathedral of Châlons. It had been the intention of the king, that her body should thence be removed to the royal tombs of St. Denis. But the Dauphin grudged this honour to his injured wife. For thirty-four years her body reposed in the Cathedral church on the Marne. Then Louis gave orders that her remains¹ should be removed to the great church of St. Laon of Thouars. There she lies, but her memorial, (of which a sketch has been reproduced for the present volume), after suffering grievous things at the hands of the Huguenots, seems to have suffered the usual fate of royal tombs during the French Revolution.

But although she was gone, the memory of her death did not rapidly pass away. In October 1445 an inquiry was held at Châlons by order of the king, to investigate the conduct of du Tillay. For, guilty or not, there was a wide-spread feeling of indignation against him, and numbers of the young lords of the court challenged him to single combat. The king, however, interposed and pursued the inquiry with a remarkable vigour and persistence, renewing it again in the summer of the ensuing year. The Dauphin also, as was absolutely necessary for his credit, took an active part in the proceedings. But what the precise cause of such persistence may have been is hidden from us. The gravest suspicion was evidently attached in the highest quarters to the conduct of du Tillay, and probably at the back of this complicated affair we have, as has been already indicated, some dark court intrigue.

Much evidence was brought against du Tillay, but he parried all attacks with great skill, often, it is true, giving the statements attributed to him a blank denial, more generally contenting himself with showing how perversely

¹ They were enclosed in three different caskets—the body in one, the entrails in a second, the heart in the third.

innocent words of his had been misinterpreted, and saying, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*. But the cumulative evidence is too strong for us entirely to believe in his innocence. What was the result of the inquiry, there is nothing to show. That it was not wholly adverse to du Tillay is obvious, for he continued to enjoy the favour of royalty. Indeed it is hard to see how on the evidence that has come down to us, he could possibly have been condemned. In England he would obtain a verdict of "not guilty," in Scotland of "not proven." To revert for a moment to a point on which we have already touched—namely, the Dauphin's conspiracy of 1446, even if we should suppose Louis to have instigated the attack upon his wife with a view to the furtherance of his nefarious aims, we cannot with fairness involve du Tillay in the full shadow of his guilt. Du Tillay's name was never coupled with that conspiracy. He was rather the blind, perhaps the well-intentioned, instrument of an unscrupulous master. We may, without injustice, brand his conduct as unworthy of a gentleman of France; it would perhaps be unfair to gibbet him as a criminal.

As for our unfortunate heroine, her innocence is beyond reasonable doubt. There is scarcely a word in all the evidence, that could with any justice suggest that she was faithless to her faithless husband. Foolish she may have been with the folly of a romantic girl. The love of poetry may have had a share in her death in more senses than one. She was careless of her health, she was perhaps over-rash and impulsive in her emotions. But wisdom and a well-balanced judgment were rarely a portion of the heritage of the Stewarts. Even her father, undeniably great as he was, had not the highest political wisdom. And like her more famous and more tragic kinswoman, who a century later was also a Dauphin's bride, she never had a

fair chance in the struggle of life. Wedded to a false husband, set in the midst of a licentious court she may well be accounted happy, if she gave no true cause for scandal; to have escaped it altogether would have been blessedness unlooked for indeed. For if, perhaps, she had some of the weaknesses of the Stewarts, she had their full dower of charm. Historians almost without exception have passed a sympathetic verdict upon her; her memory is fragrant in the pages of the French chroniclers; and her sad death was the subject of many an elegy—nay, was actually sung by a Stewart princess herself.¹ One thing alone was wanting to her—true love. Had this been granted to her, she had not been “done to death by slanderous tongues.” For her epitaph we may quote the simple comment of the chronicler. “At this time also my lady the Dauphine died, which was great pity, for she was a noble lady.”²

So we take leave of “Marguerite la Madeleine”.³ She is a slight figure seen only here and there through gaps in the hurrying crowds, that throng this stirring period of

¹ In the poem by her sister, Isabella of Brittany, referred to some pages back. It is a work of no literary and very small historical value. It is quoted in full in Michel's “Écossais en France.”

² As to the authorities to whom I have referred for this slight sketch of the Dauphine, Margaret of Scotland, I am particularly indebted to the *History of Charles VII.* by M. du Fresne de Beaucourt and to M. Jusserand's *Romance of a King's Life*. I have also consulted the reports of the three inquiries into the conduct of Jamet du Tillay, together with the *Narration of Regnault Girard*, which are to be seen in the National Library of Paris. These last two works form the mainstay as regards the evidence concerning the life of this little known princess. In addition to this, du Fresne de Beaucourt's edition of Matthieu de Coucy, and the Chronicle of Jean Chartier give some useful information. Michel's account of the Dauphine seems to be taken almost word for word out of the imaginative and grossly inaccurate account by Le Roux de Lincy in his *Femmes Célèbres*.

³ Whether there is any real authority for this title, is uncertain. It may merely be based on the fact that in the key to a secret code used by the Duke of Burgundy in his intercourse with one of his secret agents, she is signified by this pseudonym.

history. Her kinswomen in whose company she finds herself to-day, are stronger figures, with a wider and more important sphere in life. They move in politics, she was merely the martyr to callous policy,

“Et ceci n'est pas autre chose
Que l'histoire d'un pauvre enfant.”

ELIZABETH OF BOHEMIA

DAUGHTER OF JAMES VI. AND I.



ELIZABETH OF BOHEMIA.

II

ELIZABETH OF BOHEMIA, DAUGHTER OF JAMES VI. AND I.

AS a link in the Genealogy which connects the House of Hanover with the House of Stuart, the name of Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, is not unfamiliar to her countrymen. Slightly less adventitious and more personal is the additional fame which still clings to this daughter of King James I., as "The Mistress" to whom was dedicated one of the most beautiful lyrics in the English language. For it was the sight of Elizabeth in 1620, during her one year's reign in Bohemia, that inspired Sir Henry Wotton to give voice to his admiration in the following well-known verses :

"You meaner Beauties of the Night
That poorly satisfie our Eies
More by your number than your light;
You Common people of the Skies,
What are you when the Sun shall rise?"

"You Curious Chanters of the Wood,
That warble forth Dame Nature's layes,
Thinking your Voyces understood
By your weake accents; what's your praise
When Philomell her voyce shal raise?"

"You Violets, that first apeare,
By your pure purpel mantels knowne,
Like the proud Virgins of the yeare,
As if the Spring were all your own;
What are you when the Rose is blowne?"

“So when my Mistris shal be seene
 In form and Beauty of her mind,
 By Vertue first, then choyce a Queen,
 Tell me, if she were not design'd
 Th' Eclypse and Glory of her kind.”¹

The admiration of Elizabeth to which Wotton gave an expression so courtly and poetic was by no means confined to courtiers and poets: it was re-echoed by her contemporaries of every rank and of every party. Hence it is that the story of her life, while it necessarily centres round her dramatic reign as a “Queen by choice”, and round the causes and consequences of that episode, equally involves a consideration of that “virtue” to which she owed the praises of her admirers and her proudest title of the “Queen of Hearts”.

During the five generations which elapsed between the death of Margaret and the birth of Elizabeth Stuart, Europe, under the influence of the Renaissance and the Reformation, changed its mediæval for a modern aspect. By the close of the 16th century the rival Churches into which Christendom had been partitioned, were showing signs that they were weary of their long warfare. At length men could hope that the time was at hand when religious differences should no longer be made the occasion for bloodshed. Such was the condition of Europe when, on the 19th of August, 1596, the Queen of Scotland gave birth in Falkland Palace to a daughter, who was later to become the ill-fated Queen of Bohemia. Strangely enough, only three days earlier, on August 16th, there had been born in distant Heidelberg, a Prince whose life was to be most closely bound up with that of the Scottish Princess. And these two not only were destined to bring grievous misfortune upon each

¹ Reliquiæ Wottonianæ, p. 518.

other, but were also to take a foremost part in breaking the European truce and in plunging their own generation into the longest and most cruel of religious wars.

The Princess was received with but a scanty greeting: for already her father, King James VI., possessed a son and heir; and at the time of her birth the attention of the Scottish court and nation was concentrated on matters of more immediate importance. These were the days when Andrew Melville came to Falkland uninvited, and spoke in plain, uncourtly language to his King, "God's sillie vassall." It was at this very time, in fact, that the lingering struggle between James and the Presbyterian Ministers had come to a climax. And thus when the day arrived on which the two months' old Princess was to be christened, the Edinburgh preachers, so far from congratulating the Crown on the happy event, were only intent on denouncing the Court for its treatment of Mr. Black, their champion. Meanwhile, at Holyrood Chapel, the baptismal ceremony was "quietlie and with the less circumstance past owir."¹ When Thomas Bowes, the English ambassador, held the child in his arms; and when the Lyon Herald proclaimed her title as "The Lady Elizabeth, first dochtour of Scotland," the few nobles who were in attendance, probably thought but little of the small Princess herself and much of the significance of the event. It was a notable fact that James had asked the English Queen to stand "gossip" to the girl, and that she on her part had consented. What better evidence could there be that the disagreements between the two crowns were laid aside: that James was ready to forget the unkind allusions with which the English Spenser had recently defamed his mother; and that Elizabeth had forgiven the wild raid of Kinmont Willie,

¹ Hist. MS. Com. 11th Report, App. 6, p. 67.

and had for the time relinquished her intrigues with the Scottish malcontents?

For seven years the child grew up in the Palace of Linlithgow, under the care of Lord and Lady Livingston. Then, in 1603, came the good news that Queen Elizabeth was at length dead. James was summoned to fill the empty throne; and preparations were at once begun for the migration of the royal family to England. Henceforth the romance of Stuart history was to be displayed upon a more conspicuous stage.

The journey south must have been a strange experience for the little Elizabeth. Some portions of the route were traversed in the company of her festive mother. But it was for the most part in solitary grandeur that the seven year old Princess, followed by her own train of attendants, lumbered slowly along the dreary Great North Road. Edinburgh was left behind on June 3rd. At Berwick there occurred a sad parting with Lady Livingston. "Oh Madam!" Elizabeth is said to have sobbed to the Queen, "nothing can ever make me forget one I so tenderly loved."¹ However, regret at leaving her Scottish friend and her Scottish nursery doubtless soon gave way to a wondering interest at the attentions and the crowding curiosity of her father's new subjects.

After a month's journey Elizabeth rejoined her parents and her elder brother, Prince Henry, at Windsor. There was a pleasing homeliness about the family life of the first Stuart King of Great Britain. James and his wife, Anne of Denmark, were not indeed a well-assorted pair. The King himself, could have but little in common with his wife, a silly woman, absorbed in her own petty jealousies and frivolities. In his uncouth character the heavy learning

¹ "Memoirs of the Queen of Bohemia," by "One of her Ladies," p. 43.

of his tutor Buchanan awkwardly jostled with the wit and spirit of his mother, the passionate Mary Queen of Scots. But James was naturally warm-hearted; and was glad to humour both the Queen herself and their children.

An excellent insight into this family life is provided by the "Memoirs" of Elizabeth's girlhood, which were written by one of the Princess's Scottish companions in her old age.¹ This lady gives the following account of Elizabeth's reunion with James at Windsor.

"My young Mistress, (she was then but seven years old) who was very fond of her Father, expressed her joy at seeing him again, in so endearing a manner as gave him great pleasure; after giving her a thousand pretty toys, he shewed her the Dauphin's picture, and asked her how she would like him for her husband!

"She made him no answer, but coloured and ran into the next room, where I was waiting with some of the Queen's ladies. She whispered to me, that she had a great secret to tell me; and when we were alone, she told me what the King had said to her, and that the Dauphin's picture was the prettiest face she had ever seen, but charged me not to tell even her brother, that she had said so."²

We see James again in a good humour two days after the family reunion at Windsor. Elizabeth had been watching from a recess of St. George's Hall the state dinner which followed the installation of Prince Henry as a Knight of the Garter, and after the dinner she had joined the Queen, who was receiving her new subjects. Thereupon James jovially asked Lord Southampton and others "if they did not think his Annie looked passing well; and my little Bessy too (added he, taking his daughter up in his arms

¹ *Vide* "Note" on the "Memoirs" at end of chapter.

² *Memoirs*, pp. 51—2.

and kissing her) is not an ill-faured wench, and may outshine her Mother one of these days." ¹

After the Princess had been a few months at the English Court, the "camp volant" as it was called by an exhausted Secretary of State; ² James decided that her health could no longer stand the strain, and that her newly appointed guardians, Lord and Lady Harington, would do well to educate the girl in the seclusion of their country seat. Elizabeth had already made friends in England; and the parting with her cousin Arabella Stuart and the other relatives at court was sorrowful enough: but when it came to saying good-bye to Prince Henry "she hung about his neck, crying and repeating a hundred times, 'I cannot leave my Henry.'" ³

Henceforward Elizabeth was established at Combe Abbey near Coventry, and with her were several daughters of Scottish and English nobles, two Percies, a Devereux (daughter of Queen Elizabeth's Earl of Essex), a Hume, a Bruce, and the writer of the Memoirs—to whom we owe a happy picture of their life in this peaceful Warwickshire home.

The Princess's room in the old monastery looked out over brilliant flower-beds: beyond was a green English lawn, and in the distance an artificial river that disappeared among the neighbouring woods. "Nothing took the Princess's fancy so much as a little wilderness at the end of the Park, on the banks of a large brook which ran winding along, and formed in one place a large irregular basin, or rather a small lake, in which there was an island covered with underwood and flowering trees and plants, so well mixed and disposed that for nine months in the year they formed a continual spring." ⁴ This place the Princess took

¹ Memoirs, pp. 56—7.

² Nichol's "Progresses," vol. i., p. 272. Cecil to Shrewsbury, Sep. 17, 1603.

³ Memoirs, p. 107.

⁴ Memoirs, pp. 112—3.

for her own, and here in an aviary, the back and roof of which were formed of natural rock, she collected birds of every species and of every country. In the wilderness and wood Lord Harington built "little wooden buildings in all the different orders of architecture;" and in these were scattered paintings of divers races, and stuffed skins of all sorts of animals, "so that this was a kind of world in miniature. Adjoining the wood were some meadows, which were afterwards added to what the Princess called 'her Territories', and this, 'her Fairy-farm', from its being stocked with the smallest kind of cattle from the isles of Jersey, Shetland and Man."¹

If the park of Combe Abbey was the right place to give Elizabeth health of body, its owner was certainly the man to develop her health of mind. James had shown true wisdom in raising Harington to the peerage on his accession, and in then entrusting to him the up-bringing of his daughter. A man of science and a man of religion, withal a courtier and a sportsman, Harington was no unworthy contemporary of Francis Bacon. His interest in every sphere of knowledge gave him a breadth of view which prevented him from belonging to either the school of thought which culminated in Cromwell, or that which culminated in Laud. And it was to Harington that Elizabeth owed the stock of philosophy and religion that carried her through life.

It was one of James's maxims "That even a man who was vain and foolish, was made more so by learning, and as for women, who, he said, were all naturally addicted to vanity, where it did one good it did harm to twenty; he therefore charged Lord Harington not to attempt to make the princess a Latin or Greek scholar (as had been usual for women, especially those of high birth, in the pre-

¹ Memoirs, pp. 121—124.

ceding age), but to endeavour to make her truly wise by instructing her thoroughly in religion, and by giving her a general idea of history."¹

The king's instructions were sensibly carried out by Harington. "Religion" was expounded at short morning and evening prayers; and special resident masters equipped the princess with the ordinary "polite accomplishments" of a young lady; but the bulk of the instruction was imparted informally and without being obtrusively labelled work. Thus the learning of history and geography became a game in which pictured cards had to be shuffled and arranged. Or "if a butterfly or glow-worm took her eye, some account was given her of their nature, and of the wonderful changes most of them go through."² The children would delight to look at these insects through the newly discovered microscope, or at the stars through Lord Harington's wonderful telescope; and at such times their guardian would denounce the astrology which was still the fashionable belief of the age, or he would explain to them the new views of Copernicus. Then the children would think he was laughing at them, and Harington would not be satisfied till all the motions of the earth had been made clear.

At other times the birds and flowers would suggest to Harington moral lessons; or from the views of Copernicus he would branch off to the statements of the Old Testament, to discuss the divine purpose in the gradual revelation of the secrets of nature. It is satisfactory to be assured that the children understood what their guardian had to tell them, and that of them all, Elizabeth—though she was not told so at the time—proved herself the quickest, and the cleverest.³ These were happy days for Elizabeth at Combe

¹ Memoirs, p. 109.

² Memoirs, p. 115.

³ Memoirs, pp. 116—119.

Abbey; days beginning early with visits to her "Fairy-farm", filled with an abundance of exercise in the fresh air, as the Princess played on her territories, tended her pets, or adorned her grotto with moss and shells, and ending with music or dancing. Already she was playing the queen; for her court she had her six companions, while twice a week the children of the neighbouring families were admitted to "her drawing-rooms;"¹ of grooms and ladies-in-waiting there was a large train at the Abbey; for her subjects there were the farmers' daughters whom she caused to be dressed as shepherdesses, and a pauper family whom she had established on her territories as keepers of her beasts and birds. Occasionally, too, she had her state functions; as when in 1604 she paid a solemn visit to the city of Coventry, was received by the Mayor and Aldermen, and was treated to a sermon and a dinner.² Clearly, the eight year old Elizabeth was a most gracious little queen, everybody petted her, and she, for her part, was fond of everybody.

But already she had to learn, that in playing the part of a Queen there are material difficulties. The writer of her childhood's biography tells a story which shows that she was the same over-generous, extravagant creature from the first, which she remained to the last years of her life. "For a great while she spent her money long before the next quarter was due—nay, sometimes before the first week was out. Once in particular, I remember she laid it all out within three days after it was paid in, in a heap of trinkets which she had divided amongst us, but chiefly between Lady Lucy Percy and myself. Lord Harington who had observed it in silence, purposely brought to her some curiosities, that were to be sold, one morning that some

¹ Memoirs, p. 161.

² Nichol's "Progresses of James I.," vol. i., p. 429.

young ladies of the country were to be presented to her, to whom, he told her, it would be proper she should make a present of some of those rarities; and to make her distress the greater, presented her a moving petition of a decayed gentleman's family; this obliged her to own her money was all gone." ¹ She begged her guardian to advance the money out of her next quarter's allowance. He replied by warning her against the practice of ever anticipating her income, and promised to assist the distressed family himself. "This was a little mortification to the Princess: Lady Lucy Percy and I asked her leave to return what she had so lavishly given us that she might bestow them on the strangers; this she refused with some scorn, telling us, she never took back what she had given; but recollecting that our offer proceeded from affection, she burst out a-crying, and said, she would accept of any thing from such friends, but that those baubles would be despised by those who did not know and love her, and that if Lady Harington would let her, she had rather give some of *her* jewels." ²

The peaceful round of Elizabeth's country life was broken in the November of 1605 by the alarm of the Gunpowder Plot. Combe Abbey was in the centre of the conspirators' country; and they had planned to capture her and declare her Queen in her father's stead. It is an oft-told tale, how Sir Everard Digby invited the Catholic gentlemen of the neighbourhood to a meet at Dunchurch; how this party was to have hunted no smaller game than the Princess herself; and how Lord Harington received warning of the plot only just in time to place her in safety at Coventry. We have the latter's own account of the episode in a letter

¹ Memoirs, pp. 123—6.

² Memoirs, 127.

addressed to his cousin: "Our great care and honourable charge entrusted to us by the King's Majesty, hath been matter of so much concern, that it almost effaced the attention to kyn or friend. With God's assistance we hope to do our Lady Elizabeth such services as is due to her princely endowments and natural abilities; both which appear the sweet dawning of future comfort to her Royal Father. The late divilish Conspiracy did much disturb this part... I went with Sir Fulk Greville to alarm the neighbourhood and surprize the villains, who came to Holbach; was out five days in peril of death, in fear for the great charge I left at home. Her Highness doth often say, 'What a queen should I have been by this means! I had rather have been with my Royal Father in the Parliament House than wear his Crown on such condition.' This poor Lady hath not yet recovered the surprize, and is very ill and troubled."¹

About the Christmas of 1608, after five happy years at Combe Abbey, Elizabeth returned to Whitehall, and was given an establishment of her own at court. According to modern ideas, it was a ridiculously early coming out. But the children of those times, when they left the nursery, were made to talk and behave, just as they were made to dress, like elderly gentlemen and elderly ladies. The twelve year old Elizabeth was probably as staid as she was ever destined to become; nor was she lacking in self-assurance. The first impressions of the French Ambassador were very favourable: she is "full of virtue and merit, handsome, engaging, very well bred, and speaks French exceedingly well, much better than her brother."² But although the Cock-pit of Whitehall was assigned to Elizabeth

¹ Lord Harington to Sir James Harington: Nichol's "Progresses," vol. i., pp. 890—2.

² La Boderie's Report. Raumer. "History of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," vol. ii., p. 227.

and she was given a regular establishment of her own, the change was not far-reaching. Lord and Lady Harington were still kept by her side to manage her affairs, and she passed most of her time in the country at Hampton Court or at Kew, where she had leisure to continue her lessons in music, French, and Italian.

And it was well for her that she was still under the influence of Lord Harington in her new surroundings. It was well, not because the Court at this time was especially dissolute; for the ill repute which clings to the Court of James I. in so far as it is not the mere invention of a later age, is traceable to the *causes célèbres* which distinguished the latter half of the reign. The old-fashioned view which regarded the accession of James as initiating the decline of morality is thoroughly misleading. These early years of the 17th century are rather the flowering season of the Elizabethan age—both of what was ill and of what was admirable in that many-sided epoch. Freed from all wars or dangers from abroad, undisturbed as yet by serious trouble at home, England, growing every year richer in material wealth, and in literature, was now, if ever, genuinely “merry.” All classes were turning to enjoy themselves as whole-heartedly as they had previously set themselves to fight the Spaniard. Nor was there ever a jollier pedant than the King himself. Royally “liberall of what he had not in his own gripe”,¹ too lazy ever to say his friends “Nay,” James always loved to see those around him happy. At court the amusements though harmless, were not for the most part of a high order. Following the example of the silly Queen, the order of the day was for “foolery” and extravagance. This then, is the reason for which it was well for the young Elizabeth that she continued under

¹ Secret History of the Court of King James I., vol. ii., p. 7.

Harington's guardianship: it probably saved her—giddy and impressionable as she was by nature—from becoming as wholly frivolous as her empty-headed mother.

The strong influence which the teaching of Harington exercised over the mind of Elizabeth, is apparent in some childish verses which were written by her soon after her first taste of the life at court. A few stanzas are sufficient to show the tenour of the whole poem:

I

“This is joy, this is true pleasure,
If we best things make our treasure
And enjoy them at full leisure,
Evermore in richest measure.

II

God is only excellent,
Let up to him our love be sent;
Whose desires are set or bent
On aught else shall much repent.

III

Why should vain joys us transport?
Earthly pleasures are but short—
And are mingled in such sort,
Griefs are greater than the sport.

* * * * *

IX

And regard of this yet have
Nothing can from death us save,
Then we must into our grave,
When we most are pleasure's slave.

X

By long use our soules will cleave
To the earth: then it we leave;
Then will cruell death bereave,
All the joyes that we receive.

XI

Thence they goe to hellish flame,
 Ever tortur'd in the same,
 With perpetuall blott of name:
 Flowt, reproach, and endless shame."

After describing in a similar fashion the ease and pleasures of heaven, the Princess continues:

XVII

"Are these things indeed even soe?
 Doe I certainly them know,
 And am I so much my foe,
 To remayne yett dull and slowe?

* * * * *

XXII

That I hereon meditate,
 That desire, I finde (though late)
 To prize heaven at higher rate,
 And these pleasures vayne to hate.

* * * * *

XXIV

Since in me such thoughts are scant
 Of thy grace repayre my want,
 Often meditations grant,
 And in me more deeply plant." ¹

If these verses show how carefully Lord Harington had instilled into his pupil's mind serious ideas on life, they none the less reveal that natural inclination for dissipation

¹ Harington, *Nugæ Antiquæ*, vol. iii., p. 303.

Mrs. Everett-Green has suggested that the verses were written "under the chastening influence of Elizabeth's first great sorrow," the death of Prince Henry. The suggestion, however, seems scarcely to be confirmed by the actual words of the poem, and is altogether at variance with the endorsement which runs as follows:— "This was written by Elizabeth, d. of K. J., 1609, and given to Lord Harington of Exton, her Tutor."

and the "earthly pleasures" which was to increase as she grew older. It was no wonder that she should find the amusements of the court fascinating. She would be able to appreciate those games of the Queen and her ladies, which made the more serious and elderly Arabella Stuart complain that she was expected to "play the child."¹ The varied diversions of the court would seem to the young Princess always fresh and exciting—the new shops in the Strand, the bear-baitings at the Tower, the receptions of foreign ambassadors and the other state functions of every description.² But more than all she would probably enjoy the gorgeous, fantastic Masques, those marvellous entertainments, half pantomime, half opera, to the contrivance of which the great men of the age devoted so much of their intellect, and in the production of which the courtiers consumed such quantities of their time.³

The Christmas of 1609 was celebrated by a great tournament. Here Prince Henry who had challenged the young nobles, proved his manhood by breaking several pikes against them. Elizabeth herself had been chosen as "Queen of the Barriers" by her brother. It was an entertainment typical of the times. When the jousting was ended, a performer dressed as Merlin stepped forward, and, inspired by Ben Jonson, thus addressed King James:—

"You and your other you, Great King and Queen,
Have yet the least of your bright fortune seen,
Which shall rise brighter every hour with time,
And in your pleasure quite forget the crime
Of change; your age's night shall be her noon:
And this young Knight⁴ that now puts forth so soon

¹ Inderwick, "Side-lights on the Stuarts," p. 87.

² Elizabeth constantly attended these functions, *vide* Nichol's "Progresses," vol. ii., *passim*.

³ For an admirable short account of the Masques of the period *vide* Masson's "Life of Milton," (Ed. 1881), vol. i., p. 578.

⁴ Prince Henry.

Into the World shall in your names achieve
 More garlands for this State, and shall relieve
 Your cares in government; while that young Lord ¹
 Shall second him in arms, and shake a sword
 And lance against the foes of God and you.
 Nor shall less joy your Royal hopes pursue
 In that most Princely maid ² whose form might call
 The world of war, to make it hazard all
 His valour for her beauty; she shall be
 Mother of Nations, and her Princes see
 Rivals almost to these." ³

It is a strange jumble—this prophecy of Jonson—in which hidden truth consorts with fiction.

The festivities were carried on up to the following night when Elizabeth gave away the prizes; after which function, though the King himself went off to bed, and it was past midnight, the young Prince and Princess stopped up for a two hours' comedy; nor even then would they retire until Henry had twice taken his sister round the long table, laden with the supper which he had prepared for the nobles, and had shown her the windmills and dryads and planetary systems, that adorned the board, all wonderfully fashioned in sweetmeat.

Six months later the creation of Henry as Prince of Wales was celebrated with yet greater festivities. There was a Masque, called "Tethy's Festival," in which Elizabeth took part as the "Nymph of the Thames." Her dress was of sky-coloured taffetas with the "long skirt wrought with lace, waved round about like a river; while from a great mother-of-pearl shell on her head hung a thin, waiving vaile." ⁴

¹ Prince Charles.

² Princess Elizabeth.

³ Nichol's "Progresses," vol. ii., pp. 281—2.

⁴ Ibid., vol. ii., p. 354.

We see from one of her letters to Henry that this "weighty affair" had been occupying her mind for some time. She writes:—

"Monsieur mon frère, Mes lettres vous suivent par tout. Je desirerois qu'elles vous fassent aussi agréables que frequentes. Je sçay bien qu'elles ne contiennent aucun sujet d'importance qui les puisse rendre recommandables, si ce n'est que V[otre] A[ltesse] me permette de vous dire que le temps d'estudier le balet s'approche. Puis donc que c'est un affaire de poids qui semble requerir votre presence prompte? Je supplieray V. A. de vous disposer a quitter bien tost les campagnes de ce pais la, pour visiter,

"Monsieur mon frere, Votre soer tres affectionné et servante tres humble,

"ELIZABETH."¹

The friendship between Elizabeth and her brother is the most striking feature of these years. The reality of their affection is not indeed to be discerned in the polite and stilted declarations of their correspondence, much of which—together with their early letters to their parents—seems in its beautiful copy-book writing to have been merely a form of educational exercise. But even amid this formality there are occasional passages which reveal the actual relations between the correspondents; for instance, in one letter Elizabeth playfully begins to quote Italian: "Je vous en envoye mille graces et vous dis brivement que je sens un extrême contentement de votre retour por deça, et cosa e bella è finita, si vous n'entendez mon Italien je vous en donnerai l'interpretation à notre prochaine rencontre, en contre echange de celle que me promettez de votre latin."²

It was natural that Elizabeth should have been devoted

¹ Harl. MS. 6986, f. 117.

² Elizabeth to Prince Henry, 1610, Harl. MS. 6986, f. 117.

to her brother, for his was a most attractive personality. Bacon has left us his impressions of the boy. "In body," he says, "he was strong and erect, of middle height, his limbs gracefully put together, his gait kinglike, his face long and somewhat lean, . . . in countenance resembling his sister as far as a man's face can be compared with that of a very beautiful girl. . . . His forehead bore marks of severity, his mouth had a touch of pride; and yet when one penetrated beyond these outworks, and soothed him with due attention and reasonable discourse, one found him gentle and easy to deal with."¹

At the present day we cannot "penetrate beyond those outworks" better than by quoting the following characteristic letter which he wrote in 1609 to "his dear freind Sir John Harington," the only son of Elizabeth's guardian:—"My Good Fellow—I have here sent you certaine matters of anciente sorte, which I have gained by searche in a musty vellome booke in my Father's closet, and as it hath great mentione of youre ancestry, I hope it will not meet your displeasure. It gave me some paines to reade, and some to write also, but I have a pleasure in over-reaching difficult matters. When I see you (and let that be shortlie) you will find me your better at Tennis and Pike. Good Fellow, I write your friend Henry. Your Latin Epistle I much esteem and will at leisure give answer to."²

There was no doubt of Henry's pride. Perhaps there was a danger of this young prince—with his fines for those attendants whom he caught using bad language—allowing his pride to become priggishness. But his character was redeemed by its high purpose. Fired by Raleigh's *History of the World*, the boy had resolved that he would

¹ Bacon's Works (Spedding's Edition), vol. vi., pp. 327—8.

² *Nugæ Antiquæ*, vol. iii., p. 305.

one day be himself a great king; and already he was laboriously training himself for the task. It was with this idea that he would, four or five times a day, don his armour, and practise with the sword or pike, or, making friends with Phineas Pett the master-builder, would superintend the construction of the new ships for the much neglected navy. But in spite of all this seriousness of purpose, his energy was constantly overflowing in channels more natural to boyhood. "His other exercises," writes the Prince's Tutor, "were dancing, leaping, and in times of year fit for it, learning to swimme, at sometimes walking fast and farre, to accustome and enable himself to make a long march when time should require it; but most of all at Tennis play, wherein, to speake the truth, which in all things I especially affect, he neither observed moderation nor what appertained to his dignity and person, continuing oft times his play for the space of three or four hours, and the same in his shirt, rather becoming an artisan than a Prince."¹

It was through her love of sport that Elizabeth could most naturally share her brother's interests. Still, as at Combe Abbey, she had about her her dogs and monkeys and parrots. Sir John Harington the elder—"the merry blade" of the court—tells us that his dog "Bungey", so famous for its "good deeds and strange feats," "did often bear the sweet words" of the Princess "on his neck."² The brother and sister would often give each other presents of horses. Elizabeth had now begun hunting in the King's deer forests; and the Prince so often called for her to ride with him that poor Lord Harington, who had to

¹ "Life of Prince Henry" by Cornwallis, Somer's Tracts, vol. ii., p. 221; also "Life" by Birch, and "Letters to King James the Sixth," printed by the Maitland Club, 1835.

² Nichol's "Progresses," vol. ii., p. 197.

attend her, was frequently fain to apologise for failing to discharge his other duties.¹ Scarcely a day passed without the two children seeing each other, either by visiting each other's palaces, or by boating on the Thames, or going down to Gravesend together to see Henry's "great ship" on the stocks, and to be entertained by Mrs. Pett. Henry, however, had no intention of spoiling the Princess as others were doing; he would sometimes tease her, or frighten her with ghost stories before she went to bed;² but it was doubtless for her own good, for on one point all contemporaries were agreed, that though he was obedient to his parents, and though fond of "Baby Charles", his weak little brother, he nevertheless "did extraordinarily affect his sister and loved her above all others."³

When the Lady Elizabeth had been some two or three years at court, all Europe began anxiously to busy itself in providing her with a husband. It was a complicated subject, and revived the questions of foreign policy which had puzzled Englishmen in the preceding reign. Should England definitely assume the leadership of Protestant Europe? or should she maintain her position on the continent by an attitude of balance, of mediation? In favour of the former policy was the great majority of the nation—those of every class to whom hatred for Spain was the first and great commandment. As upholders of the latter policy there were but a few *Politiques*, though they were chiefly found amongst those in high places. James himself, however, was a waverer, drawn one way by his strong Protestantism, and in the opposite direction by his own

¹ Cal. Dom. 1609, Oct. 25.

² Miss Strickland's "Queens of Scotland," p. 31; Miss Strickland quotes no authority except the "traditions of Ham Palace."

³ Chamberlain to Carleton, Nov. 12, 1612, "Court and Times of James I."

shrewdness and freedom from popular prejudices. For long he was possessed with the noble idea of healing the religious dissensions in Europe by mating at least one of his children to a Catholic; and so when the chance of a French marriage for Elizabeth was removed in 1610 by the assassination of Henry IV., James for a time seriously considered the idea of a marriage with a Prince of Savoy, or one of the Medici, or even Philip III. of Spain himself.¹ But he gradually learnt—and he ought to have remembered it in his old age when he wanted to marry Charles to the Infanta—that honest toleration was impossible to Romanists. Accordingly, nothing remained for him but to secure the best Protestant alliance that offered.

There was no danger of any want of offers. Elizabeth would have secured these, even had she not been the only daughter of the greatest Protestant monarch. In features she was handsome without being remarkable; her long oval face was crowned with rich dark hair; her nose, which resembled her father's, was somewhat big and aquiline; but her eyes were large, and her mouth sympathetic.² Altogether with her abounding health, her graceful figure and her pretty impetuosity of manner, she may well have been—as in fact all contemporaries were agreed she was—a thoroughly attractive creature.

Most of the Protestant suitors who dreamt of winning the Lady Elizabeth's hand were clearly of insufficient rank—two aspiring Howards; Maurice, Prince of Orange, and some smaller German Princelets. Gustavus Adolphus, the heir of Sweden and already a youth of promise, might probably have been accepted, had not his father been at war with James's brother-in-law, the King of Denmark. And so it

¹ Gardiner, *Hist. of England*. (Ed. 1883), vol. ii., pp. 23, 136—141; *Hist. MS. Com.*, Xth Report, p. 557.

² Cf. Miss. Strickland, "Queens of Scotland," vol. viii., p. 111.

was largely by a process of exhaustion that the suitor who was finally chosen was the Prince who had been born three days before Elizabeth. Although not of royal blood, his political status was considerable. Having succeeded his father in 1610, he had become Frederic the Fifth, Elector Palatine of the Rhine, and—what was more—the head of the German Union of Protestant Princes. James might therefore reckon on the marriage being thoroughly popular with his Protestant Parliament, and might reasonably hope for a substantial expression of gratitude to fill his empty treasury.

To Frederic's guardians, on the other hand, the alliance which promised strength and prestige to the Palatine family and to the Protestant Union was a splendid prize. They had only one fear, that Elizabeth "by reason of her great birth, would introduce customs of her own education, of too high a flight for their usance to permit."¹ Their apprehensions, however, were soothed: it was agreed that Elizabeth's followers should be restricted to 36 men and 13 women; and James promised, in addition to a dowry of £40,000, a liberal yearly allowance.

By the summer of 1612 everything had been arranged, and Elizabeth was promised to the young Elector. They were most suitably matched. Frederic, like Elizabeth, had been brought up apart from the influences of a large court. At Sedan, under his uncle the Duc de Bouillon, he had received a sound Protestant education. If he had been nourished on larger doses of Latin and a stricter Calvinism than Elizabeth, he had not the less developed a healthy capacity for enjoying the sports and pageants, and the good things of this earth. At present Frederic's Sedan education seemed merely to have resulted in the production of a somewhat heavily cultured, well-mannered young Prince.

¹ Edmondes to Salisbury, Sep. 20, 1611, quoted in Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 182.

Later years were to reveal to the full, the disastrous effect on his weak will of the influence of Henry de la Tour d'Auvergne, Duc de Bouillon, the chief of adventurers, the exploiter of his fellow Huguenots, the disturber of three French reigns, the man who, with all his military and diplomatic ability, with all his Calvinism and all his culture, spent his life in playing with intrigues and rebellion.

But for the present there was small fear of future troubles. Frederic utilised the months which had to elapse before he could appear at the English court, in perfecting his dancing and deportment. At intervals he wrote elegant nothings in French to Elizabeth and his future relatives, to which the latter replied in letters equally elegant and equally empty.

The Princess was pleased with the match, chiefly because it delighted her brother with his vigorous hatred of Spain. The story ran that when Queen Anne, disappointed that her daughter was not to marry a king, jeeringly called her "Goodwife Palsgrave", Elizabeth declared in spirited fashion: "I would rather espouse a Protestant Count than a Catholic Emperor."

The Elector was expected to reach England early in the autumn of 1612. The late summer found James, as usual, making a progress through the country, securing his hunting and entertainment at the expense of his loyal subjects. The progress was closed by a family reunion at Woodstock, the pleasant manor which the king a few months previously had handed over to his son. Here Henry had prepared "a most magnifique feast . . . ; withal having ordained a great summer-house of green boughs to be built in the parke." In this summer-house on Sunday evening, the 30th of August, a great supper was served, "the King and Queen being set at a table by themselves at the upper end of the room (his Highness with his sister

accompanied with the lords and ladies sitting at another table by themselves). His Highnesse like to the princely Bridegroom, chearing and welcoming his guests, there appeared an universall contentment in all." ¹

A few weeks after this happy reunion—the last of its kind—the same party was assembled in the new Banqueting Hall at Whitehall, waiting to receive the Elector who had reached Gravesend the night before. At length he entered the Hall, escorted by the young Charles, Duke of York. The first sight of his kindly face, thick curling hair, and downy beard and moustache made it at once clear that he had “most happily deceived good men’s doubts and ill men’s expectations.” ² The scene is well described in a news-letter. “His approach, gesture, and countenance, were seasoned with a well-becoming confidence; and bending himself, with a due reverence, before the King, he told him among other compliments, that in his sight and presence he enjoyed a great part (reserving it should seem, the greatest for his mistress) of the end and happiness of his journey. After turning to the Queen, she entertained him with a fixed countenance; and though her posture might have seemed (as was judged) to promise him the honour of a kiss for his welcome, his humility carried him no higher than her hand. From which, after some few words of compliment, he made to the prince, and exchanging with him after a more familiar strain certain passages of courtesy, he ended (where his desires could not but begin) with the princess (who was noted till then not to turn so much as a corner of an eye towards him), and stooping low to take up the lowest part of her garment to kiss it, she most gracefully courtesying lower than

¹ Nichol’s “Progresses,” vol. ii., pp. 462—3.

² Fynnet to Trumbull, Oct. 23, 1612, Winwood, vol. iii., p. 403.

accustomed, and with her hand staying him from that humblest reverence, gave him, at his rising, a fair advantage (which he took) of kissing her." ¹

Frederic had assuredly begun well. Nor did he fail to improve his initial success. A few days later it was reported that he is "every day at court, and plies his mistress so hard, and takes no delight in running at ring nor tennis, nor riding with the prince, as Count Henry [of Orange] his uncle and others of his company do; but only in her conversation. On Tuesday she sent to invite him, as he sat at supper, to a Play of her own servants in the Cock-pit; and yesterday they were all day together at Somerset House." ²

The tide of Elizabeth's happiness was flowing strong. But in the midst of her pleasure an event occurred which for the first time brought great sorrow into her life. For some weeks her favourite brother had been ailing. He was the last person to admit the fact himself; and had refused to discontinue his bathes in the Thames and forego his other exercises. But by October 25th he could no longer struggle against his disease—a typhoid fever. On Sunday, November 1st, he so far rallied that he could be visited by his family and the Elector. It was for the last time. After five more days of ceaseless tossing, this prince, the playmate of Elizabeth and the hope of England, was dead.

"The last words he spoke in good sense," the news-writer reported, "were 'Where is my dear sister?' She was as desirous to visit him, and went once or twice in the evening disguised for that purpose, but could not be admitted, because his disease was doubted to be contagious." ³

It is well to remember the episode of this whole-hearted friendship between the two royal children, in the history

¹ Fynnet to Trumbull, Oct. 23, 1612, Winwood, vol. iii., p. 463.

² Chamberlain to Carleton, Oct. 22, 1612, "Court and Times," vol. i., p. 198.

³ Chamberlain to Carleton, Nov. 12, 1612, "Court and Times of James I."

of a court which too often is associated in men's thoughts only with the depravity of a Lady Essex, or the venality of a Carr. Elizabeth never forgot her "dear dead brother." But she was very young; Frederic was at hand to step into the place left empty by Henry; and her life soon went on again, as though there had been no sad interlude. The winter of 1612—3 was passed in hunting and the usual amusements of the court. Elizabeth was unlucky at cards. This Christmas she lost more than £19 to her father.

When Frederic was dragged off by James to hunt at Royston, the lover used to write frequent letters to his mistress, models of propriety and worthy sentiment. The following is an example :

"Madame,

"Combien que je n'ay rien digne de vous entretenir, si suis-je contraint de vous importuner vous ressouvenir de moy, vous assurer que n'êtes jamais sorti une minute de mon cœur et pensée. . . . Rendés moy digne et à vous agreable par vos loix, c'est l'unique grace de laquelle je vous importune par cette cy, car être aimé de vous, c'est le seul bien ou j'aspire, assurés moy donc de cela pour me donner quelque soulagement presentement en mes langueurs et toute ma vie au contentement faire vivre en repos comme celuy laquel est sans aucune exception, sans aucun desir que d'être, Madame,

"Votre très humble, et très obeissant, et très fidele serviteur,

"FREDERIC, E.P. ¹

"De Roston [Royston] le 14 Xbre, 1612."

¹ Fred. to Eliz. Dec. 14, 1612, in Aretin, Beytrage zur Geschichte und Literatur, Bd. vii., pp. 146—7.

Frederic found his entertainment at the English court an expensive luxury. He was anxious to return home as soon as possible with his bride. James, though loath to lose another child, at last gave his consent. On December 27th, the two were formally affianced and contracted. On Shrove Sunday, February 14th, 1613, the wedding service was performed in the chapel at Whitehall. On both occasions the bride was overcome with laughter: in the former function owing to the bad French of the contracting words; in the latter from the sheer good spirits and the light-heartedness of her 16 years.¹ The marriage was a wonder of ceremonial and magnificence even for that extravagant age. The bride was attended by Lady Harington (who in vain tried to still her laughter) and by 16 noble bridesmaids, dressed in white satin. She herself was in cloth of silver, upon her head a crown of immense value. Her hair hung in plaits down to the waist; "between every plait a roll or liste of gold spangles, pearles, rich stones and diamonds; and withal many diamonds of inestimable value embroidered upon her sleeves which even dazzled and amazed the eyes of all the beholders."² But the wedding itself pales into insignificance before the attendant celebrations. England and Protestant Europe gave free vent in many forms to their wild delight at the event. The plethora of "Joyfull Nuptiall Poemes" which were poured forth, can faintly be realised from the knowledge that Oxford alone published 243 "Greek, Latin and Italian Epithalamia." And the literary rejoicings were nothing compared to the spectacular demonstrations of joy which broke out in London on the Thursday before the wedding and followed the newly-married couple through

¹ Chamberlain to Carleton, Dec. 31, 1612, "Court and Times of James I.", vol. i., p. 216; Miss Strickland, vol. viii., p. 45.

Nichol, vol. ii., p. 543.

England, Holland, and Germany until they at last died away in the Palatinate. London excelled in the variety and expensiveness of its welcome. For a week, without intermission, day and night, it gave itself over to entertainments and jollity—feastings, dances, masques, revels, tournaments, “Triumphant Sports,” sham fights on the river, and “excessive bravery” of every describable kind.¹ Our sympathies go out to James, when, on Tuesday the 16th, the gentlemen of the Inner Temple and of Gray’s Inn came by the water up to Westminster to play their masque, which, being the contrivance of Sir Francis Bacon, was to outdo all that had preceded it. But “the king was so wearied and sleepy, with sitting up almost two whole nights before, that he had no edge to it. Whereupon Sir Fr. Bacon adventured to entreat of his Majesty that by this difference he would not, as it were, bury them quick; and I hear,” writes Chamberlain, “the king should answer, that then they must bury him quick, for he could last no longer.”²

It was not till two months after the wedding that James consented to his daughter’s departure, and everything was prepared for the great migration. On the 10th of April, the Electress Palatine—to give Elizabeth her new title—left London, escorted by the King and the court. As the royal barges dropped down the Thames, amid the salutes of cannon from the Tower, the banks were lined with the enthusiastic Londoners, anxious to catch a last glimpse of their favourite princess. A few, indeed, were to live long enough to see her return, but under what different circumstances! To the

¹ For interesting accounts of the celebrations *vide* Nichol’s “Progresses,” vol. ii., pp. 522—607; “Court and Times of James I.,” vol. i., pp. 224—230; Everett-Green, vol. v., pp. 203—217.

² Chamberlain to Carleton, Feb. 18, 1612—13, “Court and Times,” vol. ., p. 228.

others—to her father who left her at Rochester, and to Prince Charles who said farewell at Canterbury, she was henceforth to be but a name and a remembrance.

Not till the night of the 25th did the wind allow the party to set sail from Margate. The Elector and Electress, and the faithful Harington, who with other English nobles had been appointed as an escort to the Palatinate, sailed in the "Royal Prince," the ship whose building had been the special delight of Prince Henry. It was proudly captained by Phineas Pett, under the command of the Earl of Nottingham, the Lord Admiral, who, in his younger days as Howard of Effingham, had defeated the Armada. Thirteen other large ships, not to mention the smaller vessels, were required to transport the various attendants and followers who numbered some 675 souls. It may well have been a brave sight to see this new Armada sweeping in crescent form across the narrow seas.¹

Behind Elizabeth faded ten happy and peaceful years of English girlhood. Before her there loomed an uncertain future in a troubled Germany.

It could not be denied that Germany *was* troubled. In that collection of ill-fitted states, independent except in so far as they were subordinate to the ineffective and galling overlordship of the Emperor, there was an ever-growing animosity between the three religious parties—the Catholics, the Lutherans, and the Calvinists. Since the Counter-Reformation had begun, the Catholics from their stronghold in the South and the South-East had been the most aggressive party; and having recovered their hold over Bavaria and the Hapsburg lands, were pressing forward their conquests with the assistance of the Jesuits. The Lutherans,

¹ Germany, (States) No. 12, Public Record Office; *Archæologia*, vol. xii., pp. 268—9.

however, were still predominant in the North and North-East of the Empire. The West, therefore, was the great battle-ground of parties; and there the Calvinists, under the leadership of the Palatine family, were vigorously bidding for the ascendancy. The hostility between the parties was, of course, not due merely to theological differences. The Catholics aimed at restoring the *status quo* of 1555 by strictly enforcing of the Treaty of Augsburg; the Lutherans, accordingly, were fearing for their ecclesiastical lands that had been secularised since the treaty; while the Calvinists realised that their very existence in the Empire was threatened. Such were the elements of discórd that were disturbing Germany, and which might bring about a crisis at any moment in any corner of the land. Moreover, since the formation, in 1608, of the "Protestant Union" and the "Catholic League," both the aggressive parties had been ready arrayed for the fight, and it had become almost certain that any local quarrel would bring about a general engagement. In the following year it had seemed at one time that the occasion for the expected outbreak had actually been given by the disputed succession to the important territories of Cleves-Julich. A powerful Protestant League had then been formed by the Union, together with Henry IV. of France, the Dutch States, and James of England. Its immediate object was the settlement of the Cleves-Julich succession; its ultimate triumph would have involved the overthrow of the Hapsburgs. Then had come the blow of Ravailac—fatal to the alliance as well as to Henry. The crisis had luckily been postponed by a temporary arrangement as to Cleves-Julich, and by the accession of the moderate Matthias as Emperor. The question was shelved for the time-being, but the danger of the general situation continued.

To no one would the situation be more dangerous

and more difficult than to Frederic. For the last two centuries the Palatinate had taken a very active part in European politics. The influential position which the Electors had assumed, certainly was not proportioned to the extent of their territories, split up as these were, into two groups—the so-called Upper and Lower Palatinate. Of these groups neither possessed any geographical individuality. And, to make matters worse, large fractions of the territory had been alienated to the cadet branches of the House—the Counts Palatine of Neuburg and Zweibrücken. The leading part recently played by the Palatinate had been determined partly by its prestige as the first lay Electorate, the richness of its Rhinelands, and its commanding geographical position on the high road to France and the Low Countries, but still more by the energetic, spirited characters of the Electors. These had placed themselves at the head of the aggressive Calvinists. A generation back, John Casimir had been found fighting the Catholics sometimes in France, sometimes in the Netherlands. Our Frederic's father had been chiefly responsible for organising the Protestant Union. On his death its leadership, as though it were hereditary, had fallen during the minority of Frederic V. to the regent, John of Zweibrücken. But there was no doubt that the young Frederic would soon have to undertake the grievous honour himself. It was equally certain that in those threatening times he would have a most difficult course to steer, in his two-fold capacity as Elector Palatine, and chief of the Protestant Union.

And what were his qualifications for the task? Elegant in person, suave in manner, Frederic was an admirable performer in the everyday courtesies of life; and, with his strong sense of honour, duty, and religion, there was no

doubt that he would make an excellent husband. But he belonged to that class of men whose virtues are as great a drawback in public life, as they are beneficial in private. At Sedan, he had learnt the refinement and the creed of the Huguenot noble; yet he had not unlearnt his German nature. He took too seriously his own importance and his Calvinism. But he had lost the strong will and the power of sustained effort natural to his countrymen. Bred to be a mere courtier, he had had no experience whatever of practical affairs. His interests lay only in the direction of the small matters of everyday life. There is no evidence to show that he had yet attempted to understand politics, or to prepare himself for the duties that lay before him. Nor was it likely that his failings would be corrected by the influence of his young wife. Elizabeth's interests and sympathies resembled only too closely those of Frederic himself. Though she was his superior in point of judgment and vivacity, she had yet to learn to control herself and her household, before she could think of helping her husband in affairs of state.

Happily for themselves, however, Frederic and Elizabeth were not likely to disturb their minds with the difficulties of the future. The present with its bridal festivities was all-absorbing. When they were enthusiastically received, on their disembarkation, by Prince Maurice of Orange, and the Dutch Estates, such political considerations as may have arisen in their minds, cannot have been otherwise than pleasant.

Amid general fêtes and rejoicing, the young Elector and Electress, the representatives of the new Protestant alliance, travelled slowly from Holland, up the Rhine to the Palatinate. Their triumphal progress was a wonder of the age. Those who are curious to know how Elizabeth walked, like a common burgher's wife, through the streets of Flushing;

how she left the Hague in her chariot with its four white horses, the gift of her husband; how by the time she reached Cologne the party had swollen to an army some 4,000 strong; and how she embarked at Bonn on a ship marvellous with velvet and marble and laurels—these and a thousand other details they may find in the pages of Mrs. Everett-Green, and in other works such as that whose title begins “Beschreibung der Reiss: Empfahung dess Ritterlichen Ordens: Volbringung des Heyraths: und glücklicher Heimführung: Wie auch der ansehnlichen Einführung: gehaltener Ritterspiel und Fremdenfests: des Durchleuchtigsten Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn, Herrn Friederichen dess Fünften etc. mit der auch Durchleuchtigsten Hochgebornen Fürstin und königlichen Princessin Elisabethen.”

When the Electress reached the Palatinate the rejoicings were redoubled. The loyal Heidelbergers determined to rival all that had gone before. On June 7th, she arrived outside the town. As she passed through the Palatine army, for almost an hour the air was filled with the thunder of the cannon, and the plain with smoke. Then the procession was formed, and with the fullest state she drove through the town, and up the steep hill, under triumphal arches, ponderous with learned allegory, stopping at intervals to receive loyal addresses from the magnates of the town and university. At length the beautiful Schloss itself was reached. Elizabeth threw her arms around Louisa Juliana, her mother-in-law, a genuine Dutch woman of many virtues and of much stolidity. Frederic carried his bride across his threshold, and led her into the great hall where her new female relatives were waiting, drawn up in two ranks, ready to be presented.

For a week the celebrations were continued. It was the usual round: thanksgiving services, lengthy sermons by the court chaplain, the great Scultetus; illuminations, classical masques, dinners, tournaments, running at rings, running at tubs, running at the head of a Moor. Then slowly the dissipations abated. The guests and cousins returned home, the English escort took its departure. For a time the Haringtons remained by the side of Elizabeth to see the arrangements of her new home completed. Then even the Haringtons left her. Lord Harington she was never to see again: the kindly old gentleman died a few weeks later at Worms, worn out and impoverished by his labours on behalf of his princess.

For six years Elizabeth's life as Electress Palatine was happy and uneventful. At her disposal was everything that a heart ought to desire. She was the mistress of the Schloss on the wooded heights above the straggling town and the winding Neckar, whose cluster of red-stoned ruins is now defiled by the cosmopolitan tourist. She was surrounded by visitors from England and France, as well as by her husband's family and the nobles of the Palatinate. The court of Heidelberg compared favourably with most other German courts. It had been gradually exchanging the rudeness of the castle life of mediæval Germany for the refinements of French and Italian civilisation. Under Frederic IV. the change had been almost completed. The diary of that extraordinary man, at once an earnest Calvinist, a cool statesman, and a colossal drinker, gives, concisely enough, an insight into the court life that immediately preceded the *régime* of Frederic V. and Elizabeth. After such entries as "am 16 haben wir getanzet, am 17 wieder getanzet und maskaraden gängen, 18 wieder maskaraden gängen," the old man enters (no doubt under the influence of Louisa Juliana) many good resolutions, such as "Trinken

auf ein Vierteljahr zu verreden.”¹ With the reign of Frederic V. and Elizabeth, the coarseness of the old order disappeared; and the change was doubtless in some measure due to the excellent example of the Elector and Electress themselves. It was not that the court became Puritan: for straight-laced Calvinism found little favour except with Scultetus and the preachers; but the dissipations became more refined, luxury and magnificence grew apace, foreign fashions came in, and even the German language was almost ousted by the French.

Thus Elizabeth's life as Electress was not very different from what it had been when she had been Princess of England. So keenly did she continue her hunting, that her astonished subjects christened her their “Diana of the Rhine.” For the rest, the common round was chiefly varied by occasional visits to German Princes, and by the birth of three children: Henry Frederic in 1614, Charles Louis in 1617, and Elizabeth in 1618. Frederic did all that he could to make her happy at Heidelberg. He added a new “English” wing to the Schloss. He ordered the rocky hill on which the Schloss stood, to be planted with orange trees and adorned with fountains and grottoes; and he raised her allowance for dresses.

In spite of her general happiness, Elizabeth now began to receive her first schooling in troubles and worries.

In the first place, her husband fell sick soon after he had reached his majority in 1614, and this, added to the burden of his new political responsibilities, made him moody and dejected. He would “not even discourse with, caress, esteem, or speak to any one, unless compelled to it;” and poor Colonel Schomberg, the factotum of the court, used to become both afraid and ashamed when any one came near his

¹ Häusser, Geschichte der rheinischen Pfalz, vol. ii., pp. 240—1.

master. Elizabeth poured out her troubles to King James's secretary in a letter which is very different from her usual careless, complimentary messages:—

“Sir,—The Elector sending this bearer to his majesty, I was desirous to let you understand something of his estate, as of this place. Himself, at this last assembly, got an ague, which though it hath held him not long, yet hath it made him weak and look very ill: since his fits left him, he is very heavy, and so extremely melancholy, as I never saw in my life so great an alteration in any. I cannot tell what to say to it, but I think he hath so much business at this time as troubles his mind too much; but if I may say truth, I think there is some that doth trouble him too much, for I find they desire he should bring me to be all Dutch, and to their fashions, which I neither have been bred to, nor is necessary in everything I should follow; neither will I do it, for I find there *is* that would set me in a lower rank than them that have gone before me; which I think they do the prince wrong in putting into his head at this time, when he is but too melancholy.”¹

The last few sentences refer to a vexatious question which was continually cropping up during these years. James I. was chiefly responsible for the trouble. He had extorted from Frederic, just before the latter left England, a promise that Elizabeth, as the daughter of a king, should give precedence to no German princes or princesses whatsoever. The claim was not justified by history: it is an instance of that petty silliness which negatives the claim of the British Solomon to real statesmanship. In this case, though Elizabeth was for a time allowed to take precedence over her husband and her mother-in-law, the privilege, instead of adding any credit to England, only tended to

¹ Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 266.

make the Princess and her country odious in the eyes of the Germans. At the Heidelberg court, where the question alienated Elizabeth from the worthy Louisa Juliana and almost brought about strained relations between herself and her husband, the claim was bad enough; but when the Electress went to visit the other princes, it became intolerable. Elizabeth herself would have been ready to give way, but James would admit no compromise, and wrote violent letters forbidding any surrender.¹ The difficulty for a time assumed quite serious proportions, but at last was unsatisfactorily shelved: Louisa Juliana retired from her son's court, and Elizabeth resolved for the present not to pay any more visits. The whole affair must have made her doubly regret that her husband had not the status of a king.

Less serious but somewhat similar disputes arose in connection with the Englishmen who had followed Elizabeth to Germany. Some 200 of these remained at Heidelberg, even when the English Commissioners had returned home. At least half of them had no connection whatever with the Princess. They hung around the court and made themselves generally disagreeable, consuming the Elector's substance, and not concealing their poor opinion of his subjects; and, of course, Elizabeth herself was regarded as responsible for their misdeeds.

It was, indeed, too true that for many of her difficulties, Elizabeth had only herself to blame. Schomberg, again and again, complains that she is culpably "facile." "Madame allows herself to be led by anybody, and for fear of giving offence to some one, is almost afraid of speaking to any body, this makes some of her people assume a little more authority than they should do."² So, too, as of old, she was always running into debt. Her personal extravagance

¹ Hist. MS. Com., 2nd Report, App. p. 52.

² Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 255.

was bad, but her liberality was worse. "Every day people beg of Madame," writes Schomberg, "and right or wrong she cannot refuse, however much she may be herself inconvenienced."¹ And again: "Madame has no resolution, no consideration, is too liberal to the unfortunate, which I call rather fear, irresolution, pusillanimity than a virtuous liberality."²

Colonel Schomberg, the writer of these criticisms, was the main prop of the whole court. He had been Frederic's right-hand man ever since his accession to the Electorate. James had recognised the colonel's honesty and ability when the latter was attending his prince in England; and on their departure the king had assigned him a pension and had appointed him to be English Agent to the protestant Princes of Germany. Thus Schomberg had not only to manage the Heidelberg court as the major-domo of Frederic, but had also to represent the English interests and be responsible to the English king. As he explained to James, it was a most difficult position. "Your majesty must consider that I have a young prince and princess, an administrator, mother-in-law, sisters, aunts and every one their trains; everybody wishes to govern; everybody believes that I do more for one than another." He might well exclaim, "Have I not a miserable life?"³

Yet his efforts had their results. The English who had no business at Heidelberg were sent off, those who remained were strictly supervised, and in order to avoid the quarrels with the "Allemans", a special table was set apart for them at meals.

Then Schomberg turned his attention to Elizabeth herself. He drew up a long document of candid, practical advice.

¹ Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 262.

² Ibid., vol. v., p. 268.

³ Ibid., vol. v., p. 256.

A few paragraphs will be sufficient to show what was the actual condition of affairs at the court of Heidelberg.

1. "Your Highness should ever seek to please God and the prince, and to reprove those who try to sow dissensions between you.

3. Never grant anything on the first request, but answer to all—"I will consider"—"I will think of it"—"I will see,"—then if you find it reasonable, grant it of your own accord, as from a heroic liberality, and never from fear, for your highness's goodness is abused.

5. Have a wardrobe in which to put all the old dresses, and every year examine them—choose those you will not wear again, and give them as you please, but have a list kept of all, with the names of those to whom you gave them."

"For the direction of your servants:—

4. Prevent gossiping between servants of all grades; they only combine together to resist your commands: and let order and reason govern your highness, not the prattle of maids or valets, to whom you are now enslaved; and while they thus abuse your goodness, you will always be despised and lose your control over your people.

5. Let it be known that you will be ruled by reason; that you abhor disobedience and flattery and lying; that you will hear no tales, or importunities; that you will have no coquetting in your presence; that the men-servants shall keep their places at the door, so that when you want a little private conversation, you may not be obliged to retire to your bed-room or dressing-room;" etc.¹

By his indefatigable care Schomberg actually succeeded in temporarily extricating Elizabeth from her debts and difficulties. In writing to the English secretary he proudly

¹ Everett-Green, vol. v., pp. 269—270.

summarises his achievements as follows: "I have brought up the prince, reformed the court, installed Madame, maintained the balance proper for the preservation of their highnesses, offended everybody to serve his Majesty and Madame, and so acted that his Majesty can never with truth, hear any reproach or reflection upon these personages, though married so young, assisted so little, left, flattered by everybody; and it is I alone who have had this burden upon my shoulders."¹

These were not empty boasts on the part of Schomberg. The value of his services to the court was fully recognised by others. In 1616 Sir Henry Wotton, then English ambassador at Venice, spent some days at Heidelberg, and sent home to James a long report as to the condition of Palatine affairs. After describing Frederic himself who "*par boutades* is merry, but for the most part cogitative, or (as they here call it) *malincolique*;" after noticing the staid and solemn manners that prevailed at the court, and after discussing the difficulties of the question of precedence, and the measures by which "the domestic differences" had been as well settled as they could be, he commences to praise the colonel: "I must both by my own most assured information here from others and by her Highness' particular and serious commandment give your Majesty this account of him. That he is the only sincere and resolute friend that she hath found since her being here. That without his continual vigilance and power with the prince, she had been much prejudiced both in her dignity and the rest, not so much by the prince his own motions as by the infusions of others and particularly (as I conceive) of the old Electoress."²

¹ Schomberg to Winwood, May 24, 1615, Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 277.

² Wotton's Despatch, 23 April, 1616, S. P. For.: Venice, vol. xxii.; I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. L. Pearsall Smith for a transcript of this despatch.

But Schomberg was not to bear for long the burden of his arduous duties. In 1615, after many years of courtship, he had married Mistress Anne Dudley, Elizabeth's principal lady-in-waiting. The next year, Anne died in child-birth, and Schomberg soon followed her to the grave. To Elizabeth the two deaths were a loss which even the hurried return of the affectionate old Lady Harington could not make good.

How, it may be asked, did these deaths, how did these new responsibilities as Electress Palatine and as a mother, affect Elizabeth's character? It had been naturally sweet and merry: in these six years it should have become stronger and deeper. Yet, so far as it is possible to judge of such matters, there was no material development. Elizabeth at twenty-three years of age appears to have been still the girl of sixteen, and in some respects almost the child of ten. This may have been simply the Nemesis of her good looks and royal rank; the result of being everywhere and always flattered and spoiled; or perhaps it can be explained by the supposition that she had inherited some of her mother's perpetually infantile youth.

Certainly her troubles and responsibilities did not make a great impression on her. Though on hearing of her mother's death, which occurred in 1619, she does indeed tell James that "sadness weighs my heart so that it hinders me from writing as I ought," her "extreme regret" does not seem to have been of long duration, nor, considering how little she had seen of Queen Anne, need this be to her discredit. Of Anne Dudley, who had been her companion since childhood, the Princess writes: "She is a great loss to me for she was very careful in all that concerned me." And similarly when her other friends die she is at the most "very sorry." Her affection for her children seems similarly to have been of

a somewhat casual kind. She found her little "black baby"¹ as good as a doll, or a pet. An amusing description of the Electress with her monkeys and her children was written to Sir Dudley Carleton by one of her ladies, who facetiously calls herself "the Right Reverend Mistress Elizabeth Apsley, chief governor to all the monkeys and the dogs."—"Her Highness is very well, and takes great delight in those fine monkeys you sent hither, which now are grown so proud as they will come to nobody but her Highness, who hath them in her bed every morning; and the little prince, he is so fond of them as he says he desires nothing but such monkeys as his own. . . . They do make very good sport, and her Highness *very merry*."²

However, Elizabeth retained the charms and virtues as well as the childishness of her girlhood. Lord Doncaster's praises of her to James, in 1619, do not read like mere courtly flatteries:—"Concerning her Highness, I can say no more than that she is that same devout, good, sweet princess your Majesty's daughter should be, and she was ever; obliging all hearts that come near her by her courtesy, and so dearly loving and beloved of the Prince her husband, that it is a joy to all that behold them."³

During these first six years of her married life (1613—1619) the "good, sweet Princess" was too much busied with the amusements and troubles of her court, to disturb herself greatly with the politics of the time. Yet it was during these same years that the Palatinate, under the weak control of her husband, was drifting into the vortex of the political storm.

¹ Elizabeth to James, Dec. 14, 1615, quoted in Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 278.

² Domestic Papers, 1618, quoted in Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 288.

³ Gardiner, "Letters and Documents illustrating the relations between England and Germany," vol. i., p. 118.

When, in 1614, Frederic came of age and took over the government of his state, and the leadership of the Protestant Union, there lay before him two alternative policies: either he could attempt to unite the Lutherans and Calvinists of the Empire in the defence of their common interests, or he could help to form a more aggressive alliance, which, while resting on a broad basis of hostility to the Hapsburgs and Catholicism, should be worked mainly in the interests of Calvinism. Of the two alternatives, the way of reconciliation was the more difficult. There had never been any love lost between the Protestant Union and the Lutherans; while the Calvinists of the former were democratic and cosmopolitan, the latter were aristocratic and conservative, and were controlled by John George, Elector of Saxony, a man who, in the moments when he was neither hunting nor drinking, generally inclined to side with the Emperor and authority. Yet, difficult as it was, united action between the two branches of Protestantism was the only safe policy; and it was a course that appeared practicable to Maurice, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, the ablest of the Calvinists.

Frederic, however, chose the more dangerous and the more showy of the alternatives. He could scarcely help his choice. Brought up by his French uncle, the Duke of Bouillon, the Huguenot who was still showing France how to make of sedition a profitable employment; a disciple of his Dutch uncle, the great Maurice, arch-enemy of Romanism and the Hapsburgs; married to the daughter of the English James, the schemer who for the time being was inclined to fancy himself as the champion of Protestantism, Frederic naturally looked at German politics through foreign glasses, and as naturally stepped into the place marked out for him by the world as the representative of the international anti-Catholic alliance. Moreover,

with his hesitating, pleasure-loving character, he was in the hands of his father's ministers—Christian of Anhalt, the Dhonas, Solms, Camerarius,—and these had already committed themselves and their state to the dangerous forward policy. The Palatinate had taken a leading part in the events of 1608—1610, events which had shown that the Calvinists had the desire (though the death of Henry IV. had deprived them of the power) to ruin the Hapsburgs. Thus, even before the accession of Frederic V., the Palatinate had thrown down the glove to the Hapsburgs and the Catholics.

For the time being, however, there existed a suspicious truce between the two parties. While the Calvinists could not recover from the defection of France, the Catholics were crippled by the luke-warmness of the Spanish Hapsburgs, by the existence of a powerful Protestant nobility in Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia, and, above all, by the want of union in their own ranks.

It was out of this want of union that there arose a question around which the efforts of all parties centred. The right wing of the Catholics realised that Matthias, the reigning Emperor, was not the man to lead them to victory. They therefore placed all their hopes on Matthias' cousin, Ferdinand, Archduke of Styria and Carinthia, a pupil of the Jesuits, who had already won his laurels by the extirpation of Protestantism in his own Duchies. Their immediate object was to secure the recognition of Ferdinand as heir to Matthias, (1) in the hereditary dominions of the Hapsburgs, and (2) in the Empire. And consequently the chief aim of Frederic and the Calvinists was to prevent this recognition.

If Frederic had confined himself to this aim, he would simply have been doing openly what the jealous Matthias was doing in an underhand manner. But instead of this

he involved his legitimate opposition in a network of adventurous and often seditious schemes. In these matters, however, Frederic was little more than the willing tool of his cabinet, and especially of Christian of Anhalt, who, though in name only the Governor of the Upper Palatinate, was in reality the manager of the whole Palatinate and of the Protestant Union. Christian had been originally a mere soldier. Then, when fighting for Henry IV. in France, he had embraced Calvinism and the restless politics of the Huguenots, and for the last 20 years he had been Governor of the Upper Palatinate and the moving spirit of the Calvinists in Germany. He was a believer, firstly, in intrigue, secondly, in "blood and iron".

A good example of the political methods pursued by the Palatine Cabinet is to be found in the negotiations which it was carrying on at the beginning of the year 1617. One agent, Christopher von Dohna, who had been sent to Bohemia and Austria, reported that the dissolution of the Hapsburg monarchy was at hand: that in each country there was a pretender ready to assume the crown on the death of Matthias, and that everywhere men were looking to the Union as the champion of Protestantism. A few weeks later another agent, Camerarius, was intriguing with the Bohemian nobles, who promised never to elect Ferdinand to their crown; and he then proceeded to Saxony, where he suggested to John George that Bohemia would make an admirable addition to his Electorate—a suggestion to which the Elector sensibly replied that he had enough already, and did not wish to hazard that which he had.¹

These negotiations illustrate the futile as well as the mischievous character of the Palatine politics. Within four

¹ Gindely, *Geschichte des Dreissig Jährigen Krieges*, vol. i., pp. 186—8.

months, Matthias allowed Ferdinand to be brought forward as his heir, and the Bohemians, surprised and intimidated, "accepted" the Catholic zealot as their future king. A few months later their example was followed by the Hungarians. The Palatine Cabinet struggled hard to prevent the victory of the Catholics being completed by the election of Ferdinand as King of the Romans. They implored other candidates to stand: but it was in vain. Ferdinand paid a visit to Dresden and danced with the Saxon Elector's daughter: it seemed certain that he would secure John George's vote and a majority in the Electoral College. And so, by the March of 1618, Frederic was realising that all his recent plans were failing: he saw approaching the reign of the enemy whom he had irritated with his countless intrigues: but neither he nor his advisers had any clear policy with which to meet the future dangers.

It was at this point, that on March 23rd there occurred the famous "Defenestration" at Prague. The Bohemians had soon discovered the consequences of their rash acknowledgment of Ferdinand. It had become clear that the Hapsburg government, by questioning some of the privileges which had been won by the Protestants in 1609, was beginning a systematic attempt to restore the authority of Catholicism. The discontent had simmered for a time. Now, by hurling the Hapsburg ministers from the window of the Council Chamber, Count Thurn, the leader of the Bohemian agitators, suddenly committed the country to a general revolt.

The event brought Germany face to face with the civil war which had been long foreseen. In its actual presence even the Bohemians themselves recoiled, and John George of Saxony was only giving expression to the general feeling when he announced that his anxiety was to "help to put out the fire."

But to this general feeling there was one important exception. By the Palatine Cabinet, struggling in the toils of its own diplomacy, the Bohemian insurrection was welcomed as a fortunate diversion. With redoubled energy Frederic and his councillors began once more fondly to weave across Europe their tangle of political intrigue. At the best their schemes had been shifting and opportunist. Now in the stress of the crisis Frederic seemed altogether to lose his bearings. His plans became not only wild, but contradictory. For instance, while on the one hand he undertook to act as mediator in conjunction with the Elector of Saxony, on the other hand it was he, Frederic, who repeatedly dissuaded the Bohemians from coming to terms with the enemy. Thus, again, in June 1619, there were two Palatine agents in Bohemia, one of whom was publicly urging the Duke of Savoy's election to the vacant crown, while the other was secretly working in favour of Frederic himself.¹

At first Frederic's efforts seemed to be meeting with a certain success. It was thanks chiefly to the help of Mansfeld's troops, which he provided in co-operation with the Duke of Savoy, that the Bohemians were able in 1618 to sweep the Austrian army almost completely from Bohemia, and in the spring of 1619 to advance up to the very walls of Vienna. The Protestant Union, moreover, had been induced by Frederic to send an army to the Upper Palatinate; and there were fair expectations that greater assistance might be contributed by his other allies.

By the summer of 1619, however, these hopes had been for the most part falsified. The Duke of Savoy was thinking better of his former engagements. James was consuming time with a useless embassy. The Protestants

¹ Gindely, "History of Thirty Years' War," vol. i., p. 144.

of the Union were falling away. The Bohemians themselves were being driven back on Prague, and as a last resource were preparing to elect some foreigner as their sovereign, who should extricate them from their difficulties.

On the other hand, the Catholics had been steadily consolidating their strength; and since Matthias had fortunately died in the March of 1619, they were confidently looking forward to the immediate election of Ferdinand as Emperor.

In short, a year and a half's ceaseless negotiation had only succeeded in entangling Frederic in a worse predicament than that in which he had been at the outset. He had encouraged the Bohemians to revolt for his own ends, and now he found himself involved in their ruin. Nor was it possible to expect that such a man as Ferdinand would ever forgive him for the part which he had recently been playing.

And so during the month of August, 1619, two fateful assemblies were holding their sessions. Few can have awaited their decisions more breathlessly than did Elizabeth at Heidelberg. First came the news from the Electoral College at Frankfort: on the 28th, Ferdinand had been unanimously chosen Emperor—the Palatine proctor after vain opposition having given his vote with the others. Then came the news from Prague: the day before Ferdinand had been chosen Emperor, Frederic of the Palatinate had been elected by an overwhelming majority to the Bohemian crown which had so lately been wrested from Ferdinand. The long-drawn-out crisis had culminated. If Frederic refused the offered crown, he would acknowledge his complete defeat by the Catholics. If he accepted it, nothing could be looked for but open, bitter war, until one of the two rivals should be utterly ruined.

Frederic realised now, when it was too late, the awkwardness of the dilemma. On hearing the news at Amberg

he at once wrote off to Elizabeth. "Les Etats de Bohême," he said, "m'ont eleu unanimement pour leur Roy, ont fait des feux de joye, tiré le canon. Croyées que je suis bien en peine à quoy me résoudre."¹ Although Frederic could persuade himself that he had not been aiming at the Bohemian crown, he knew well that he had committed himself too deeply, to be able now to draw back with safety.

Everyone was aware that he had been secretly supporting the Bohemians. His troops had actually attacked and scattered a Spanish force that was on its way to invade Bohemia. If he were now to desert the Bohemians, he would only be giving their common enemy an opportunity to crush each of them in detail. Was it not, then, clearly to the advantage of both parties that they should unite their forces, and that over these united forces there should be one common leader—even Frederic, King of Bohemia. and Elector Palatine? And besides the question of expediency, was not Frederic bound in honour not to betray in the hour of their danger those whom he had encouraged in their daring rebellion?

But, on the other hand, even the optimistic Frederic could not disguise from himself that it was "a very hazardous affair;" and the nearer he approached, the greater did the difficulties appear. The Duke of Savoy and the Elector of Saxony, the two other candidates who had been talked of for the Bohemian crown, had understood the real danger and emptiness of the honour, and had refused to enter the trap themselves. The Bohemians had chosen Frederic because "they hoped that he would be able to induce foreign nations to do that for them which they had deplorably failed to do for themselves."² By establish-

¹ Von Aretin, *Beytrage*, vol. vii., p. 148.

² Gardiner, *History of England*, vol. iii., p. 315.

ing a new constitution before the election, they had arranged that their future king should be but a magnificent menial: the nobles were to remain the masters, and were to be allowed to continue their misconduct of affairs. Already it was becoming clear that these Bohemian rebels, who were more moved by their personal interests than by true patriotism, were not the men to found a free and stable kingdom. Moreover, the Heidelberg councillors were beginning to suspect that the resources and allies on which they had been wont to reckon, would appear much less imposing when politics passed from paper to practice. Now, too, they were beginning to appreciate the dire realities that would result from their paper schemes. Frederic was to indulge in this desperate adventure at the cost of plunging all Germany, perhaps all Europe, into war, and of bringing almost certain desolation upon his own defenceless Palatinate.

Well might Frederic hesitate. He was distracted with contradictory advice. From Frankfort the assembled Electors wrote solemnly warning him against precipitating a war which they prophesied would outlast their lives. Similar messages poured in from the individual Princes of Germany and the neutral European powers. Even the Protestant Union shrank in alarm from the rash enterprise of their leader, and stipulated that if the crown were accepted, its own troops should not be employed to defend Frederic in Bohemia. Last of all Louisa Juliana tearfully implored her son not to accept the fatal honour. But the advice of the world at large was counteracted by the influence of a few persons to whom Frederic had long been wont to look for direction. Christian of Anhalt, already appointed by the Bohemians to be the general of the new king, threatened Frederic with perpetual infamy if he should now draw back from the cause of Bohemia. The Dutch Maurice declared that he was preparing fool's coats for those who

should dissuade his nephew from the undertaking. The Duke of Bouillon was in favour of Frederic's joining forces with the Bohemians, but he wisely recommended him not to accept the invidious title of King.

The Duke of Bouillon had laid bare the real crux of the question. The fate of Frederic was indeed bound up, for better or for worse, with the fate of the Bohemians. But would it not be better to make an open alliance with them without accepting their crown? By so doing, he would not offend the Protestant princes, jealous of his elevation to royal rank, and he would not be cutting off all hope of future reconciliation with Ferdinand.

That Frederic did not adopt such a course is chiefly to be explained by the personal characteristics of himself and his wife, by their zealous Calvinism and their passion for social enjoyments and social distinctions.

When Elizabeth heard of the election, she at once wrote to Frederic putting before him the religious aspect of the crisis. She said that, since God directs everything and had so ordained, she left it to her husband to decide whether the crown should be accepted. She herself—the letter continued—would be ready to follow the Divine call, and thereby to suffer what God should ordain,—yes, she was ready, if it were necessary, even to pawn her jewels, and whatever else she had in the world. This view of the election as being a Divine call was constantly urged on the Elector and Electress by the Calvinist clergy, both in England and in the Palatinate.

It was on this ground that Frederic ultimately justified his decision. He wrote to the Duke of Bouillon: "I beg you to believe that this resolution does not proceed from any ambitious desire to aggrandize my House; but that my only end is to serve God and His Church.... It is a Divine call which I ought not to neglect."

Although Frederic liked to shift his own responsibility on to Providence, he was very far from being insensible to the attractive glitter of the crown itself. Ever since he had married a king's daughter, there had been strange rumours that he would one day gain for her the royal dignity.

To Elizabeth herself the new rank must have been particularly welcome. She had been bred up to expect that one day she would become a Queen. Even if her mother's taunts at the "Goodwife Palsgrave" had ceased to rankle in her mind, she could not have been blind to the fact that those disputes as to precedence which were spoiling her enjoyment of German society, could apparently be settled in no other way than in this which had now presented itself.

Yet Elizabeth's part in determining her husband's action has lately been questioned.¹ Such a point as the personal influence of a wife on a husband it is as impossible to prove as to disprove. However, the little evidence that is extant seems to agree best with the traditional view which ascribed an important part to the young Electress. It has been seen that Elizabeth urged on Frederic the religious standpoint which he ultimately adopted. It has also been made clear that she had very strong motives for desiring the crown. Her readiness to sell her jewels was the common talk of the time—and a woman like Elizabeth, who was accustomed to cover herself with precious stones after the manner of a Russian Icon, could not have expressed more forcibly her devotion to a cause. Moreover,

¹ Opel in Sybel's *Historische Zeitschrift*, vol. xxiii., p. 294; Article on Elizabeth, in *Dictionary of National Biography*, by Prof. Ward. The latter attaches importance to a statement of Elizabeth's grand-daughter, whose evidence as to the youth of her grand-mother surely cannot be "unexceptionable," as he maintains.

Frederic was ever a devoted, almost an uxorious husband; and it is at least consistent with general probability that he should have been influenced on this, as he certainly was on later occasions, by the virile, decisive common-sense of his wife. There is one piece of evidence in which it is possible to touch the solid ground of fact. Elizabeth was especially thanked by the Bohemian representatives for her efforts in persuading her husband to his decision; and these thanks were gratefully accepted by her. Lastly, there is the picturesque tradition which is preserved in histories written at the end of the 17th century. The account of Elizabeth begging the Elector day and night not to deprive their children of a crown, cannot be other than a gross exaggeration; but when she is said to have vowed that "she would rather eat pickled cabbage (*sauerkraut*) at a king's table than dainties at that of an elector," we seem to have either a touch of the real Elizabeth or else a good imitation of the impetuous forcible speeches that were entirely characteristic of her.

On the whole, therefore, it seems probable that while Frederic could not desert the Bohemians with either safety or honour, Elizabeth had a large share—though one that cannot be accurately measured—in urging her husband to his fatal decision of accepting their crown. If this is the case, our English Princess must also bear some of the responsibility for the horrors of the following Thirty Years' War.¹

Though Frederic and Elizabeth were involving Germany in a war to the death, their sin was but thoughtlessness.

¹ For the question of the Bohemian election, *vide* (in addition to the ordinary biographies of Elizabeth) Gindely, *Geschichte*, vol. ii., pp. 227—234; Sötl, vol. i., pp. 149—157; Häusser, vol. ii., pp. 306—313; Menzel, *Neuere Geschichte*, vol. vi., pp. 339—348; Gardiner, vol. iii., pp. 309—311; Spanheim, *Memoires de Louyse Juliane*, pp. 136—140.

In their own minds they fondly imagined that they were acting for the best. The toy pageants of court life they could understand, but in serious politics they quickly found themselves out of their depths. As for Elizabeth she was about to play at being queen in Bohemia, much as she had played at being queen at Combe Abbey. As for Frederic, Camerarius wrote "Pfalz machet die Sache sich selbst leicht, und setzet Alles auf Gott und gute Hoffnung."¹ On August 13th, "Pfalz" had remarked in a gossipy letter to Elizabeth, that Ferdinand in seeking to gain one crown would very likely lose two.² And with similar jocosity had the Electress notified Ferdinand's election to Sir Dudley Carleton: "They have chosen here a blinde Emperour, for he hath but one eye, and that not very good. I am afrayed he will be lowsie, for he hath not monie to buy himself cloths."³

Frederic's hesitation as to the Bohemian crown lasted for some four weeks. At first he had replied to the Bohemian Estates that he could not accept their proposal until he had received from England the consent of his father-in-law. But before his envoy to James could have returned, the Bohemians sent to press for an immediate acceptance, privately hinting that they might be forced to look elsewhere for a king if the Elector did not close with their offer immediately. Thereupon Frederic decided to meet the Bohemian delegates without waiting for James's consent, being assured by all that the English King would not desert his daughter; and Elizabeth insisted on accompanying her husband.

When it came to the point of actually saying farewell to Heidelberg, the home of their peaceful and prosperous

¹ Camerarius to the Chancellor at Heidelberg, Oct. 6th, 1620. quoted in Menzel, vol. vi., p. 348, n.

² Bromley's Collection of Royal Letters, p. 2.

³ Gardiner, Letters and Documents, Second Series, p. 1.

married life, their spirits were overwhelmed by the solemnity of their undertaking and the terrible uncertainty of the future. Sunday, the 26th of September, was spent in religious devotion and the hearing of sermons. The next morning, at 8 o'clock, "these princely personages"—so wrote the Rev. John Harrison, an Englishman who witnessed the scene—"with their train, in their coaches, and some on horses and wagons, without any vain pomp or ostentation, but rather tears in their eyes lifted up to heaven, quietly departed—And no heart but would have been ravished to have seen the sweet demeanour of that great lady at her departure, with tears trickling down her cheeks, so mild, courteous and affable, (yet with a princely reservation so well becoming so great a majesty) like another Queen Elizabeth, revived also again in her the only Phoenix of the world." ¹

As the long procession moved away, Louisa Juliana (who was to be left at Heidelberg in charge of Frederic's two youngest children) watched sorrowfully from a window. "Achl!" she cried, "nun zieht die Pfalz nach Böhmen."

At Waldsassen, on the borders of the Upper Palatinate and Bohemia, the Princes were greeted by the delegates of their new kingdom in 18 coaches. After the conditions of Frederic's rule had been finally arranged, the leisurely journey was continued; and Prague was at last reached on October 31st. It was long since the Bohemian capital had enjoyed a pageant so magnificent as this royal entry. Frederic's subjects, new and old, and his Dutch mercenaries; cavalry, infantry, and nobles, all in gorgeous uniforms: the king himself on his charger, his person well set off by a suit of dark brown and silver: the Queen in a carriage embroidered with silver and gold, with liveries of

¹ Harrison, Relation of the Departure of Prince Frederic, 1619.

violet-coloured velvet: a red satin carriage containing the Countess of Solms, Stewardess of the Court; yet more carriages with Prince Frederic Henry, and the rest of the royal suite, and again more uniforms containing more soldiers—such was the procession which wound slowly through the city to the royal palace, the massive Hradschin on the right bank of the Moldau. Equally elaborate and equally costly were the ceremonials of November 4th and 7th, when first Frederic and then Elizabeth were solemnly crowned and anointed. The Bohemians were jubilant at having once again a king of their own choosing.

Yet all the regal robes and the holy oil of Prague could give no more to Frederic than the outward semblance of kingship. And this was generally perceived, in spite of the blind rejoicings of the Bohemians. "This prince has entered into a fine labyrinth!" had been the Pope's remark when he heard of Frederic's decision. Camerarius, the Palatine minister, a few days after his arrival at Prague, had to confess that the Pope had indeed spoken the truth. "Omnia enim sunt in confusione. The Exchequer is empty, and everything in a ruinous condition."¹ The Jesuits had prophesied that Frederic would be but a "Winter King;" that he would go with the snow. "Fools" was the epithet which Ferdinand had applied to his revolted subjects when he heard that they had elected Frederic.

All this contempt was but too well grounded. Frederic found everywhere predominant among his new subjects divisions, selfishness, and disorder. The various territories of which the kingdom was composed were but half-hearted in their recognition of the common interests. Silesia, Moravia, Lusatia, each was jealous of its own provincial independence, each anxious to reduce its share in

¹ Menzel, vol. vi., p. 340, note.

the common burden. Nor was there even a strong religious bond of union in the country.* Though the Catholics were only a very small minority of the population, the Protestants were split into two sections: those who represented the former Utraquist party, were now not unlike the Lutherans; the others, called the "Bohemian Brethren," were descended from the older Taborites and, from their extremer Puritanism, had more in common with the Calvinists. A yet more fatal division was that between the classes. The great nobles who had begun the revolt, were anxious that the towns should entirely finance the undertaking. The towns objected and were jealous of the nobles' monopoly of the government. The peasants who in the Hussite wars had, as freemen, risen of their own accord to defeat all the armies of Germany, were being reduced to the condition of serfs; and hence during the critical period of the invasion of 1620 many of the nobles were occupied in repressing the agricultural risings of those whom they ought to have been leading against the foreign enemy. The truth is that this Bohemian revolt of the 17th century was only a national and religious movement, in so far as the interests of the nation and of religion had been identified with the interests of a few individuals. The want of a common sympathy in the nation was the more disastrous, since the country had brought forth no great leader—no Zizka, or Podebrad, as in former times. Thurn, who had instigated the revolt, was neither a general nor a statesman. He was a bold adventurer, a man who had scarcely learnt to speak the Bohemian language. Without the necessary dictator, the Bohemians had no clear method either in the field or in the administration. The various armies wandered about "veluti in turba cyclopica."¹ The war taxes which

¹ Menzel, vol. vi., p. 342.

had been voted by the Estates were uncollected, and the mercenaries who were called in to take the place of the free fighters of the 15th century, were, on account of the non-payment of their wages, in a state of chronic mutiny.

Such was the chaos out of which Frederic would have to create order and victory. Even a born ruler of men could scarcely have avoided failure where the spirit of self-sacrifice and of disinterested enthusiasm was so rare. What then could be expected of Frederic, the courtly dilettante, the well-meaning blunderer; Frederic who to the Bohemians was a German and a foreigner, and whom the jealous nobles had invited to reign rather than to rule?

The country had happily been removed from the fear of immediate disaster during the winter of 1619—20. Boucquoi, the general who had been leading the Imperialist invasion, had shortly after Frederic's election been suddenly recalled to defend Vienna against Bethlen Gabor, Prince of Transylvania.

This hero of forty-two battles was playing with great success in Hungary a part similar to that which was being attempted by Frederic in Bohemia. Thus he was a really effective ally to the Bohemians, and by drawing off Boucquoi, left them free to reorganise the country in readiness for the attack which would certainly be renewed by the Imperialists and their allies in the spring. Already preparations for driving out the Winter King resounded from Germany, and from the Spanish lands, from Italy and from Poland.

In spite of the cloud which was hanging over the kingdom, the winter was passed by the Bohemians without much outward concern. At Prague the court was gay and animated. Here there lay before the King and Queen an obvious task—to establish their position in the hearts of their new subjects. The day after their entry into Prague, Elizabeth told the Duke of Buckingham in a hurried letter

that they had been "received with a great show of love of all sortes of people." ¹

After a time, however, evidences of their popularity became rarer. The Bohemians were indeed delighted when, on Dec. 6th, a Prince was born among them, who was to grow up to be the Cavalier Rupert of English History. In the following spring the Estates were persuaded to nominate Prince Frederic Henry to the succession, and to settle on the royal family various lands and revenues, as though a dynasty were commencing which might last for centuries. But on the whole, Frederic and Elizabeth were unsuccessful in winning the love and loyalty of their new subjects. Very possibly their ejection in 1620 by the Hapsburgs may have saved them from a troubled reign with a yet more ignominious ending.

The history of the Winter King and Queen is largely composed of the misunderstandings with their subjects—misunderstandings that are often apparently trivial. The Queen and her ladies were the first to incur criticism. They were complete foreigners, and were content to remain such. Even conversation with the ladies of Bohemia was impossible: the one party could speak no Czech and but clumsy German, the other neither French nor English. Elizabeth's happy-go-lucky character was discovered by the Praguers within four days of her arrival. Gossip said she was sometimes an hour late for church and meals. Moreover, the Bohemian ladies were scandalized by the foreigners' low-necked dresses; and what was especially galling, was the impression that the English women were often laughing at the homely ways of Bohemia. When the goodwives of Prague brought the Queen a present of some of their home-made cakes, they were greatly offended

¹ Hist. MS. Com., 10th Report, App. i., p. 90.

to see the court ladies exchanging ill-mannered jokes at their gift. Elizabeth, indeed, had the tact to shake hands in British fashion and to thank them for their present in a few words of Czeck. But in private she could be as disdainful of her new subjects, as any of her ladies.¹

Then Frederic also lost his popularity. The Praguers criticized all his endeavours to win their affection, his absence of pomp, the simple hunting dress in which he sometimes appeared in public attended by only a single servant, his condescension in mingling with the nobility on terms almost of equality, his dancing with their daughters, and his unkingly capers of delight when he heard of the birth of Rupert. They observed also his real faults—especially the want of independence in his character. The nobles had small reverence for this king who had always to consult his Palatine advisers, and who spent most of his time in the company of his wife.

His strong religious views were a more serious cause of offence. At the instigation of his chaplain, Scultetus, and possibly of Thurn, Frederic caused all the "idolatrous abominations" to be torn down from the palace chapel. The Lutherans were almost as enraged as the Catholics when they saw their national pictures and relics ruthlessly destroyed. Then on a report being spread abroad that the weather-beaten statues of Bohemian saints on the bridge across the Moldau were also being threatened, the Praguers assumed such an intimidating aspect that the court at once repented of its intended vandalism. The new government wasted over these, and other religious reformations, such as the stricter observance of the sabbath, the care which should have been wholly devoted to the work of political reorganisation; and by these means, in spite of all their

¹ Gindely, *Geschichte*, vol. ii., p. 251; Häusser, vol. ii., p. 318.

good intentions, they simply added to the general confusion.

Throughout this winter while the court at Prague was continuing its daily round of ceremonies and huntings, and the usual serious and frivolous occupations, the nations of Europe were being canvassed and counter-canvassed by Frederic's envoys and those of his enemies. It was clear that the fate of the new King would depend on the failure or success of these negotiations. What had recommended Frederic to the Bohemians, had been the hope of securing the active support of his large circle of allies. Now, however, that the time had come for realising these hopes, both Frederic and the Bohemians were bitterly disillusioned.

At last, too late, Frederic made a serious effort to combine the Lutherans and Calvinists of Germany in the defence of their common interests. When he called a joint assembly to Nuremberg in the autumn of 1619, the Lutheran Princes were so much disgusted with him for having shaken the foundations of all authority, that they did not even answer his summons. Even the Princes of the Protestant Union, annoyed with Frederic for precipitating the conflict, and jealous of the personal aggrandizement which he had thus secured, now stopped his monthly pay as their commander and confined their promise of support to the protection of the Palatinate. In the following July, the Union made a treaty with Maximilian of Bavaria at Ulm; in it they carried their desertion of Frederic's cause still further; for while they promised the Imperialist troops a free field in Bohemia, they did not insist on a corresponding guarantee that the Palatinate should not be invaded by the Spaniards.

The English alliance had been the other trump card in Frederic's hand. James's senile diplomacy during the crisis is well known. Influenced in one direction by his own family affection, by the advice of his ministers, and by the

pressure of popular opinion; and influenced in the other direction by his own sluggish, peace-loving temperament, by his abhorrence of anything approaching revolution, by annoyance that the Bohemian crown had been accepted without waiting for *his* advice, and by his partiality for things Spanish, "the Wisest Fool in Christendom" ever hesitated to take any firm step in either direction, ever attempted to put off the evil hour of decision by pedantic enquiries into the legal aspects of the quarrel, and by marshalling futile embassies for peace where there could be no peace. All that could be tediously extorted from James was a permission that voluntary troops and contributions might be unofficially levied in England, and an unsubstantial promise that "howsoever he meddle not with the matter of Bohemia, yet he [would] prepare with all speed that may be to succour those that are so neere unto him for the defence and recoverie of their patrimonie."¹

When their own father was thus lukewarm to the cause of the Palatines, the other friendly states such as Denmark, Venice, and Switzerland were clearly exonerated from active interference. In fact the Duke of Savoy, that most accurate of weathercocks, turned completely round, and now offered an army for the support of the Emperor in his "righteous" war. And so, although Frederic appealed even to the Sultan himself, the only assistance from his allies that he actually received, was a monthly subsidy from the Dutch, and the co-operation in arms of the rebel Protestants of Hungary and Austria.

Ferdinand, on the other hand, was as fortunate with his alliances as Frederic was unsuccessful. The Pope, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the King of Poland assisted him with money or with men. France, contrary to her usual

¹ Buckingham to Sir Edward Herbert, 29th Sep. 1620, Hist. MS. Com., 10th Report, App. i., p. 106.

European policy, supported him for the moment with her great influence. Spain, while amusing James with negotiations, prepared an army in the Spanish Netherlands, which, under the command of Spinola, was to reduce the Palatinate. In Germany itself circumstances proved equally favourable to the Austrian interest. Maximilian of Bavaria, the leader of the Catholic League, was bribed to make the Emperor's cause his own by the promise that the lands and Electoral dignity of Frederic should be transferred to the Bavarian house. In July, a similar offer won over the Lutheran John George of Saxony, who undertook to attack the Calvinist usurper in his northern territories while the Catholics marched against him from the South.

Throughout the spring the League had been steadily arming. By the close of July, Maximilian's formidable army was ready to begin its advance. First the Protestants of Upper Austria were crushed. Then came the turn of the Lower Austrians, who in vain had conferred on Frederic the title of "Protector." In September, Maximilian united with Boucquoi, the general of Ferdinand's army, who had been carrying on a desultory war throughout the summer. On the 20th their combined forces crossed the Bohemian frontier.

Meanwhile in Bohemia itself the armies had been mutinying for want of pay; the generals had been quarrelling; and Prague, crowded with officers who should have been at the head of their soldiers in the field, had been sparkling with regal ceremonials and festivity.

To the outside world Prague might appear unconcerned: but the hearts of those in its high places were every week becoming heavier from the apprehension of the hopelessness of their case. The ministers in their desperation now began to think of those reforms which earlier might have retrieved the situation. As for the King and Queen themselves, we can

discover their state of mind from their numerous letters of the period. Some of these are urgent entreaties to James and those who could influence him in England. But the most illuminating correspondence is that of Frederic to his wife during his two separations from her; firstly, in the spring of 1620, when he was making a progress through Moravia and Silesia to confirm these provinces in their allegiance; and secondly, when, after the Imperialist invasion, he had joined his army in the field. It is evident from these letters that the gay face Elizabeth was showing to the world only hid an anxious and dejected spirit. Again and again Frederic has to entreat his wife to remember her promise not to give way to "melancholie". It is indeed a reversal of their usual parts; but Frederic's trouble is largely distracted by the incidents of the journey or the camp; while Elizabeth has to sit at home apprehensive for his safety.

The most striking feature of the correspondence is the genuine, tender affection which now existed between the King and Queen. Evidently their common troubles have drawn them closer than ever together. They write to each other three or four times a week, sometimes even twice in one day. Elizabeth is always his "cher unique cœur". He "kisses her mouth a million times in imagination"—and so forth. He tries to amuse her with bits of personal gossip or the descriptions of dresses, or to cheer her with the prospect of their happily hunting together some day in Moravia.

In the second batch of letters, however, Frederic's tone becomes less hopeful, and more predominantly religious. But he is still the anxious husband and the comforter. Thus, shortly before the battle of the White Mountain, he writes: "Croyés que je ne vous feray partir de Prague qu'il n'en soit besoin, car je vous desire plus là qu'en autre

lieu, mais la nécessité le requerrant il se faut resoudre, et si je n'avois plus soin de vous que vous pouvés en avoir de vous même, vous vous pourriés precipiter en un danger lequel tout le monde regretteroit. Pour Dieu donc ne me parlés plus comme faites en ces deux lettres, s'il plait à Dieu nous nous verrons encore force années."¹ Frederic's fear for the Queen's safety in Prague was unfortunately justified. The Bohemian army, mutinous and disheartened, had fallen steadily back before the advancing Imperialists. There was small hope of defending the capital. Yet Elizabeth remained "ful of courage,"² and in spite of all entreaties refused to stir. "Her Majesty," wrote Nethersole, the English Agent, "out of the rare and admirable love to the King her husband, to whom she feareth that her removing for her own safety might be the occasion of much danger, by discouraging the hearts of the people when his Majesty goeth to the army, and, it might be, by other worse effects; her Majesty, I say and merely in this consideration, is irremoveably resolved to abide in this town which God bless. It were a pleasant thing . . . to recount the loving conflicts that have been between their Majesties upon this occasion."³

By the close of October the two armies were lying opposite each other at Rakonitz, a few miles from Prague. "There are daily skirmishes," wrote Nethersole, "and we can in this town hear the cannon play, day and night, which was enough to fright another queen. Her Majesty is nothing troubled therewith; but would be, if she should hear how often there have been men killed very near the King, with the cannon, and how much he adventureth his person further than he is commended for."⁴

¹ Aretin, *Beytrage*, vol. vii., p. 169.

² Germany (States), Conway's and Weston's Despatch, Oct. 13/23, 1620.

³ Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 336.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. v., p. 342.

On the 5th of November the Imperialists suddenly decamped, and made a dash for Prague. The Bohemians marched after them in desperate haste. On November 7th they just succeeded in interposing themselves between the enemy and the capital. Anhalt and the army camped for the night on the White Mountain, three miles outside the city. The King himself pressed on to Prague in order to see his wife and make arrangements for her safety. It was three in the afternoon when he appeared at court, and "with a countenance of glee" gave a reassuring account of the situation. Accordingly, the night was passed in security "as free from doubt as we supposed ourselves quit from danger."¹

Early the next morning, a Sunday morning, came Anhalt, and begged the king to cheer the army with his presence in the battle which now was imminent. Frederic, however, disbelieved in the intended attack of the enemy, and was resolved to entertain at dinner Conway and Weston, the useless ambassadors of peace from England. So it happened that about noon, just as the companies of Imperialist pikemen and musketeers were advancing up the slopes of the White Mountain to throw themselves upon the Bohemians and Hungarians drawn up along its crest, the Bohemian King in his neighbouring palace was sitting down with Elizabeth and her father's peace-makers, to dine. At table they resolved that they would afterwards visit the army, the Queen to be escorted by the envoys. But while yet "at their cups" came the news that the enemy had begun the attack. The dinner was ended, and the king at the head of 500 horse started off for the field.

As the party neared the city gate, however, a sight which told its own tale met their eyes—the Bohemian

¹ "Relation of the loss of Prague, by an Englishman there and then present." Harl. MS. 389, f. 1.

troops surging from the White Mountain in hopeless panic, and in their midst the three generals, Anhalt, Thurn, and Hohenlohe. The fray—it had not deserved the name of battle—had scarcely lasted an hour. The Bohemians had fled disgracefully, leaving all their cannon and some 2,000 dead on the field. They continued their flight through the city, and “the brute came running in the mouths of those that ran away that the enemy pursued to the porte and entered there.”¹

Frederic, when he saw the men who had a few hours previously formed his army, rushing past him to put the Moldau between themselves and the enemy, at once thought of his Queen, and despatched a servant to bid her follow the general example, and seek safety in the Altstadt on the opposite bank of the river. The message reached Elizabeth. She ignored it. Not until Frederic himself returned with the fugitive generals to the Palace, could she be persuaded to join the flight. Carrying off what few belongings they could, the royal party hurriedly left the Hradschin—the scene of their short-lived royalty, the halls where, we are told, but one year ago Elizabeth had laughed over the beautiful collections so kindly left for her and her husband by Ferdinand. They crossed the old bridge which the Queen had once vowed—so her enemies said—never to cross until its images of the saints had been demolished. Thus they gained the Altstadt and temporary safety.

The king and “his blessed undaunted Lady” took up their quarters in a house in the Brückenplatze, and around them gathered the generals and ministers for a council of war. A large majority considered that further resistance

¹ Conway's Despatch, Harl. MS. 1580, f. 281. The account of the defeat of the Bohemians and the flight from Prague is mainly derived from Gindely's "Geschichte", vol. iii., (especially pp. 348—358) and Everett-Green, vol. v., pp. 342—359.

was for the moment impossible, in view of the panic which had completely seized the army. By accepting the offers of the English envoys to negotiate, however, a final decision was for the time postponed. Before darkness came down on the unhappy city crowded with terrified soldiers, Frederic removed with his wife to a house safer than that which they had first occupied: and hard by them lodged the generals. The night was passed for the most part in consultations and the exchange of messages. The generals were inclined to recommend to the king immediate flight; but everywhere there reigned doubt and hesitation. And thus closed this eventful Sunday which had decided for ever the fortune of Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia. The Catholics were careful to recall the text from the morning's lesson that had been read in all the churches—"Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's."

The dawn of Monday, November 8th, found the generals in a more heroic mood. It was now recommended that the Queen and her baby should for the present be the only persons to leave the city. But on this point Elizabeth, who in the hour of danger had become calm and resolute, had her own opinion: either she would remain with her husband in Prague, or else her husband should accompany her in her flight.

But the heroism of the generals "lasted but a breath."¹ When soon after nine o'clock no answer had been received to the two proposals of the English envoys, it was decided that the Queen should at once set out. "As she stepped into the carriage with the baby Rupert on her arm, Frederic's irresolution departed: he also mounted his horse, and so set the example for a general flight."²

As the coaches which carried the Queen, her ladies, and

¹ Conway's Despatch, Harl. MS. 1580, f. 283.

² Gindely, Geschichte, vol. iii., p. 354.

such small portion of their belongings as could be saved, wound sadly through the streets of Prague, the procession grew ever longer and yet longer, till it included besides 2,000 of the demoralized soldiers, some 300 waggons, and a goodly cavalcade of generals, councillors, officials, and nobles. These who were now swelling the mournful exit, were the same personages who, just twelve months earlier, had impressed the Praguers by the bravery of their entrance—almost all of them from the highest to the lowest now equally forgetful of their duty to the city, and equally anxious to save their own persons and their own property.

At the walls there was a tedious wait before the gates could be opened. Then Frederic bade a short farewell to the distressed citizens. The Bohemian officials promised to return to their posts in a few hours; and the long train wound away through the gates.

One Bohemian noble, the young Count Thurn, kept his word: a mile outside the town he turned back to encourage the soldiers, and to dispute the passage of the bridge in order to secure the Queen's retreat. He assured Elizabeth that "he would *do* the work he went for, or *die* to do it." And to this she is said to have replied: "Never shall the son of our friend hazard his life to spare my fears,—never shall this devoted city be exposed to more outrageous treatment for my sake. Rather let me perish on the spot than be remembered as a curse!"¹

The commencement of the flight has been described by the English Ambassador. "That day's journey was long, of six great leagues, to a town called Nimburg: by the way were many rumours and vain alarms, only the king bare himself through all the passages of this disaster with more clearness of judgment, constancy, and assurance, than

¹ Conway's Despatch, Harl. MS. 1580; Harte, "Gustavus Adolphus," quoted in Warburton, "Prince Rupert," vol. i., p. 38.

any of the chiefs of his army, and indeed as well as could be looked for in such an unexpected change and, a man may say, total disorder. But his incomparable lady, who truly saw the state she was in, did not let herself fall below the dignity of a queen, and kept the freedom of her countenance and discourse, with such an unchangeable temper, as at once did raise in all capable men this one thought, that her mind could not be brought under by fortune.”¹

At Nimburg only a short rest was possible. Before the night was over came bad news from Prague, and the tired fugitives had again to hasten on. For ten days the headlong flight was continued, until the Elbe was left behind, the Riesengebirge crossed, and safety was reached in Breslau among the still loyal Silesians. It was a hard journey for a Queen within two months of her confinement. Troops of the half-savage Cossacks were following hard upon her steps. Sometimes she was able to travel by coach: at others it was necessary for her to gallop on horseback through roads deep with mire—postillioned behind the young Ralph Hopton, at this time fresh from Oxford, one of the many gentlemen who had flocked to her service, and destined later to become a General of the Cavaliers in the English civil wars. But more bitter than the hardships of the journey were its indignities. When even her own attendants presumed to pillage her baggage-waggons, she began to feel the sting of failure.

None the less, this was the hour of Elizabeth's personal triumph. “Their Majesties' retreat,” wrote Nethersole, “was no less truly glorious than their entrance.” Nethersole was right. It was now that Elizabeth showed of what metal she was made: that she could be as cheerful amidst difficulties as amidst frivolities, and as fearless when hunted

¹ Conway's Despatch, Harl. MS. 1580.

as when hunting. All who came across her at this time were unanimous in their praises—praises that are not, as so often, the mere compliments of the courtier, but expressions of genuine, heartfelt admiration. Nethersole, for instance, assuredly no feather-headed man, interrupts his sober political Despatch to Naunton, James's Secretary of State, with the following undiplomatic outburst: "I will beleeve that God who hath given to everything his proper season . . . hath no ill purpose in leading his [Majesty's] glorious daughter thus round about the Empire, to conquer all the heartes of this mighty people where she passeth. Your honour will, I doubt, think I want sleepe when I write this. I confesse I am rapt with the greatness of her Majesty's spirit, and the goodness of her disposition, and I am not alone in it."¹ Nor was he alone in it. Elizabeth, a Queen without a kingdom, a Queen without even a night-gown, was now, as earlier, a Queen "by virtue," was beginning her reign as "the Queen of Hearts."

Even at Breslau there was only safety for a few days. The troops of the Elector of Saxony were in Lusatia on the flanks of the fugitives. Frederic had to remain to rally the Silesians and Moravians, but Elizabeth with her baby in her arms again fled northwards, escorted only by 60 troopers. Passing down the Oder she begged from the friends of her prosperity some place where she might take refuge for her approaching hour. They offered her a cold welcome. But Frederic's brother-in-law, the Elector of Brandenburg, could not order the doors of his Castle of Cüstrin to be shut against her, though he pointed out that she would find there "nothing but misery and starvation." And so to Cüstrin, a desolate fortress without furniture, without tapestry, and even without a kitchen,² the lonely

¹ State Papers (Foreign), Germany (Empire) 1620, 16/26 Nov.

² Bengel, *Memoirs of Elizabeth*, vol. ii., p. 106.

Queen retired. Thither, at the close of December, hurried Frederic, leaving his Silesian and Bohemian subjects to their fate—now as ever more mindful of his wife than of his own honour. And in one of the bare rooms of Cüstrin the Queen on Jan. 16th gave birth to “a large and goodly son.”¹ “Let him be called Maurice,” she said, remembering Frederic’s uncle, the champion of the Dutch, “for he will have to be a fighter.”

As soon as she was well enough to travel, Elizabeth pursued her way across North Germany. At Berlin she was now kindly received by the Electress, her sister-in-law; and in her safe hands she left the baby Maurice. Then passing through Wolfenbüttel she rejoined, in Westphalia, her husband, who had left her in order to negotiate with Christian of Denmark and the Lutherans.

But where next were they to turn? The Palatinate was already partly occupied by Spinola and his Spaniards. Men thought it was all the more necessary therefore that Frederic should visit Heidelberg, and restore confidence there by his presence. Once more, however, Frederic’s principal care was the safety of Elizabeth; and he resolved, before visiting his lands on the Rhine, to escort her to some place of refuge. England was the country to which the exiles had naturally turned their eyes. But in England the extraordinary outburst of Protestant enthusiasm only made the cautious King less anxious for the presence of the Princess round whom the enthusiasm centred, and James therefore let it be known that for the present he had no desire to see either his daughter or her consort. Nor did any safe asylum offer itself within the Empire. But there was one hearty invitation which reached the homeless couple, from

¹ Harl. MS. 389, f. 2.

Maurice of Orange, their uncle at the Hague; and this they were glad to accept. Travelling down the lower Rhine by Cleves and Rotterdam—the route which eight years earlier had been enlivened by the triumphs of their bridal procession, the exiles reached the Hague on the 3rd of April. Everywhere the Dutch endeavoured to make their welcome as warm as it had been in 1613. Frederic and Elizabeth were given all the honours of royalty, together with the reverence due to Protestant martyrs. They were saluted with solemn addresses by town councils, and were formally received by foreign ambassadors. “A great concourse of people coming from all parts” made the road between Delft and the Hague “like a continued Street.”¹ And most substantial compliment of all, the States General offered them a palace for their lodgement and a monthly pension of 10,000 florins for their keep.

Here, then, at the Hague, Frederic and Elizabeth after their long flight had at last found a home: here they could survey at leisure the ruin of their fortunes. It was but a year and a half since Frederic had accepted the Bohemian crown. But within these few months he had plunged Germany into a general war, and had brought disaster on himself and on all who had trusted him. Bohemia was lying at the mercy of the pitiless Austrian: its national life was being crushed, its Protestantism proscribed, and the flower of its nobility exiled or executed. The Lower Palatinate was partly in the hands of the Spaniards; and the remainder was about to be deserted by the troops of the Protestant Union, which, disgusted by the selfishness of Frederic and the shiftiness of James, was anxious to put an end to its own miserable existence. Nor was the case of the Upper Palatinate much better; for there Mans-

¹ Carleton's Despatch, Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 361.

feld, the brigand General, was using Frederic's name as a cloak for his robberies, and was involving his nominal master in his own evil repute. Moreover, in January Frederic had been put to the ban by the Emperor, and Maximilian of Bavaria was determined to exact the full share that had been promised him of the spoil. Frederic's fall was as profound as his ambitious plans had been exalted: he who had thought to ruin the Hapsburgs, even to add the crown of Hungary to his crown of Bohemia, had succeeded in making himself and his misfortunes the butt of every wit and lampooner in Catholic Europe.

Frederic had fallen, never to rise again. His active career as a Prince was at an end. He and his wife had astonished the world by the recklessness of their play; but their turn at the game was over, and they had lost. Henceforth they were to watch from their retirement the struggles of others: they were to consume their long years of exile in monotonous attempts to persuade these others to regain for them some portion of their former possessions. And so the story of the Queen of Bohemia is in a sense now closed. Although there were forty years of life still left her, they were years of almost unrelieved adversity, and in spite of the brave cheerfulness with which she bore her succession of misfortunes, it is kinder to dwell as shortly as may be on this later history—kinder to those who read it, since the court circular of an exiled Queen cannot often be a lofty theme; and kinder to Elizabeth herself, since in the troubles of these years there is not a little that is sordid, much that may well be forgotten in the merry freshness of her girlhood, and the heroism of her flight.

Happily for themselves, however, neither Frederic nor Elizabeth realised the completeness of their failure. Elizabeth had written on November 25th: "I am not yet so out of

heart, though I confess we are in an evil estate, but that (as I hope) God will give us again the victory, for the wars are not ended with one battle, and I hope we shall have better luck in the next." ¹

Frederic was no less optimistic than Elizabeth. Except during some short intervals of despondency, he was buoyed up till the day of his death by his airy plans. Every one of these eleven years had its similar hopes, its similar failures, and its revived hopes.

Frederic is ever just about to be restored—sometimes by means of the force, sometimes by means of the influence of others: he never *is* restored. The political theme in which light-heartedness alternates with sadness, is repeated with endless variations, repeated till all men and especially the performers are weary. This extraordinary sameness in the history of Frederic's affairs throughout the ensuing years, is to be explained by the permanent forces that were at work—the Winter King's own unchanging character, and the constant elements in the disposition of political parties.

As before the crisis had occurred, Frederic could still select as his allies from among the mass of those who were opposed to Catholicism and to the Hapsburgs, either the war party or the peace party. Foremost among those who had so far committed themselves to a policy of war that they had no choice but to fight things out to the bitter end, were the Dutch whose long truce with Spain was just lapsing when Frederic reached the Hague; Bethlen Gabor who had carried on more successfully in Hungary, the part that Frederic had attempted in Bohemia; and those German princes who kept armies of marauders in the field, nominally in the cause of Frederic, but in reality too often for their own pleasure, that they

¹ Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 349.

might live at large upon the peaceful inhabitants of the land; such were Mansfeld and the *condottieri* of the Mansfeld type, the Marquis of Baden-Durlach and Christian of Brunswick.

First of the opposite party, of those who preferred peace, was James of England. This monarch's policy, admirable in theory, execrable in practice, was in its main characteristics always the same; but the external world was changing, and so the actual verity of things receded ever further from the illusion of things that existed within James' brain. James believed that he and his ambassadors could reason the Emperor into a restoration of the Palatinate, or—when that attempt had failed several times—that he could reason Spain or France into using their influence with the Emperor sufficiently to intimidate him into the restoration. At the same time, to please his own Protestant vanity and to satisfy the clamours of his people, the British Solomon would assume a half truculent air and would talk loudly of the punishment which was awaiting the Catholics if his wise words were neglected. But the Catholics were rather amused than alarmed at the sight: they knew James better than he knew himself; they were aware that his warlike pose would not last long, and that he would always return to talk of treaties and peace. For the fact was that, in regard to the political affairs of Germany, it was scarcely possible for James to do anything more than to talk. Unless he was prepared to surrender all the prerogatives that he held dearest, he could not obtain sufficient money to carry on a war himself, or to pay others to carry it on for him. On those occasions when James's treaties and mediatorial plans broke down, when it became necessary for him to think of real action, the English King, like Frederic, naturally turned to see if he could not induce others to do that for him which he was not prepared to do himself. To

effect this purpose, it was essential to gain over the Lutheran wing of Protestantism. The princes of Northern Germany were in an unpleasant position: they were uncertain which was the more horrible, the Catholicism of the Hapsburgs, or the anarchical conduct of Frederic and his generals. Yet they were continually importuned and menaced by both parties. The Lutheran kings of Denmark and Sweden were in a similar state of indecision. All were opposed to the Emperor's confiscation of the Palatinate and to the aggressive march of Catholicism. But they wished to be sure of their ground before moving; they would not commit themselves until they had the example of some leader. For long they looked to James for this lead. But James by his shifting policy simply disheartened and confused them; and those princes whom his promises of support persuaded to take up arms, were only lured thereby to their own ruin; for James's promises could never be fulfilled so long as he was distrusted by the English parliament.

The other constant element which decided Frederic's political history in these years was the peculiarity of his own character. In the first place, he could never learn by experience. In the second place, he displayed the curious combination of obstinacy and indecision, which is possible to a weak but conscientious mind. As a consequence he continued vainly to place his trust in the number of his potential allies, and madly to attempt to unite the advantages of two opposite policies by adhering with rapid alternation now to the peace, now to the war programme.

Frederic, however, was not entirely to blame for such criminal folly. He was the sport of circumstances. While his personal inclinations drove him to the side of men like Gabor and Mansfeld, who alone encouraged him to think of reconquering Bohemia, and while he felt bound by honour both to support these men who were fighting in

his cause, and to regain by the sword that of which he had been deprived by the sword, he was, on the other hand, drawn to the side of James and the peace-loving Protestants by Elizabeth's sense of duty to her father, and by a misty consciousness that no good would ever come of the brigand generals. Moreover, Frederic was a pauper, and not being prepared to starve, was no longer a free agent. For part of their sustenance the Palatine family were dependent on the charity of the Dutch—and the Dutch were once more engaged in a deadly struggle with Catholicism; for the rest they were dependent on the charity of James—and James made a practice of bending Frederic to conform to his negotiation policy by threatening to stop the English allowance. The miserable exile attempted to please both parties, and in so doing, he of course succeeded in irritating both. When his father-in-law compelled him to sit tamely at the Hague and trust in the wisdom of English diplomacy, those who were fighting in Frederic's cause regarded him as a traitor to himself: then, when stung by their reproaches, he broke loose from the tape bonds of James, the English statesmen raised the cry that he had spoilt the good effects of all their efforts and was ruining his own cause: thereupon the shame-faced Frederic would return to the Hague and his wife, and the dreary process would recommence.

There is no space here to re-tell the political history of Frederic and Elizabeth during the period of their exile. This can be found in the general histories of the times;¹ for round the attempts to recover the Palatinate centred most of the history of the Thirty Years' War and of the foreign policy of England.

To Elizabeth who had to remain quietly at the Hague,

¹ The best short account is that of Prof. Gardiner in his volume on the Thirty Years' War. (Epoch Series.)

a mere spectator of the continual follies and failures of those who were championing her cause, these years must have been painfully wearisome. After having expectantly followed in 1621, Lord Digby's negotiations, the failure of which was attributed to Frederic's conduct in refusing to disown Mansfeld, and in impatiently joining the Dutch army in the field; after having, in 1622, waited through the Weston negotiations which were rendered futile by her husband's gratuitous attack on the Lutheran Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt; after having hoped for a moment that James would at last be moved to give some active assistance, Elizabeth was then, in 1623, doomed to see her father, ensnared by the idea of the Spanish marriage, take the suicidal step of allowing Charles and Buckingham to go in person to Madrid. It was a crushing blow to her prospects.

Some time previously, Elizabeth, who had lavishly used her private influence with her English friends for political purposes, had written the following characteristic letter to the Duke of Buckingham:

"My Lord,—The King understanding that the Spaniard hath refused to renew the truce in the Palatinate, hath written to his Majestie to intreat him for his assistance; the cuntry else will be all lost. I must desire your help to his Majestie in this, and beseech him for us not to lett us loose all. I know the Spanish Ambassadour will make manie complaints against the King concerning the Count Mansfeld's proceedings, but I hope his Majestie will not judge till he heere the King's answeare to anie such accusation, who may be believed as soon as the other. I must entreat you therefore to help us in this. I have also written to my deare Brother about it, next to whom I have most confidence in you who shall never find me other than

"Your most affectionat frend,

"ELIZABETH.

“My Lord, I forgott one thing, which is that the king is much troubled at this newes more than ever I saw him. I earnestly intreat you therefore to gett his Majestie to send him some effectuall comfortable answeare that may a little ease his melancolie, for I confess it troubles me to see him soe. I pray lett none know this but his Majestie and my brother to whom I forgott to write it. The naggs you promised me shall be very welcome, specially since they come from your wife to whom I pray commend my love.”¹

There is no doubt that Frederic was extremely depressed by his misfortunes. He was reported to have said “that were it not for the person of his Lady which he loved above all other, he could have wished he had married rather a Boore’s daughter, than the King of Great Brittaines.”²

And Elizabeth had unwillingly to admit the justice of her husband’s complaint. “My father,” she wrote in December 1622, “hath hitherto done us more hurt than good.”³ The gloom was never more profound than in the winter of 1622—3. Mansfeld, Brunswick, and Baden-Durlach had each been hopelessly defeated. Frederic had at length yielded to English pressure and dismissed them from his service. But this had not enabled him to gain any advantage from the Weston negotiations. It had rather encouraged the Imperialists to redouble their military efforts; and the two or three fortresses that had long been doggedly defended by the English and other volunteers, were now falling one by one into the hands of the Catholics. On hearing of the capture of Heidelberg, Frederic, from his retreat at Sedan, had poured out the bitterness of his heart in a long

¹ Queen of Bohemia to Buckingham, 8 Aug., [1621?] Hist. MS. Com., 10th Report, Appendix i., p. 90.

² Mead to —, 5 May, 1621. Harl. MS. 389, f. 67.

³ Elizabeth to Sir T. Roe, Dec. 5, 1622, quoted in Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 404.

letter to Elizabeth: "Voilà mon pauvre Heidelberg pris! On y a exercé toutes sortes de cruautés, pillé toute la ville, allumé tout le fauxbourg qui étoit le plus beau du dit lieu . . . Me semble avoir été quelques années sans voir ce que j'aime le plus en ce monde; d'ou autrement, certes, je me retirerois plus volontiers que d'y vivre; car je pourrois mieux servir à mon Dieu, aurois l'esprit plus content en le plus petit coin du monde, que le plus grand monarque au plus grand palais: et certes, si je suivois mon humeur, je m'en retirerois de tout, et laisserois faire le Roi d'Angleterre pour le bien de ses enfans, ce qu'il leur croiroit utile."¹ A month later the loss of Mannheim was announced to Frederic at the Hague. "Of all the ill news," Carleton reported, "which have come unto him like Job's messengers, I have observed none since his first arrival in these parts to drive him into so much distemper and passion as this, for which the sorrow of her Highness' heart (who was present at the reading of the letters) was seen in her watery eyes and silence. God send them both patience."²

The Palatines had certainly need to pray for patience. The year 1623 passed as other years had passed, in unsuccessful negotiations. Then Charles and Buckingham came home in disgust at Spanish hypocrisy. For the first time England resounded with actual preparations for a campaign. But the summer of 1624 brought with it the usual disillusionment. James sank back into negotiations, and thought only of procuring allies instead of putting his new troops to any useful purpose. In the next year came the death of James, who had always been the great obstacle to decided action; and hope accordingly revived. Elizabeth wrote to her friend Sir Thomas Roe: "Now you may be

¹ Bromley Letters, pp. 18—19.

² Carleton to Sec. Calvert, quoted in Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 402.

sure all will go well in England; for your new master will leave nothing undone for our good." ¹ For a time all seemed to promise well; an arrangement was concluded by which Christian of Denmark was to make a serious attack on the Emperor; and England actually declared war against Spain. Then one by one the Palatines' hopes were more completely shattered than ever before. It became clear that however anxious the English King might be to restore the Palatinate, it was not possible for him to enforce his will, since he could not secure the support of his Parliament. The Spanish war was a failure. The English troops of Mansfeld wasted away in Holland from starvation and disease. In 1626 Christian of Denmark, being deserted by England, was crushed at the battle of Lutter. The new Imperial army of Wallenstein became supreme in Germany. Mansfeld and Christian of Brunswick died, the generals who had dared so much and done so little for the King and Queen of Bohemia. In Hungary, Bethlen Gabor, after ten years of intermittent war, at length made his peace. Charles of England, indeed, would not admit himself to be beaten; he pledged himself to see Frederic restored. When, however, peace was concluded with Spain in 1629, Charles did not insist on the clause for the restoration of the Palatinate. Well might Frederic, on hearing the news, burst into a passionate fit of weeping. All the toiling efforts, the diplomacy and the fighting, of the last eight years had been in vain and to no purpose.

And no Princes were affected more closely by the failures of this period than Elizabeth and Frederic. For them it had not been merely the fate of German Protestantism and the prestige of England that had been at stake, but their own honour and their own possessions, the fortune

¹ Letters and Negotiations of Sir Thos. Roe, p. 397.

of those who had trusted to their government, the future careers of their numerous offspring, and the whole material welfare of themselves and their dependants.

The Palatines at the Hague were not indeed poor in the ordinary sense of the term. Besides smaller resources they enjoyed monthly allowances of 10,000 florins from the Dutch Estates, and £1,500 from the English treasury. But this was poverty compared to their previous circumstances; and the demands on their purse were very great. They tried to keep up the show of royalty; the Queen's own establishment consisted of 200 persons and 50 horses. Moreover, they were surrounded by needy exiles from the Palatinate and Bohemia; and neither Frederic nor Elizabeth could ever learn to refuse a petition. At any rate, the Palatine family was always in pecuniary difficulties. In 1627 Sir Dudley Carleton sent home word that their poverty was so extreme that they hardly knew how to get bread. "Lay about you on all hands for here is neither money nor credit." Three years later Frederic was in such straits that for a time he thought of putting away all his servants in order that he might "live obscurely with a couple of men," while his Queen was to be sent to England to throw herself at her brother's feet.¹ The fact was that Charles after the break with his parliament was not able to pay the English allowance punctually, and still less to discharge the exiles' debts, as James after much grumbling had been wont to do. Even in 1627 the sums due from the Bohemian court to the tradesmen of the Hague had amounted to £10,000; and they increased as the years went by. It was a trying situation for the court. Outside were the shopkeepers "waiting for the messenger with money from England with as much earnestness as the Jews look for their Messiah."

¹ Everett-Green, vol. v., pp. 458, 479—80 etc.

Inside were the courtiers longing for news of the Queen's agent, "with hunger and thirst."¹

When such was the condition of affairs it is not strange that Carleton had fears lest "Elizabeth's cheerful temper, unbroken by public distresses, should be dejected with the pressure of private wants."² But the Queen of Bohemia would not allow her spirit to be broken by her sorrows. To Sir Thomas Roe she wrote: "though I have cause enough to be sad, yett I am still of my wild humour to be as merrie as I can in spite of fortune."³ It was no wonder that even the matter-of-fact diplomatists who had dealings with the exiles should have applauded with one accord her "heroical spirit," and "her princely courage."

Elizabeth justly deserved all praise for the brave manner in which she bore her troubles. Yet it must not be forgotten that fortune was not as yet wholly unkind. At the Hague she could enjoy the society and amusements which to her meant life itself. Here she was in a town which was just waking up to its importance as the centre of the fresh activities and growing prosperity of the youthful Dutch Republic. Here were gathered nobles, ambassadors, artists, men of every interest and from every country; and in spite of the lingering Dutch war with Spain, they were all prepared to make life enjoyable for themselves and for the royal refugees.

Foremost in this interesting society were the two Princes of the House of Orange, who successively exercised the powers though not the title of a king. The elder, Maurice, was especially kind to the Palatines; and the genial old bachelor was regarded by Elizabeth as a foster-father.⁴

¹ Abstract of Carleton's Despatch in Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 430.

² *Ibid.*

³ Letters and Negotiations of Sir Thos. Roe, p. 146.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 397.

When he was on his death-bed in 1625, Maurice showed his appreciation of the healthy atmosphere of Elizabeth's court by insisting that his younger brother and successor, Frederic Henry, should marry one of her ladies, the fair Amelia de Solms. Under the new *régime* it was natural that there should be some friction between Amelia, now the rich hostess, and her former mistress, the poor Queen. But the honours of royalty continued to be punctiliously afforded to the Palatines, and to all functions they were asked as the principal guests.

The exiled court was especially dependent for its comfort on the successive English ambassadors at the Hague. It became one of the most difficult duties of these officials to entertain their master's daughter, to sustain her hopes and divert her attention during those "melancholy days" which would sometimes come even to the lively Queen. With Sir Dudley Carleton, who was diplomatically employed at the Hague till 1628, and with his wife, Elizabeth was on the easiest terms. On one occasion she is found paying a surprise visit to the embassy at dinner time, and then carrying off the company on an expedition to see a monster fish that had been washed up on to the sea-shore.¹

But besides its ordinary residents the Hague was enlivened by a continual stream of visitors. Many of them came with the sole purpose of seeing the exiled Queen. Her energy and her wide sympathies enabled her ever to keep in touch with a remarkably large and varied circle of acquaintances. Some, such as the Countess of Bedford, formerly Lucy Harington, had been the friends of her childhood. Others who were in the habit of sending her small presents, or who would come to kiss her hand, remembered her simply as their "Lady Elizabeth". Many,

¹ Nethersole's Despatch, Aug. 22, 1621, quoted in Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 372.

again, were English noblemen whom she had known at her father's court. For instance, it appears from her letters to Sir Thomas Roe, that the Duke of Richmond was "loved well" by her; and that the death of "worthie Southampton" in 1624 left her sad for many days.¹ Amongst her circle of correspondents were a few men of letters such as Donne and Bacon. But though she would graciously thank these for their "Dedications" to her, it does not appear that she was herself a very great reader.

Those friends with whom she seems to have been most familiar, are the diplomatists who had been at one time or another employed in her behalf. The impression which Elizabeth had made on Sir Henry Wotton at Prague was never obliterated. "Shall I die without seeing again my Royal Mistress?" he would write to her. ". . . Shall such a contemptible distance as between Eton and Hague, divide me from beholding how her virtues overshine the darkness of her Fortune?"² With Conway, also, who had been by her side during the disaster of the White Mountain, she continued to correspond. When he was created Viscount Killultagh she wrote to him, "You have gotten the maddest new name that can be; it will spoil any good mouth to pronounce it right, but in earnest I wish you all happiness with it."³ With the dandy Earl of Carlisle, the Viscount Doncaster who had been James' envoy in 1619, she was on such close terms that she could fling at him one of her nick-names. The following is a letter to Carlisle in her liveliest strain:—

"Thou ugly, filthy, camel's face,

"You chid me once for not writing to you: now I have my revenge, and more justly chide you, for not having

¹ Letters and Negotiations of Sir Thos. Roe, p. 222 and p. 397.

² Reliquiæ Wottonianæ, p. 450.

³ Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 462.

heard from you so long as I fear you have forgot to write. I have charged this fat fellow [Sir Harry Vane] to tell you all this, and that I cannot forget your villany. He can inform [you] how all things are here, and what they say to the peace with Spain; and though I confess I am not much rejoiced at it, yet I am so confident of my dear brother's love, and the promise he hath made me, not to forsake our cause, that it troubles me the less. I must desire your sweet face to continue your help to us, in this business which concerns me so near; and in spite of you I am ever constantly,

"Your most affectionat friend,
"ELIZABETH." ¹

But the diplomatist with whom she seems to have corresponded most regularly was the fatherly Sir Thomas Roe. To "honest Tom" she would pour out all her woes; nor would she hesitate to tell him her private opinion of her father's disastrous policy. For his part, he and Lady Roe were ever filled with fervid devotion to the Queen. "My poore wife," he wrote, "is overjoyed to see her name in your Majesty's letter, and kysseth it, as it were alive. I should bee jealous of so much passion to anything but paper."²

From persons of either sex and of all ages the admiration was always the same. Elizabeth was "the best woman living," "the best of Queens and of women," "the Goddess of her sex," "the most incomparable lady of this age."³ And this loyalty to the Queen of Hearts was in composition as diverse as the subjects by whom it was professed. Some saw in her a princess in distress, others a martyr to Protestantism, others again a fair lady with a gracious

¹ Queen of Bohemia to Carlisle, June 12, 1630. Everett-Green, vol. v., pp. 482—3.

² Letters and Negotiations of Sir Thos. Roe, p. 313.

³ Balcanquell's Despatch, Oct. 8, 1620, Germany (States) S. P. Foreign; Sir D. Carleton to Roe, 1622, Letters and Negotiations, p. 69; Green, vol. v., p. 402.

bearing and a lively wit. The cult of Elizabeth was naturally most widely spread amongst her own countrymen in England. It was the Protestant fervour which predominated when parliament cruelly punished Floyd for daring to laugh at "Goodman Palsgrave and Goodwife Palsgrave" having to take to their heels and run away from Prague. And it was the romantic sentiment which principally induced the gentlemen of the Middle Temple solemnly to kiss a sword and vow to live and die in the Queen's defence.¹ But there were hundreds of Englishmen to whom such vows were not mere words and who volunteered to fight for Elizabeth's cause on the continent. One of these, Lord Cromwell, an officer in that army of Mansfeld which was left by the English government to starve in Holland, wrote home in the following gallant strain:—"We are in that disorder that we are weary of our life; yet to leave the Queen's service I will never; for misery with her sacred Majesty is a thing far exceeding any bliss else."² And "her sacred Majesty" also had her own pleasure in the adoration of those who came to fight for her. In 1622 she had written to Honest Tom:—"We have many volunteers here;... so as I am never destitute of a fool to laugh at: when one comes, another goes."³

The fame of one of these chivalrous admirers, Christian of Brunswick, has eclipsed that of all others. He was a distant cousin of Elizabeth through her mother, Anne of Denmark, and being a cadet of his family, had only been provided with the secularised Bishopric of Halberstadt. He has been already mentioned as among the principal Protestant generals, and he was perhaps the only one of them who sought no private gains and remained

¹ Nichol's "Progresses," vol. iv., p. 751.

² Everett-Green., vol. v., p. 442.

³ Letters and Negotiations, p. 74.

true to the cause without wavering so long as he lived. The objects for which he fought were proclaimed to the world on his standards: some bore the device, "Tout pour Dieu et pour Elle"; others "Alles für Ruhm und für ihr." He was a born fighter; and had taken part in the war "for God" and "for Glory" before it can have been "for Her." In all probability it was not till the royal fugitives had retired to Holland, that Christian first set eyes on Elizabeth. There is possibly truth in the story that the Prince then plucked a glove from the Queen's hand, and placing it in his helmet, vowed that there it should remain until he had restored her husband to his rights.¹ It is at any rate certain that he set out like a knight of mediæval romance to devote his services and if necessary his life, to the cause of the distressed Queen. On one occasion he was overheard to say that "his army was not in the field for the service of Frederic, but of Elizabeth, the great and brave Princess, to whom he had the honour to belong (gehören)."²

Christian, however, was very far from being a knight without reproach. In war he was, like Mansfeld, little better than a brigand chief. But if he was a bad general, he was at any rate as reckless of his own person as of his army. To his contemporaries he was simply "the mad Halberstadter"; but to later generations it is his "madness" that has raised him above the commonplace, self-seeking princes of the time. In 1621 Christian raised an army at his own expense. In the following year he twice suffered defeat. Of the second battle it was reported in England: "Brunswick had three horses killed under him. At last upon the fourth he was shot in the left

¹ Opel (in Sybel, *Historische Zeitschrift*, Bd. XXIII., p. 305) traces the story to Lotichius, *Rerum Germanicarum*, published A.D. 1646.

² Villermont quoted in *Zeitschrift für Preussische Geschichte*, 1869, p. 510.

wrist, yet continued divers houres fighting and with his owne hand (I say after the hurt) slue six men, but the hanging downe of his arme and holding his bridle occasioned the fire to come into it; by reason whereof when he came to Breda, his arme was faine to be cutt of.”¹ It was amputated amid the flare of trumpets; and whilst he was “devising how to make an iron arm for his bridle hand” he sent word to Elizabeth that he had still another arm and a life remaining for her service. In 1623 the iron-handed Prince collected another army and was again disastrously defeated. Having now exhausted his money and credit in the cause of the Queen, he was implored by his family to make his peace with the Emperor while yet the way lay open; but strengthening his purpose by visits to the Hague, he altogether refused to make any “servile submission”, and continued to maintain with Mansfeld a Protestant army in the North East of Germany.

What was the precise nature of Brunswick’s devotion to Elizabeth—a devotion that impelled him to such sacrifices in her behalf? His letters throw some light on the question. To his mother he wrote, “Angehende dass ich Lust zum Kriege habe, muss ich bekennen dass ich es habe; denn es mir angeboren noch wol haben werde biss an mein Ende, und wolte Gott ich hette es nicht. . . . Dass es aber geschehen, ist aus keiner ander Ursache gewesen als die grosse affection so ich gehabt habe zu der Königin in Bohemen.”² It was evidently no affection of which he could be ashamed. To Elizabeth he sent a letter apologising for his first defeat, which began as follows: “Madam, my dearest and most beloved Queen, the fault is not that of your most faithful and affectionate servant, who ever loves and cherishes you. I entreat you most humbly, not to

¹ Newsletter, Harl. MS. 389, f. 224.

² Wittich in Zeitschrift für Preussische Geschichte, 1869, p. 516.

be angry with your faithful slave for this misfortune, nor take away the good affection which your Majesty has hitherto shown me, who love you above all in this world." Then after continuing the letter in the same strain, he subscribed himself: "Your most humblest, most constant, most faithful, most affectionate, and most obedient slave, who loves you and will love you, infinitely and incessantly to death, Christian."¹

Elizabeth on her part certainly encouraged the Prince to devote his energies to the Protestant cause; and for the rest seems to have felt for him a cousinly affection. She begs him through Carleton not to expose his person, since the honour of a general is not that of a common soldier. In one of her letters to Roe, shortly after pathetically remarking, "I see it is not good in these days to be my friend, for they have ever the worse luck," she adds, "I must confess I am in a little trouble what will become of a worthie cosen germain of mine, the duc Cristian of Brunwic; he hath ingaged himself onelie for my sake in our quarrell."² But Frederic was still warmer in his praises: "God knows," he said, "that I love him like a brother."³

In 1625 Christian was for a time in disgrace. His name was connected with an act of downright brigandage that had been committed against an inoffensive merchant. Elizabeth was seriously displeased and refused to recommend the Prince for a vacant Knighthood of the Garter. "I find her Highness," wrote Carleton, "much afflicted with the accident; but her love to the person whom it most concerns is guided by this rule, 'dum quod re dignum est facis'; and she is no less troubled by his setting light by it, than with the thing itself."⁴

¹ Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 388.

² Letters and Negotiations, p. 74.

³ Bromley Letters, p. 20.

⁴ Everett-Green, vol. v., pp. 434—5.

It was not long, however, before "the mad Halberstadter" was forgiven. In September, before setting out to join the Danish army, he followed Frederic and Elizabeth to the island of Goeree, where they were hunting, and there he said farewell to the Queen for the last time.

In December Elizabeth wrote to his sister Sophie: "Je voudrois bien sçavoir comment notre tres cher cousin le Duc Christian se porte, car il y a long temps que je n'ay eu de ses nouvelles." About the same time Christian was himself complaining to the same Sophie that he had been forgotten by the Queen. His sister's reply is alone extant: "Eure Liebden die müssen solche *opinion* von der *Belle* nicht haben, dass sie Ew. L. solte vergessen haben; denn ich weiss besser; denn ich bekomme schier kein schreiben von ihr, oder sie gedenkt Ew. L. daerinne; daruf mügen sich Ew. L. woll versichern; denn sie traget Ew. L. noch gross *affection* zu." Then on the margin she added, "Mon cher frère, je bois a vous la santé de la belle."¹ A few months later the young prince—he was but 27 years old—was carried off by a fever.

Yet one more admirer of the Queen remains to be mentioned. William, the first Lord Craven, was as prominently connected with the later years, as was Christian of Brunswick with the earlier period of her exile. Craven was no less quixotic than Brunswick in his devotion to the Queen, and he also first distinguished himself in her cause by service in the field and by his personal daring. But the two men were of very different species. While Brunswick reverted to the Middle Ages for his ideal of chivalry, Craven was a knight of the modern order. Just as in his old age he made the suppression of fires in London his philanthropic profession, so until the death of the Queen of

¹ Wittich, *op. cit.* pp. 521—2.

Bohemia he devoted the vast wealth which he had inherited, as well as his own personal services, to alleviating the lot of Elizabeth and her family. So far indeed was his self-sacrifice carried, that some have sought to explain it by supposing a secret marriage to have taken place between the royal widow and "the little lord" who was ten years her junior. But the suggestion is not confirmed by facts, and Craven seems to have regarded himself as being sufficiently rewarded by the gratitude of one who was not only a lady in distress, but also a Queen.

If any proofs were really necessary of the entirely Platonic character of Elizabeth's numerous friendships, they might be found in her whole-hearted devotion to her husband while he was alive and to his memory after his death. In Carleton's words she was "a tender wife whose care of her husband doth augment with his misfortunes."¹ When Frederic was away at the wars she was miserable; when he returned, her welcome "proved rather an ecstasy than a meeting;" and when she realised how greatly his hardships had changed his countenance, the woman who had endured the flight from Prague with greater courage than the men, "swounded divers times together."²

So long as he lived, Frederic was never separated from Elizabeth without exchanging letters as affectionate and as numerous as in their earlier years. His letters are the only side of the correspondence that has been preserved. They are not the productions of a great intelligence. Loosely strung together are items of gossip and political news, plain statements of his own occupations, and small talk about clothes and domestic worries. Everywhere, however, the reality of his affection is brought out by the small touches: he remembers her birth-day, he wishes she were hunting

¹ Carleton's Despatch, Aug. 23, 1622, Harl. MS. 1580. f. 243.

² Harl. MS. 389. f. 245.

by his side, or he assures her that she never leaves his thoughts.¹

Scarcely a year of their exile passed without a son or daughter being added to the Palatine family. But the Queen saw little of her children. Some of the elder ones remained for long at Berlin in the charge of their grandmother, Louisa Juliana. For the younger ones a royal nursery was established at Leyden. There they could be reared more cheaply than at the Hague. Elizabeth was too much preoccupied by her own troubles and pleasures, and her offspring was too numerous for there to exist between them any very intimate sympathy. The children were treated much as she herself had been in her girlhood. Care was taken that they should be brought up strictly, and they were provided with a sound religious and general education. For two of her sons, however, she seems to have felt a special affection—Rupert, the passionate boy who had been born in the days of her magnificence at Prague, and Frederic Henry, her first-born.

Englishmen loved to imagine that their other Prince Henry had come to life again in this latter boy, so full of promise and so devoted to military exercises. Perhaps it is possible even now to trace the resemblance in a childish letter which the nine year old Frederic Henry wrote to King James:—

“Sr.

“I kisse your hand. I would faine see yo^r Ma^{tie}. I can say Nominativo hic, haec, hoc, and all 5 declensions, and a part of pronomen, and a part of verbum. I have two horses alive that can go up my stairs, a black horse and a chestnut horse.

“I pray God to bless your Majestie.

“Your Majestie’s Obedient Grand-child,

“FREDERIC HENRY.”²

¹ Von Aretin, *Beytrage*, vol. vii., pp. 172—209, and 260—278; Bromley *Letters*, pp. 5—66.

² *Letters to King James the Sixth*. Maitland Club. 1835.

Certainly the fate of Elizabeth's eldest son was as sad as had been the fate of her eldest brother. In 1629, a few days after his fifteenth birthday, the Prince was taken by his father to inspect the Dutch fleet which had just returned from a successful expedition in the West Indies. As the party was returning by water from Amsterdam, their boat suddenly came into collision with another vessel. Frederic himself was saved by a sailor. But the young Prince was drowned. "Mediis tranquillus in undis" had been the favourite motto of the boy in his troubled youth, the motto which he had cut with a diamond on his window-pane. On the next day his body was washed ashore. But the cries of his son, calling "Save me, Father, save me", never ceased to ring in Frederic's ears. ¹

The summer and autumn of these dark years were chiefly spent by the ex-King and Queen in hunting in the country. At Rhenen on the wooded bank of the Rhine, Frederic had diverted his mind from brooding over his misfortunes by planning and building a neat house after the Italian manner—his "Palazzo Renense", as it was christened. Here he would escape from the hateful *canaille* of the Hague, and, alone with his wife, enjoy the peaceful life of the country. "Here," wrote the Queen a few weeks before the birth of Sophia, "they are hunting as hard as they can, and I think I was born for it, for I never had my health better in my life." ²

The year 1630 which saw the birth of Sophia, was a turning-point in the history of the Thirty Years' War. In the spring, Frederic had contemplated making a humble confession of his past sins, and surrendering his own rights

¹ Benger, vol. ii., pp. 260—1; *Commentaire de la Vie et de la Mort de Messire Christophe Vicomte de Dohna*. p. 303.

² Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 484.

to the Palatinate in favour of his children. By the winter he was once more buoyant with hope. The Emperor had been compelled by the Electors to dismiss Wallenstein, and Gustavus Adolphus had landed in Germany. In the Swedish King the Protestants found for the first time a statesman who could unite Lutherans and Calvinists, and a general who could lead his troops to victory. Throughout 1631 Gustavus pursued his conquering course in Northern Germany. At the opening of 1632 Frederic joined the army of the great King, and thus had the satisfaction, first of seeing the Swedes recover from the Catholics a large part of the Palatinate, and then of accompanying them on their victorious march to Munich, where he inspected "the handsome house of his good cousin", the Duke of Bavaria. Elizabeth did not pretend to pity Maximilian. To "Honest Harry" (Sir Henry Vane) she wrote, "The King of Sweden doth but pay him for what he lent us." ¹

But this elation did not last long. In the autumn Frederic was back again in the Palatinate, wandering about its wastes and ruins, still as a mere private person, still forced to assuage his impatient spirit with unsubstantial promises; for Gustavus, in spite of his good will to the Bohemian King, was too businesslike to put into his incapable hands either the reconquered territory or an army. Frederic felt keenly the refusal of Gustavus. His letters to his wife during the autumn show that he was melancholy and depressed. He could not withstand, as she had successfully done, the buffetings of fortune. The reverses of the last twelve years had left their mark both upon his spirit and his person. Already his heavy countenance and listless eyes showed him to be a worn-out man.

In November he was seized with a fever at Mainz. Then

¹ Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 502.

came the news that the hero King, on whom, for the last two years, Frederic had based his political hopes, was lying dead on the field of Lützen. For a few days Frederic struggled with his plague-like sickness. He wrote to Elizabeth cheerily telling her that the fever had left him, and adding that could he but live to see her once again, he could die contented. But a few days later, on November 29th, 1632, he expired. He died as he lived, confident in Providence, and full of thoughts for his wife and children.

Unfortunate as ever, Frederic has been severely treated by historians. But with those who study him as a man, rather than as a political agent, the indignation called forth by the folly with which he lightly plunged Europe into war, and the irritation naturally aroused by his obstinate yet weak ambition which prevented all peace, may well be buried in a profound compassion. Endowed by nature with sufficient intellect to fit him to play the part of a country squire, educated to be a fervent Calvinist and an elegant courtier, the man could scarcely help foundering amid the storm of European politics. He strove in vain to fit himself for his task. But he could never learn to see beneath the outer surface of men and things political. It would have needed a miracle to translate him into a leader either in peace or in war.

The very virtues of Frederic's private character were his bane in public life. His actions were ever intended to be for the best. It was a sense of religious duty which impelled him to his original mistakes. It was a sense of personal honour and of what was owing to his children which forbade him to recover his position by a timely submission. And not the least important of his injurious excellences must be reckoned his devotion to his wife. Frederic was wont affectionately to call Elizabeth his "Star":

but it was a malign influence that she unconsciously exercised on her husband's life. Without reverting to the part taken by Elizabeth in persuading him to accept the fatal crown, it may be said that it was largely for the sake of Elizabeth's society that he neglected his opportunities for infusing new life and order into the Bohemian revolt: that it was in order to be with Elizabeth that he refrained from joining the Bohemian army until it was in full retreat before the enemy, and that, by returning to Prague at the first opportunity, he was absent from the critical battle and thereby seemed to his soldiers and to the world to have repudiated his own cause. Moreover, it was because he could not endure to leave Elizabeth that he fled from Prague; and then it was in order to be with her at the birth of Maurice that he deserted his kingdom. It was in no small measure due to Frederic's respect for Elizabeth's wishes, and Elizabeth's English sympathies, that, contrary to his natural inclinations, he repeatedly signed away to James and Charles his freedom of action, and consumed ten years of exile in reliance on English promises that were never fulfilled. However, although it was to his wife that some of Frederic's misfortunes were due, it was from her also that his life derived almost all of its happiness.

It was when the exiled Queen was looking forward to her husband's early return to escort her again to their Palatinate, that it was suddenly announced to her that Frederic was dead. For three days she neither spoke nor slept, nor ate, nor cried. Men thought that she would not long survive Frederic.

Yet she was again to show that she was "inflexible to the blows of time."¹ She resolved to live in order to carry

¹ Everett-Green. vol. v., p. 536.

on Frederic's care for their children. When Charles, with an exquisite feeling, entreated his "dearest and only sister" to come and live with him at once that they might comfort each other, Elizabeth excused herself chiefly on the ground that "the last request that their father made me was to do all that I could for them [the children], which I wish to do so far as lies in my power, loving them better because they are his than my own."¹ Nor was her grief ephemeral. After five months she wrote to Roe: "though I make a good show in company, yet I can never have any more contentment in this world, for God knows I had none but that which I took in his company, and he did the same in mine."² So long as she lived her rooms were draped in black, and in memory of Frederic special days were set apart for fasting.

As soon as Elizabeth recovered from her first shock she began with her usual energy to agitate throughout Europe in the cause of Charles Louis, her eldest surviving son. To every prince who could be of any assistance she wrote, begging him to use his influence in procuring the restitution of the Palatinate that had been promised to her husband by Gustavus. She found no difficulty in picking up the thread of Frederic's diplomacy, since from the early years of their exile she had herself taken an important part in many of the negotiations. Charles I., in fact, had not disguised his opinion that "the grey mare is the better horse," and had been in the habit of dealing with his sister rather than with her husband.

Elizabeth intelligently appreciated the general situation of German affairs, and possessed decided views as to her own policy. In the first place she was for "tout ou rien."³

¹ Everett-Green, vol. v., pp. 512—4.

² Ibid., p. 516.

³ Ibid., p. 550. Elizabeth to Roe, 1636.

Her son must receive back the Upper and the Lower Palatinate as well as the Electoral privileges. In the second place, she would "rather have him restored by force than by treaty." Her correspondence with Archbishop Laud on this point is full of interest. "I do not think he [Charles Louis] will be restored fully," she wrote, "otherwise than by arms: sixteen years' experience makes me believe it." Then Laud remonstrated: "It cannot be all one to Christendom, nor to yourself, to have him restored be it never so honourably, by arms as by treaty. It may be there is soldier's council in this, Madam, but I am a priest, and as such, I can never think it all one to recover by effusion of Christian blood, and *without* it, provided that without blood right may be had." And to this Elizabeth replied: "I confess, as a woman and a Christian, I should rather desire it [the restitution] by peace, but I have lived so long amongst soldiers and wars, as it makes one to me as easy as the other and as familiar, especially when I remember never to have read in the chronicles of my ancestors, that any king of England got any good by treaties, but most commonly lost by them, and, on the contrary, by wars alone made good peaces. It makes me doubt the same fortune runs in a blood, and that the king my dear brother will have the same luck. I know your profession forbids you to like this scribbling of mine, yet I am confident you cannot condemn me for it, having hitherto seen little cause to have a contrary opinion, by my experience in this our great business: all I fear is that you will think I have too warring a mind for my sex; but the necessity of my fortune has made it." ¹

In the third principle of her policy she showed less common-sense. It was to England in particular that she

¹ Everett-Green, vol. v., pp. 552—3.

looked for the forces that were to reconquer the Palatinate. She did not realise that in England the courtiers and Puritans who had at one time rivalled each other in devotion to her cause, were now diverting their attention to their own insular troubles. But experience should have taught her that in German affairs English help was a broken reed on which to lean. It was largely a personal prejudice against the "ulcerous priest"¹ who was ruling France in the name of Louis XIII., which blinded her to the facts of the situation. Even after 1634 when the fortresses of the Palatinate, on being evacuated by the Swedes, had to be occupied by French troops on account of Charles' inability to supply men for the garrisons, Elizabeth continued to cherish the vain hope that her brother would one day send to the continent armies instead of ambassadors.

At length, in 1638, the Queen saw that for which she had long agitated, her son fighting for his own rights at the head of his own forces. The undertaking had been rendered possible by Lord Craven's generosity. But it was a desperate attempt; and the troops were easily scattered on the first occasion on which they came into contact with the enemy.

Elizabeth had done all that she could in her son's behalf, and had failed. The English King, moreover, on whose support her schemes had rested, soon after became involved in the troubles of the Great Rebellion. And so to Charles Louis, who was by this time of sufficient age, Elizabeth gradually resigned the management of his affairs.

The refugees had still to watch the fightings and negotiations of ten long years. But at length, in 1648, their rights were partially recognised, and by the treaty of West-

¹ Everett-Green, vol. v., p. 563, Elizabeth to Roe. Sept. 8, 1639.

phalia Charles Louis was restored to the Lower Palatinate and the Electoral dignity.

This Peace might have been expected to put an end to all Elizabeth's woes. Now her exile should have ceased, and she should have returned to the Palatinate to quietly live out the remainder of her life, surrounded by her family, and enjoying the wealth and high position to which she had been accustomed as a girl. How different was to be the reality! This year, 1648, but opened for Elizabeth a period of greater distress, of more complete misfortune than that which she had hitherto experienced. She was now to learn the hard pinch of genuine poverty, the cruel desertion of some of her own children, and the ruin of almost all her friends and kindred.

In January of the following year came the news of the execution of her brother, "Babie Charles", whom she could only remember as a weakly, affectionate boy. It was no ordinary bereavement to her, for with the abolition of the English monarchy, she was deprived of her chief means of subsistence. Until the outbreak of the civil war some £20,000 had been annually assigned her from England. The Parliament had then continued the grant at the rate of £12,000 a year—a favour which was in part a recognition of Elizabeth's sufferings in the cause of Protestantism, and in part the consequence of Charles Louis' adhesion to the Parliamentary cause, and of her own judicious refusal to flaunt her sympathy with the Cavaliers. But the allowances had never been regularly paid, and by 1649 the arrears due from England amounted to £100,000. Meanwhile her own debts at the Hague had risen to at least £50,000. And thus when the new-born Commonwealth at length entirely cancelled her pension, the exiled



*Carolus D.G.
ad Rhenum
Electoratus*



*Comes Palatinat.
Dux Bavariae
Heres, &c.*

Juan Gomez del Real

1697 et Exc.

CHARLES LOUIS, ELECTOR PALATINE.

Queen found herself in a hopelessly insolvent condition. With the slender allowance that she still received from the Dutch estates, she had to exist like other decayed gentry, living a life of comparative poverty amidst some faded show of earlier magnificence, and trusting to the forbearance of her creditors and to the generosity of her friends. Many of the latter, however, were themselves exiles and destitute. And when in 1653 the English estates of Lord Craven were confiscated by the Commonwealth, Elizabeth was probably as great a sufferer as "the little lord" himself.

As her revenue from England dwindled away, the exiled Queen naturally turned to the new source which seemed to have been presented just at the right moment by the recovery of the Palatinate. She besought her son to pay her the dowry that was her due from that territory. Charles Louis, however, had determined to nurse his lands back to prosperity; and was only prepared to hand over small sums to Elizabeth. The discord that ensued between the mother warmly begging for money, and the son coldly refusing it, is an unpleasant subject. Some short quotations from the correspondence will suffice to give an idea of the tenour of the whole. In 1653 Elizabeth wrote to Lord Craven whom she had sent to Heidelberg on her behalf:—"My Lord, I have received both your letters and find little comfort in them concerning my own particular; it may be my next will tell you I have no more to eat: this is no parable, but the certain truth, for there is no money nor credit for any; and this week if there be none found, I shall have neither meat nor candles. I know my son thinks that I should be rid of all my jewels, because he thinks he doth not deserve so well of me that he should share in them after my death, but that will do him no good, for I can leave to my children what he owes me,

which will trouble him more than my jewels are worth." ¹ In 1655 she writes to the Elector:—"I earnestly entreat you to do so much for me as to augment that money that you give me, and then I shall make a shift to live a little something reasonable. I pray do this for me, you will much comfort me who am in so ill a condition as it takes all my contentment from me." ² It is impossible not to sympathise with Elizabeth's indignation at the ungrateful parsimony of her son, which formed such a contrast to her own generosity. On the other hand, it is easy to understand the conduct of Charles Louis, who, while himself living on 3,000 guilders a year, was asked for 7,000 by his extravagant mother. But in the later developments of the dispute the Elector became ungracious beyond all excuse. He refused to restore her dower house, he sent her wine that was "stark naught" ³ (if Elizabeth's own account can be believed) and he even thought of taking from her some of the furniture at the Hague.

Charles Louis, of all Elizabeth's children, caused her the bitterest disappointment: but her family as a whole brought her small joy. Three, in addition to Frederic Henry, died in childhood. Of those that reached maturity, not one stayed by her side to the end. Their well-known careers—so varied and so unfortunate—are among the most pathetic pages of Stuart history. For a brilliant moment these pauper Palatines flashed across Europe. Then they died out, and left behind them no other trace of their existence than that mockery of their bright genius—the House of Hanover-Brunswick. Rupert and Maurice were seen heading the charging Cavaliers of England, or scouring the high seas as

¹ Everett-Green, vol. vi., p. 38.

² Bromley Letters, pp. 203—4.

³ Queen of Bohemia to Sec. Nicholas, Aug. 2, 1655, *Archæologia*, vol. xxxvii., p. 231.

royalist pirates. Maurice's ship was lost in a storm, and Rupert thenceforward vainly tried, amid the courtiers of Charles II., to forget the bitterness of his sorrows by commanding the English fleets and by devoting himself to scientific invention. Nor were the other sons less adventurous. Edward—"Wilful Ned" as Elizabeth called him—eloped with Princess Anne de Gonzague, a gay Parisian heiress, turned Catholic, then insulted the envoys of Cromwell at the Hague, and finally ended his days fighting for the French King. Philip, the youngest boy, began life by killing D'Épinay, a Frenchman who possessed—so the Palatine children thought—too great an influence over the Bohemian Queen, and died, when 28 years old, a soldier in the service of Venice. Or, if the fate of the daughters is regarded, there is the philosophic Elizabeth, the friend and correspondent of Leibniz, a handsome, portionless Princess whom the young Princes that passed through the Hague used to adore, but whom they were not allowed to marry, who, therefore, as Abbess of a Lutheran nunnery, consoled with good works her lonely old age. Or there is the playful brunette, Louise, a pupil of Honthorst and herself an artist of no small merit, she who, turning Catholic in 1657, stole secretly away from her mother's court, and died at the age of 88, after a happy life as Abbess of Maubuisson. And there is the pretty Henriette with her flaxen hair and her pink and white complexion, skilled in all the arts of housewifery and needlework, who was married to the Prince of Transylvania and died soon after she had reached her distant home. And, lastly, there is the lively Sophia, whose fate it was to be the ancestress of the Hanoverian Georges.

It must have been chiefly due to Elizabeth herself that not one member of her family was dull or commonplace. If such varied brilliancy were not the outcome of her Stuart

blood, then it must be attributed to the rigorous education with which the exiled Queen equipped her children, who, she knew, would have to make their own way in the world, and to the sharpening which their wits received when, after their manumission from the Leyden nursery, they were gathered round their mother at the Hague, a family party alive with gossip and practical joking.

And Elizabeth must also be held responsible for some of the unhappiness which came to her children. The family party broke up quickly. By 1657 all her sons and daughters had gone out into the world; and they had not been sorry to leave her side. Here truly is seen the great want in Elizabeth's character. She had overcome the blows of fortune by throwing herself with girlish impetuosity into the occupations and diversions of the moment. Thus with her brave spirits and gracious ways she had been able to charm all sorts and conditions of mankind. But the deeper side of her nature had been stunted; and hence it was that she failed to win the love of her own children. It was possible for Princess Sophia to declare that her mother cared in the first place for her monkeys and her dogs.¹

And yet the Queen of Hearts was by no means heartless. Her love for her husband had been deep and lasting. And for many others her affection had been neither slight nor transitory. Thus to Mary of Orange, the daughter of Charles I., she seems to have been much more warmly attached than to her own daughters. Elizabeth's letters in the later years of her life abound with references to this "deare Niece;" and when Princess Mary goes away the Hague becomes "verie dull."² The following letter is characteristic of the large correspondence which Elizabeth

¹ *Memoiren der Herzogin Sophie*, ed. Köcher, p. 34.

² *Archæologia*, vol. xxxvii., p. 241.

addressed to Nicholas, the secretary of the exiled Charles II. :—

“Mr. Sec., I ame verie glade your goute is departing. My colde is gone also, but before it left me I was verie angrie at it, for when my dear Niece came hither I coulede not go to her for my colde, nor she to me for her weariness, but yett we mett at last. I finde her verie leane and paile, which troubles me verie much; but if she will exercise enough, she will soon be well. After I had my first child I was just so, but I rumbled it away with riding a hunting. I tell her of it, but she is sadly lasie. I doe wish with all my heart the Dons woulde be wise, and not goe on their slow, slow pace, but make hast to take your incomparable master by the hands. There is no news heere, onelie that Mons. Chaunt is gone for France. I know not yett who comes in his place, which is all I write now to you from Your most affectionat frend,

“E R.”¹

It is from letters such as this and from the accounts of English visitors to the Hague who never omitted to kiss the Queen of Bohemia's hand, that we can obtain some insight into her life in her old age. Though poor and deserted, she nevertheless maintains the gracious dignity and outward show of royalty. She is equally reluctant to surrender the habits of her youth. Surrounded by her dogs, she leads the same active, sporting life as of old. To Montrose she writes from Rhenen in 1649, “How we pass our time here, is soon said, for all is but walking abroad and shooting, which now I have renewed myself in.”² Moreover, she takes as keen an interest as ever in current

¹ Queen of Bohemia to Sec. Nicholas, Nov. 18, 1655, *Archæologia*, vol. xxxvii., p. 239.

² Montrose Memorials edited for Maitland Club, p. 389.

politics. The execution of Charles I. has made her an uncompromising Royalist. When Montrose sends her his picture she hangs it in her bedroom to fright "the brethern."¹ As for Cromwell she cannot think of him without bitter jibes at "that arch-rebel," "his pretious highness." If he is not the "divell" himself, "sure Cromwell is the beast in the Revelations that all kings and nations doe worship." "There never was so great an hypocrit!" she exclaims; "I wish him as ill a new year as, I thank you, you wish me a good."²

But it is the old amusements that mostly occupy her thoughts. One week she reports that she has been "debauched in sitting up late to see dancing" and by "late" the gay old lady means five o'clock in the morning.³ At other times it is the maskings which to her seem never to have grown stale by repetition, that she records; or the comments of the dour Calvinist divines, or a miscellany of gossiping items that would make excellent copy for a modern society newspaper.

She is perfectly frank as to her likes and dislikes. Especially does she show her jealousy of the other ex-Queen, the clever Christina of Sweden. She reports that the latter persecutes the Archduke at Brussels "verie close with her companie, for you know he is a modest man. I have written the king some particulars of it which are rare ons."⁴ Unfortunately, these rare particulars are lost, but Elizabeth has great pleasure in mentioning at another time that "Queen Mother of Sweden is dead; her daughter seems much troubled at it, which makes her rap out with

¹ Montrose Memorials, p. 384.

² Archæol., vol. xxxvii., pp. 241; Evelyn's Diary, Edition 1879, vol. iv., p. 223; Montrose Memorials, p. 385.

³ Evelyn's Diary, vol. iv., p. 223.

⁴ Ibid., vol. iv., p. 222.

manie an oth.”¹ Elizabeth, the old lady of sixty, is unmistakably the same Elizabeth as in earlier days. Her merriness has not been abated by her years of poverty and misfortune. Her letters show that she can still crack her jokes with her elderly beaux. To Lord Finch she writes:—

“My lord,

“I assure you your letter was very welcome to me, being glad to find you are still heart whole, and that you are in better health, and your cough is gone: as to your appetite, I confess your outlandish messes are not so good as beef and mutton; I pray remember how ill pickled herring did use you here, and brought you many of your hundred and fifty fevers.

“As for the countess, I can tell you heavy news of her, for she is turned quaker, and preaches every day in a tub; your nephew, George, can tell you of her quaking, but her tub preaching is come since he went, I believe; I believe at last she will grow an Adamite. I wish your nephews had some of her pippins preserved in their noses; it would do them much good.”² And so the old dame rambles on hilariously.

Till 1660 the monotony of Elizabeth's life in Holland was greatly relieved by the society of the Royalist refugees. Then came the Restoration. Elizabeth had the pleasure of escorting her nephew on board the “Royal Charles” which was to carry him back to England; and she looked confidently forward to being asked immediately to share the new prosperity. But Charles II. had many claims, and the expected invitation did not arrive. Neither did Elizabeth receive the £20,000 which was voted to her by

¹ Archæol., vol. xxxvii., p. 225.

² Everett-Green, vol. vi., p. 51.

the Restoration Parliament. Lord Craven was sent over to England to expedite matters, but could effect nothing. It was no wonder then that when Prince Rupert, just a year after Charles had sailed from Holland, was passing through the Hague, he "found the poore woman very much dejected that I could not tell her the time she might expect to be sent for."¹

Five days later she resolved to take matters into her own hands, and to return to England, though uninvited. On the 19th May, 1661, the ex-Queen of Bohemia said farewell to the Hague which had been for forty years the home of her exile. As she was on her way from Delft to Delfthaven, a letter was put into her hands from the English Chancellor, Clarendon, protesting against her proposed journey, on the grounds that it was not desired by the king. Here, indeed, was a cold greeting! Yet Elizabeth felt that she could not return again to the Hague. She explained her intentions to her favourite son:—"I go with a resolution to suffer all things constantly. I thank God he has given me courage; I shall not do as poor neece, but will resolve upon all misfortunes. I love you ever, my dear Rupert."²

And so the ex-Queen of Bohemia stole back to England with a train of but twenty-six attendants in three vessels provided by the Dutch. After touching at Gravesend, she sailed up the Thames, and entered London by night, in order to prevent the world from noticing the coldness of her reception.

Truly this return of the Lady Elizabeth to England is a strange contrast to her triumphant departure half a century earlier. Then the banks of the Thames had been

¹ Hist. MS. Com., 11th Report., App. 5, p. 4. Rupert to Col. Will. Legge, April 24, 1661.

² Bromley Letttrs, p. 189.

lined by a cheering crowd. Then, together with hundreds of nobles and attendants, the young bride and bridegroom had been escorted by the veteran admiral of the Armada in an English fleet decked out with gaudy silks and velvets. Then there had been mad rivalry between Holland and the Rhenish lands in their preparations to honour the only daughter of King James. Then, too, all had been high hope for the newly confirmed alliance which was to make England a great power and secure the predominance of Protestantism in Europe.

And now, Elizabeth was leaving behind her on the continent little else than debts and disasters. The Palatinate shorn of its provinces, was still suffering from the ravages of the Thirty Years' War. Bohemia had lost its place as an independent nation to become the spoil of a foreign aristocracy and the Roman priesthood. And the Dutch who had provided Elizabeth with a refuge and with money, were in consequence, many of them, on the verge of bankruptcy. It had been with reason that the Queen had once observed "I see it is not good to be my friend."

And yet, in spite of her adversities and in spite of her wrinkles, it is not possible to mistake in this cheery undaunted old lady the Elizabeth of earlier days, the Queen who had won all hearts. The French ambassador who drove her from the Hague in his coach, thus described her to his master:—"Assuredly she cannot but be very useful to him (Charles II.), being a good creature, of a temper very civil and always equal, one who has never disoblighed anybody, and who is thus capable in her own person, of securing affection for the whole royal family, and one who, although a sexagenarian in age, preserves full vigour of body and mind. Although here she is in debt more than 200,000 crowns, to a number of poor creditors and tradespeople,

nevertheless, from the friendship they have for her person, they let her go without a murmur, and without any assurance of their payment than the high opinion they have of her goodness and generosity." ¹

Neither had Elizabeth lost in her forty-eight years' residence abroad the peculiarly English characteristics of her personality. Throughout her life she had looked at foreign politics through English glasses. Few except her fellow-countrymen had been included within the inner circle of her friendship. The English gentry on their part were devoted to Elizabeth because her education at Combe Abbey had made her one of themselves. They, at any rate, could appreciate her country love of fresh air, of sport and of animals, saved as it was from mere rusticity by her practical grasp of the political and social affairs of life, and by her natural enjoyment of art and literature in their lighter aspects. Her countrymen could appreciate, too, the frankness of her character, her combination of a somewhat rude frivolity with the severer virtues of the British matron. Thoroughly English, moreover, was Elizabeth's Protestantism. It could not be classified under any sub-heading. Her one great principle was an abhorrence of Romanism; and when two of her children became Papists, she could only wish that either she or they were dead. In fact Elizabeth was wholly English in a sense that had become rare at the time of the Restoration. She really belonged to an England in which neither Cavaliers nor Roundheads had a place. It had been right that during the early years of the German War, the whole nation, irrespective of party, had been wild with enthusiasm for the pupil of Lord Harington. If Elizabeth had come to the English throne (and for some years this had seemed a likely event),

¹ De Thou to Louis XIV., May 19, 1661, quoted in Everett-Green, vol. vi., p. 73.

England might well have seen another Elizabethan reign as prosperous as that which had gone before. If the daughter of James I. was inferior to the daughter of Henry VIII. and of Anne Boleyn in caution and in a regard for economy, she surpassed her in straightforwardness and in devotion to the Protestant cause, she rivalled her in the capacity to arouse admiration and enthusiasm. Although she would not have been able to resist the rising spirit of religious and constitutional freedom, yet she would almost certainly have prevented the movement from becoming revolutionary. She, at any rate, had been able to learn from experience that which her brother never mastered, the essential art of yielding. She had succeeded in preserving her good relations with the Parliament until it executed Charles I.; and at one time she had even submitted to receive from the Puritans a chaplain who should conduct her services without the help of the book of Common Prayer.

To the English people of the Restoration, however, the Queen of Bohemia was a stranger and an alien. Like a ghost from another world she moved about for nine months amongst the busy Londoners and the merry-making courtiers. Men used to see her at the theatre or the Opera attended by Lord Craven or by the King. Charles, when his aunt's return had become an accomplished fact, readily treated her with a dutiful regard; and ample supplies were promised for her present needs and her past debts.

For a time Elizabeth was entertained by the ever-faithful Craven at his home in the Drury Lane. Then in January, 1662, she rented a house of her own in Leicester Fields. But no sooner had the move been accomplished, than she was seized with a cold. Further complications set in; and on February 13th the life whose first appearance had been but scantily noticed amid the turmoil raised by Mel-

ville and his fellows of the Scottish Kirk, ebbed away in equal oblivion amid the wild dissipation of the restored Royalists.

On the night of the 16th, Elizabeth, the Winter Queen of Bohemia, was buried. The body attended by Prince Rupert, Lord Craven and a train of nobles was borne in torchlight state up the Thames to Westminster. While the burial service was being said in the dim Abbey, there raged outside a storm of wind and hail, of thunder and lightning, "such as never was seene the like in any man's memorie."¹ Then this Stuart Princess who had suffered so long and so bravely, was laid by the side of three other members of her ill-fortuned family—her grandmother, Mary Queen of Scots; her cousin, the Lady Arabella, who had died broken-hearted in the Tower; and her brother Henry, the companion of her childhood.

Note on the authorship of the "Memoirs Relating to the Queen of Bohemia. By One of her Ladies."

The "Memoirs" form a small duodecimo volume of 162 pages. They were privately printed. The story breaks off abruptly in the middle of an account of the Gunpowder Plot. On a fly-leaf of the copy in the Bodleian Library, someone (presumably a member of the Erskine family) has written a long note which begins as follows:—"This Fragment of Memoirs, relating to the Queen of Bohemia, was written by the Lady Frances Erskine, who commenced it about 1753 when she lived at Houghton Park in Bedfordshire. This Fragment was all that was ever printed of it. The continuation of it, in manuscript, was lost in the fire of Alloa, the family seat, 28th August, 1800." The note

¹ Evelyn, vol. ii., p. 143.

goes on to explain that the Lady Frances Erskine was the only daughter of John, 11th Earl of Mar, that she was born in 1715, and died in 1776.

It is probably on the strength of this note that the authorship of the *Memoirs* is commonly attributed to Lady Frances Erskine. This, however, leads to a misapprehension. The Lady Frances Erskine who devoted herself to the *Memoirs* in 1753 was the editor and not the author. There may be some doubt as to how far her work of editing was carried. She is certainly responsible for the notes where she compares the statements of "the Author" with those of other writers in the 17th century. Possibly she may have also to some extent manipulated the text and style. But there can be little doubt that the *Memoirs* are substantially that which they profess to be, the remembrances of one of Elizabeth's ladies.

The name of this lady I have not as yet been able to discover. It may be presumed that she was a member of the Erskine family to which King James repeatedly shewed his favour. This supposition receives support from the full account that is given (*Memoirs*, p. 40) of the quarrel between Queen Anne of Denmark and John Erskine, second or seventh Earl of Mar. The author gives a few autobiographical touches in the *Memoirs*. For instance, she writes (p. 42), "As the Princess had always honoured me with a greater familiarity and friendship than any of the other children who had been admitted to play with her, the Queen allowed her to take me to England with her; and as I loved her better than I did anybody, I obeyed with cheerful readiness, and never left my dear Mistress after that."

It is clear that since the author was about the same age as Elizabeth, and since the *Memoirs* are addressed to the author's grand-daughter, they must have been written long after the events which they describe. A few of the details

are slightly inaccurate; thus, Elizabeth is said (p. 42) to have "set out with the Queen" from Edinburgh, whereas in reality (as Calderwood's "History of the Kirk," p. 474, points out) the Princess was delayed by sickness, and did not leave till two days after the Queen. So, too, the Memoirs confuse Catesby with Digby. But on the whole the authoress appears to have enjoyed a memory that was both vivid and accurate. The picture of the young Princess is perhaps somewhat idealized, and the writer evidently intended the Memoirs to afford moral and historical instruction to "the Grand-daughter"; but if we may judge of the ability of the authoress from the clever characters which she draws of James and his wife, we may be sure that the portraits that we find in these pages of Elizabeth and of Harington, are as excellent as they are detailed.

MARY, PRINCESS OF ORANGE

DAUGHTER OF CHARLES I.



MARY OF ORANGE.

III

MARY OF ORANGE, DAUGHTER OF CHARLES I.

IN one of his Short Studies, Froude has urged an eloquent plea for the use of history as a means of acquiring a juster and more sympathetic conception of humanity. By digging in the past we accustom ourselves to take a more tolerant view of the present. We need not go, perhaps, outside the range of our personal experience to make ourselves familiar with "the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind," but we are bound to do so if we wish to see them in proper focus. Only when we pass judgment on our predecessors do we escape from the prejudices that colour our opinions of our contemporaries—though even then perhaps not wholly. The crimes that we read of still excite our disgust, but the criminals our pity; we hate the heresy, but come near to loving the heretics. So, too, with the brighter characters in the perennial drama. We grant their virtues unstinted admiration, but we steady our verdicts by a recollection of their shortcomings; we glory in their achievements, but no idealism blinds us to their failures.

Whatever may be said against this humanizing aspect of history, there can be no doubt of its value as an encouragement to read. The rise and fall of institutions, the birth and nurture of movements, their causes and effects—these things may represent the true functions of research; but for the most part we lack the breadth of mind and con-

centration of effort to fit us for grappling with a task that paralyses if it does not stimulate, that kills if it does not cure. Hence it is that the world still prefers to extract the history of a period from the history of its great men. We like better to read where the predilections of the writer are no sooner seen than corrected, than to be shown under-currents of thought and feeling, whose existence we had never suspected and which our ignorance renders us impotent to criticise.

But, whilst this fashion of grouping history round individuals has produced countless lives of kings and ambassadors, politicians and judges, soldiers and ecclesiastics, it has led to an undue neglect of the feebler sex. After the Elizabeths and Isabellas have been stolen to swell the ranks of statesmen, the remaining queens and princesses are left to perish in the cold; no one, for example, thinks of writing a life of Henrietta Maria in relation to the politics of her time. The works of Miss Strickland and Mrs. Everett-Green have, it is true, collected most of what there is to be said about the wives and daughters of our sovereigns, but this very completeness has obscured their portraits. We read the "Lives of the Queens and Princesses of England," not to estimate their political influences, but to enjoy their quaint manners and customs, their odd sayings, their unsuitable marriages, in short the gossip of their courts; and we suppose that we have fairly gauged their place in history when we have really confined them within the four walls of their palaces.

At the end of the Communication Gallery at Hampton court, hangs the portrait of a lady richly dressed in white satin covered by a red-feathered mantle, and wearing on her head a kind of turban also of white and adorned with red feathers. The face is more striking than beautiful. Deep brown eyes surmounted by thick eyebrows of the

same colour and a high forehead, when set off by the bright colour of the cheeks, produce an effect that goes far to explain the high reputation for beauty that the possessor enjoyed, if we recollect that she was a royal princess. For the lower part of the face is not so pleasing. The nose, as is not perhaps surprising in a Stuart, is too long; the lips are thick; the chin recedes. In spite of the air of hauteur, the features give the impression of weakness, almost of petulance. For the rest, the neck is long, the shoulders sloping, and the hands graceful, with long tapering fingers. The picture is labelled "Portrait of a Lady Unknown"; but it has now been identified as "The Princess of Orange in a feathered mantle, half-length, by Hanneman," in James II.'s catalogue.¹

Mary of Orange was born on Nov. 4th, 1631, at St. James' Palace, the eldest daughter and second child of King Charles I. and his Queen, Henrietta Maria. She was a sickly infant and narrowly escaped death a few weeks after her birth. Her early childhood was passed in London, under the care of Lady Roxburgh and Mrs. Bennett, respectively her governess and her nurse. In 1636 she was moved to Hampton Court, where she spent the greater part of her time till 1639, when, in company with her mother and brothers and sisters, she took refuge in Whitehall from the violence of the London mob. In the following year she acted as godmother to Prince Henry. But there is little to record of her childhood. The times were troublous and men had other things to think of than the doings of the little princess.

For those were days in which Strafford and Laud built up their great system of "Thorough" in Church and State.

¹ Law's Hampton Court Guide for 1900, p. 123. There are also portraits of Mary of Orange at Windsor and in private collections (see the article in the Dict. of Nat. Biog.).

Into the rights and wrongs of the constitutional dispute we have no occasion to enter here, but the increasing unpopularity of the king, to which it led, was destined to have a very powerful influence on the prospects of his eldest daughter. In 1637, when Queen Marie de Medicis visited England, bringing with her a proposal that Mary's younger sister Elizabeth should be betrothed to Prince William of Orange, the possibilities of an absolutist Government must have appeared considerable. Laud was, it is true, already engaged in his disastrous enterprise of introducing the Anglican ceremonial into Scotland, whilst Strafford's administration of Ireland was far advanced; but it had not yet become evident that the respective Calvinism and Catholicism of the lesser kingdoms were to find a battle-ground in the greater.¹ And so we are scarcely surprised to find King Charles receiving the Queen Dowager's overtures with something very like contempt.² It probably seemed to him almost an insult to suppose that the son of a Dutch stadtholder and grandson of Louise de Coligny was a fitting match for the descendant of the Stuarts and granddaughter of King Henry IV. of France. But by 1640 political developments had driven the king to a very different conclusion. The great system had been tried and found wanting. Strafford had been impeached and sent to the Tower; and his downfall had foreshadowed, if it had not involved, that of Laud. On the continent the anti-dynastic policy of Richelieu deprived the king of any hope of succour from the quarter whence he had most right to expect it; whilst, so long as the Scots remained invincible and hostile, the rebel Parliament could never be crushed. Under these circumstances the Dutch marriage, hateful as it was to the Queen, became a lamentable

¹ Seeley, "Growth of British Policy," vol. i., p. 351.

² Everett-Green, "Lives of the Princesses of England": Mary of Orange, p. 106.

necessity. In December Charles informed the Privy Council that he was prepared to give his second daughter, or even his eldest, in betrothal to Prince William. He did not add, as he might have done, that he hoped by this method to gain at all events a powerful mediator between himself and his subjects in the person of Prince Frederic Henry, the father of the bridegroom.¹ Whether he expected further the assistance of a Dutch army in England it is impossible to say, but by Jan. 6th, 1641,—the date of the first audience of the Dutch ambassadors—he seems to have made up his mind that, in case of necessity, he might rely on the Prince of Orange.² A fortnight later he gave another audience to the emissaries, and he stated that he was content that Princess Mary should be the bride and that he looked to the marriage for the basis of a political alliance against Spain. The envoys expressed a similar hope, but qualified it by saying that such a treaty could be of little avail unless the king could come to an amicable agreement with his Parliament. It may perhaps be inferred from this that the Dutchmen had divined Charles's idea of reducing his own subjects to obedience with the aid of an army from Holland; and, if this theory be correct, we must regard the introduction of Spain into the matter as a mere blind to cloak the king's real design.³ "Charles's habit," remarks Prof. Gardiner, "of regarding his own authority as something distinct from the nation, prevented him from feeling, as Elizabeth would have felt, that there was anything disgraceful in appealing to foreigners for assistance against his own subjects." Anyhow, three weeks later, during the debates on Episcopacy, Queen Henrietta confidently informed Rossetti that the young

¹ Gardiner, "Hist. of Engl." vol. x., p. 32.

² *Ibid.*, p. 47 and note on p. 48.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 53.

Prince of Orange was to come to the succour of his future father-in-law at the head of twenty thousand men.¹ Probably the Queen's wish fathered her thought, but at the same time it is only reasonable to suppose that she had some sort of foundation for her statement.

The second of May, 1641, saw the betrothal of the young pair (the marriage was not completed until Nov. 1643). The ceremony was very quiet, as was natural in the existing state of the king's fortunes and in view of the popular agitation against Strafford, at whose trial Princess Mary had been present in company with her parents a short time before.² The service was performed at the Chapel Royal by Bishop Wren of Ely. Not long afterwards the Prince left England to rejoin his father.

As may well be supposed, the union gave rise to a good deal of comment. The court was determined to believe that the king had made immediate pecuniary assistance the price of the marriage; a view which is borne out to some extent by the fact that Charles was at this time transmitting money to York.³ Abroad, much surprise was expressed that the head of the House of Stuart should have allowed his daughter to wed into a family that lacked royal blood. In France, surprise gave place to indignation; it was disgraceful, men said, that the granddaughter of King Henry should have to be content with so poor a match. It was regarded, too, as very significant that the young bridegroom had been appointed head of the Dutch embassy in order thereby to raise his status at the English court.⁴ In our own days, however, Mary would probably have been considered a very fortunate

¹ Gardiner, vol. x., p. 84.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 110, 111.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

princess, for William from the first seems to have had an almost passionate admiration for his *fiancée*. If he was not strictly handsome, he was at any rate energetic, courageous, well-bred, and well-educated. He could speak, we are told, five languages—Dutch, English, French, Italian, and Spanish;—no small accomplishment in the seventeenth century. Anyhow, so far as domestic happiness could make it so, the match proved eminently successful. There is no record of any disagreement or misunderstanding between the Prince and his wife, whilst each gave conspicuous proof of devotion to the other. When they were separated, he wrote to her frequently and with unremitting expressions of anxiety as to her welfare. For a measure of her affection we have only to recall the scene at his death-bed, when Mary, from whom the truth had been withheld till the last, threw herself upon the corpse in a fit of frantic and uncontrollable despair; an incident that found an almost exact parallel in the behaviour of her son on the death of his wife. In fact, when we remember that William and Mary had never seen each other before their engagement and that they were betrothed off-hand at the respective ages of fifteen and ten, we cannot but feel that on this occasion the Fates were singularly kind.

On William's return to Holland, Mary was left behind in England, for, by the provisions of the marriage treaty, she was not to be taken from her father's charge until she reached the age of twelve. These provisions included, further, the promise of a marriage portion of £40,000, payable in sums of £10,000 every half-year until completed, and guarantees from the Prince of Orange that the young princess should have the free use of her religion, the servants her father should choose for her, so long as they did not exceed forty in all (twenty-six men and fourteen

women), and her household expenses paid, with £1,500 a year pocket-money. In the event of her husband's death she was to have £10,000 a year for her dower and two palaces at the Hague and Breda, which were to be entrusted to English commissioners for security of payment. Under these arrangements Mary should, as has been shown, have remained in England till 1643, but the serious condition of the King's affairs and especially his want of money obliged a change of plans. On Feb. 4th, 1642, Charles learnt that the Prince of Orange declined to mediate between him and the Parliament;¹ and this determined the queen to go in person to Holland and solicit arms, men and money from that country and from France. Some plausible excuse for this step was needed and no better suggested itself than the delivery of Mary to her prospective husband. So on Feb. 23rd Henrietta and her daughter set sail from Dover, whilst the king, overcome with melancholy, rode along the coast so as to keep the departing ship in sight as long as possible. After a bad passage, the voyagers reached Hounslerdike on the first of March. The general condition and especially the politics of the country, in which Mary had now become the first lady, compel us to make a brief digression.

When Louis XVI. received the news of the capture of the Bastille he remarked that it was a revolt. "No, Sire," was Liancourt's famous reply, "it is a revolution." An equally candid and far-seeing courtier might have employed the same words to King Philip II. of Spain with no less truth, when in 1572 the town of Brill was captured by a few Dutch sailors. It seemed a small flame, but it was destined to raise a mighty fire. The smouldering opposition of the Netherlands to the civil and religious tyranny of the Spaniards blazed up at once into armed resistance, and

¹ Gardiner, p. 422.

from that time the little low-lying state asserted with an unflinching determination the new doctrine of the responsibility of kings, that was to revolutionise the world. The long and heroic struggle is familiar in some degree to everyone, for it had widespread European effects. It established Protestantism on a secure basis, it put an end to the dreams of universal empire that were at that time entertained by the Hapsburgs, and it gave a *coup de grâce* to the famous bull of Alexander the Sixth. But its internal results were not less remarkable, for it exerted an immense influence over the characters of the Dutch themselves. As Mr. Wakeman has admirably put it, "Slowness and obstinacy became refined into patience and endurance, dulness into obedience, sloth into fidelity."¹ But amongst the gallery of heroes, that were the offspring of the rebellion, one figure will always stand out pre-eminent. William the Silent was the mainspring and mainstay of the revolt—its statesman in the council, its general on the battle-field—and his fortitude and courage have won for him an undying fame that will ever be the true measure of his services. For those services were not repaid in any material shape. He chose to die Prince of Orange, and the offer of the crown was not renewed to his descendants. It required in those days some great peril or distress to provoke the Dutch to desire a king. Unlike the Israelites, the possession of a national dignitary exercised no fascination over their minds. And so, whilst the crisis of their struggle for independence saw them eagerly seeking a ruler and pressing the sovereignty of their country now upon William, now upon Elizabeth of England, now upon the Duc d'Anjou, in 1650 Princess Mary and her husband found them setting their faces the other way with provoking obstinacy. If the

¹ Wakeman, "Ascendency of France."

truth be told they regarded a monarch more or less in the light of a commercial speculation. If he served to bring them a valuable political alliance or to consolidate their strength by enlarging their boundaries,¹ he was worth having; if he did not, the sooner he was put out of the running the better. The principle savours a little too much of the huckster for our taste, but the Dutch were essentially merchants.

As a result of these heterodox opinions, the United Provinces possessed an unique constitution. Each of the seven confederates was entitled to send as many deputies as it pleased to the assembly of the States-General, but for voting purposes it only possessed one voice. Although in theory the functions of sovereignty rested with this body, in practice the constituencies exercised so close a supervision over their representatives that on all important matters there was a referendum to the provincial assemblies. But these local parliaments, whose members were appointed by the municipal councils, were in their turn dependent on the small burgher aristocracies of the towns. As may well be supposed, such a system of Government, qualified by the proverbial characteristic of the Dutchman, seemed to the outsider to be nothing less than an organised delay. The States-General did not, probably could not, make an effective point of union for the provinces; and the want was supplied in times of danger by the House of Nassau. Each province was empowered to appoint a stadtholder or chief magistrate, and by degrees five or six out of seven of these offices were entrusted to the Princes of Orange: the central Government was accustomed at the same time to appoint them Captain and Admiral-General of the na-

¹ If William the Silent had accepted the sovereignty he would probably have ruled the whole of the Netherlands, except the Walloon Provinces. See Thorold Rogers' "Holland," p. 109.

tional forces. Invested with these dignities, they became the first subjects of the Republic and the leading members of the Council of State. This Council, which voted by heads, contained twelve deputies; two each from Guelderland, Zealand, and Friesland, one from Utrecht, Overyssel and Gröningen, and three from Holland. As may be inferred from this uneven representation, the seven provinces were of very different importance. Guelders was dominated by a nobility of small means; Friesland supported a maritime population of democratic sympathies; Utrecht, once part of an episcopal principality, retained the ecclesiastical interests that under a new form were to make it famous in the coming century. Gröningen and Overyssel on the West presented a strong contrast to Holland and Zealand on the East. Whilst the former were badly situated for naval enterprise, the latter possessed magnificent seaboard and a perhaps unparalleled inland water-way. Indeed the weight of Holland amongst the provinces cannot well be exaggerated. Amsterdam is still known by its title of the Venice of the North, and was at that time the object of a furious jealousy both at home and abroad. Whitelocke records how "the rest (of the provinces) are jealous of Amsterdam as if they (that is, the burghers) designed... to domineer over all other towns."¹ The famous bank of the city had replaced those of Venice and Genoa and was credited with metallic deposits to the amount of \$180,000,000,² a sum which in those days was considered vast. From Amsterdam, too, the Dutch East India Company had obtained one-half of its capital.³ Of the other towns of Holland, Rotterdam and Delft were of course great commercial centres, Leyden was the home of an university which in

¹ Whitelocke's Memorials, June 1651.

² Thorold Rogers' "Holland," p. 222.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

its best days was preferred to the older foundations at Oxford, Cambridge, and Paris;¹ and the Hague, in virtue of being the seat of Government, was regarded as the capital of the United Provinces. In Holland, moreover, the great agricultural industries of the country—cattle-farming and market-gardening—were developed to their fullest extent. A province which towered so easily above its fellows in importance was bound to take a leading part in the politics of the confederation. Possibly a natural rivalry with Zealand, where lay for the most part the private territories of the House of Orange, more certainly the purely commercial interests of the burgher merchants, made its chief official the head of the opposition. Whilst the stadtholders instinctively preferred a state of war with its opportunities of military distinction and personal aggrandisement, the Grand Pensionary of Holland represented the pacific ambitions of the trading class. Religious differences, moreover, had tended to divide the nation into two parties. That of the Princes of Orange included, besides the soldiery and the depressed populace of town and country, the Calvinist ministers; whilst, on the other hand, the municipal aristocracies, asserting their superior enlightenment, favoured the doctrines of Arminius.

There is a certain danger that the stakes for which the Court party (for so it is convenient to call the adherents of the stadtholders) were playing, may be under-estimated; Holland in our own days occupies such a very different position in the European system from that of the United Provinces in the seventeenth century. For at that time the Dutch were justly entitled to be called the pioneers of Europe. Their wealth was prodigious, their colonial enterprise unsurpassed, their military organisation so good that

¹ Thorold Rogers' "Holland," p. 220.

their army was regarded as an excellent training-ground for young officers from other countries,¹ their navy so well-equipped as to be a match for our own, and their merchant-vessels so numerous that they came near to monopolising the carrying-trade of the world.² The names of Paul Potter, Ruysdael, Cuyp and Rembrandt in art, of Vondel in poetry, of Grotius in diplomatic theory, of Spinoza and Descartes in philosophy, are sufficient to recall their amazing intellectual fertility; whilst the mention of Linschoten, Barendz and Van Tromp (though the first two carry us back into the preceding century) is enough to prove that physical did not lag behind mental energy. It might be safe enough to sneer at the Princes of Orange when they held only the chief magistracy; could they but arrogate to themselves the title of king in such a state, no power could afford to incur their enmity. Unfortunately, the wealthy element in the country was strongly opposed to any such measure, and the pertinacity of the burghers was fully a match even for that of the descendants of William the Silent. Still for the present the Fates seemed kindly. Prince Frederic Henry had exchanged the title of Excellency for that of Highness; his son took another step in the right direction when he married the Princess Royal of England.

We left Mary as she was entering her new home. At some little distance from the Hague she was met by the Prince of Orange, and by her aunt Elizabeth, the widowed Queen of Bohemia, who, with her family, was living in retirement in Holland. A kind of procession was then formed, and amid the cheers of the townsmen, who had managed

¹ Lefèvre-Pontalis, "John de Witt".

² "The Dutch, according to the saying of a contemporary, had made themselves the common carriers of the world." *Ibid.*, p. 10.

for the time to shake off their antipathy to crowned heads, the young Prince conducted his bride and her mother to their lodging in the New Palace. Mary spent the next six weeks in making the acquaintance of her new relatives. Frederic Henry, her father-in-law, was the son of William the Silent by his fourth wife Louise de Coligny. He had early distinguished himself under the leadership of his brother Maurice, and in 1625 had succeeded him as stadtholder. To a prudent genius in war he united some talent for government. He won the affections of his people, and added considerably to their wealth, by a religious moderation that permitted the return of the Jews, and gained for himself the reputation of being one of the ablest of an able race. Having set a wise limit to his ambitions he succeeded in realising them. For himself he obtained an increase of dignity, for his son a royal princess, and for his people a satisfactory conclusion to a war that had lasted over half-a-century. In the presence of his daughter-in-law, he always exhibited a decorous respect, never approaching her but bare-headed and with a reverence.¹ Such conduct can hardly have tended to soften the feelings of his wife towards the Princess Royal.

No-one, indeed, disliked Prince William's match more than his mother. Born of a noble German family, Amelia de Solms had been maid-of-honour to Elizabeth of Bohemia, from which position she had risen to be Princess of Orange. Essentially a capable woman, her good qualities were to some extent impaired by a pronounced affection for power and money. "La Princesse," wrote Mazarin, "estant altière et ambitieuse au point qu'elle l'est, mettra tout en oeuvre pour conserver du credit et pour avoir part au gouvernement."²

¹ Manley's "Life of the Duke Gloucester and Princess Mary," p. 14.

² G. van Prinsterer, "Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau," Deuxième Série, tome iv., p. 147.

To her avarice the French diplomatists bore frequent testimony. They accused her of taking bribes from Spain to use her influence over her husband and persuade him to secure for them a peace with Holland. That she did obtain lands from the Spaniards there seems to be little doubt.¹ It does not, however, follow that there was anything very wrong, according to the ideas of the age, in the transaction. The Princess's enemies no doubt called it a bribe, but her friends would have described it as a present. Moreover, the evidence of a baffled diplomatist must not be accepted without reserve. Few men are eager to do justice to their adversaries at the expense of their own reputations; and they are the less so when their official despatches constitute the only outlet for their vexation. An examination of the correspondence of Mazarin's emissary with his master leaves us with the impression that Princess Amelia did not always have the worst of it. "Nos conférences. . . ressemblent à la fièvre tierce," wrote Servien, "il y en a toujours une bonne et l'autre mauvaise."² "S'il y avait de la fermeté dans son esprit, je penserois souvent de l'avoir guignée, mais à la visite suivante je luy trouve l'esprit flottant."³ He puts the caprice down to the influence of a hostile favourite, but we are inclined to think that the Princess was really a good deal sharper and more definite in her intentions than he was ready to admit or perhaps realised. If our view of her character be correct she was the only politician in the country who saw, or at any rate who chose to see, its real place in the European system. A temporising neutrality with a view towards Spain was, as will presently be shown, the true policy for the United

¹ G. van Prinsterer, "Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau," v., p. 170.

² Ibid., p. 185.

³ Ibid., p. 183.

Provinces; and this was precisely the course that the Princess of Orange seems to have favoured.

If she aspired to give a Dutch rendering of Elizabethan diplomacy she could scarcely have played her cards better. Though Mazarin regarded her throughout as a dangerous force, he hesitated to declare open war against her, and in the end she got her way, contriving to throw over the French and conclude a treaty with Spain without damaging the *entente cordiale* between France and the Netherlands. She may have taken presents or bribes or whatever we may like to term them, from her various political suitors; it makes no real difference to our judgment of her, if she was pursuing a preconceived line of action. People were not more scrupulous in those days than they are in these, and Amelia probably saw no particular harm in serving her country and herself at the same time, as it happened to be convenient. But we need not limit out praise to a recognition of her talent for intrigue. Alone, amongst the members of the House of Orange, she grasped the trend of public opinion. Holland was incomparably the most important of the seven provinces. "It contributed," says Captain Mahan, "five-sixths of the fleet and fifty-eight per cent of the taxes and consequently had a proportionate share in directing the national policy."¹ In 1647 it added to its traditional hatred of the House of Orange, a violent dislike to the war that was evidently being prolonged only in the interests of that family, though mainly supported by the purses of the Hollanders. Princess Amelia realised that there was no object in alienating further the sympathies of the merchants when hostilities had ceased to be of a kind to serve her husband's interests. If the crown had not been granted in the crises of the War of Independence, it was not likely

¹ Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power upon History," p. 68.

that it would be given when Spain had ceased to be dangerous and a great victory was almost out of the question. She saw that the stadtholders would never be exalted to the throne, if they allowed their ambition to govern their prudence; they must swim with public opinion, not struggle against it. It is said that on the death of William II. a medal was struck by his enemies representing him as Phaethon falling from his chariot, and bearing the inscription, "Magnis excidit ausis"¹: he would have escaped the sneer had he followed the counsels of his mother. Altogether, Amelia de Solms was a remarkable woman, who would possibly have raised high her own name and that of her country, had she possessed a free hand. As grandmother of William III., and responsible in some sense for his education, she has at least a claim upon the recognition of Englishmen. But between 1648 and 1660—the period of Mary's political influence—we see her at her worst. Her antipathy to her daughter-in-law, arising originally from a very feminine pique at the difference in rank, was destined to lead her astray. After William's death she is the bitterest and most inveterate foe of the Princess Royal, and her jealousy completely obscures her patriotism. But this is no reason why we should ignore her great qualities. "She is a woman," said Sir William Temple, and he was no bad judge, "of the most wit and good-sense in general that I have known."²

Of the minor characters at the court little need be said. Mary's confidence was mainly bestowed upon the superintendent of her household, John Van der Kerkhoven, lord of Heenvliet, and his wife, Lady Stanhope. Heenvliet was the son of a professor at Leyden and had been employed as ambassador to England, where he met and married the

¹ Lefèvre-Pontalis, p. 58.

² Ibid.

widowed mother of the second Lord Chesterfield, who returned with him to Holland. On Mary's arrival in the Netherlands her father and mother could think of no-one better suited to be her governess than this lady, and she was consequently appointed to that position. In later days Charles II. accused his sister of being governed by her attendants—a charge which provoked an indignant denial.¹ However this may have been, Lady Stanhope was not over-officious in her scholastic duties. A letter of her pupil, written in 1642, is still extant, in which the spelling is doubtful and the writing atrocious.² But it is at least not long, and the reader may judge of its literary merits for himself:—

“Deare lady Lillies,” (she writes)

“Belieue me I have not forgott you for nott writing to you. I loue you as well as euer I did and Prays you to continue your letters: for neuse, I pray do not expete eny from me, for I hieere not butt what comes from you, the Queene, and the Princes of Orange, and I hes had a Presant from the East Endy house; soe Pray Belieue I am constantly,

deare lady Lillies,

Your most feathfull and louing freand,
MARIE.”

“Haye this 8 of

“December 1642

“For my dear lady

Lillies Drummond.”³

Amongst the members of her husband's family, Mary was intimate with Louis of Nassau, lord of Beverwaert, a natural son of Maurice of Orange,⁴ who seems in general to

¹ Everett-Green, p. 193.

² Ibid., p. 135.

³ Quoted by Everett-Green, p. 134.

⁴ Lefevre-Pontalis, p. 61.

have guided her policy after William's death. The influential friends of the Princess Dowager were her two sons-in-law, the Elector of Brandenburg and Count William Frederic of Nassau, Stadtholder of Friesland. The latter had an excellent presence and fair abilities. He was, however, regarded with jealousy by the State and failed to achieve the success that he had much reason to expect. He took care, we are told, to be acquainted with all that was going on; he was a man of lofty ideals (*de grand cœur*) and consequently of high pretensions. But whatever he might have effected for his own or his nephew's interests was frustrated by the incurable ill-feeling between the two princesses. Neither of them trusted him or would give him her confidence. Excluded from the counsels of his family and feared by the anti-Orange party, he found himself practically reduced to a position of impotence. Of course, at the time of Mary's landing, parties were not yet defined, and under the strong hand of Frederic Henry, such ill-feeling as existed was to a great degree suppressed. Moreover, for the moment, foreign affairs were the magnet that held the public attention.

The lifetime of Mary of Orange coincides, curiously enough, with what Seeley has called "the age of the Cardinals." Between 1630, when Richelieu had established himself sufficiently to allow of his turning his attention to foreign affairs, and 1661, the date of the death of Mazarin, was enacted that great national and international drama, which laid the French nobility at the feet of the French king and dissipated for ever the aspirations of the Spanish Hapsburgs. Amid the ruins of the empire of Philip II. rose that of Louis XIV.

It was a momentous epoch for France and for Europe, and we can attempt to indicate its varied aspects only

so far as they concern the United Provinces. For during those thirty years the motive power in international policy was subjected to a great change at the hands of Richelieu. Hitherto it had been religious; henceforth it is colonial and commercial. Until this time, if we set aside the transitory supremacy of Sweden during the Thirty Years' War, the Dutch had been the continental representatives of European Protestantism, and in this guise they had been able, without arousing the jealousy of their neighbours, to filch a large part of the colonial possessions of the Iberian Empire,¹ and appropriate the carrying-trade of the world. The Cardinals and Cromwell made clear, what an intelligent observer might have detected before, that this monopoly of Spanish colonies and general shipping, was no longer going to remain unchallenged. But this was not the only cause of friction between the United Provinces and their old allies. England and France had each planned a future for the Republic. To Cromwell, with his magnificent scheme for a league of European States to propagate Protestantism in general and overthrow Catholic supremacy in Germany in particular, the adhesion of the Dutch was essential. He was ready to admit them to a political union at once, but in any case they would have to be coerced later on, so at least as to make them completely dependent upon England if not literally subject to the English Government.²

A somewhat similar plan commended itself to Richelieu. In 1635 he made an alliance with the States-General against Spain; if it proved successful the Spanish Netherlands were to be partitioned, but, anyhow, neither party was to make peace without the consent of the other. The Dutch entered somewhat reluctantly into this engagement, and it is reason-

¹ Spain and Portugal were united from 1580—1640.

² See Seeley, "Growth of British Policy," vol. ii., chap. 2.

able to assume that they already began to suspect the drift of French policy;¹ the idea of natural boundaries seemed likely in course of time to transform their ardent ally into an unusually pertinacious enemy. Thus it became evident throughout the age of the Cardinals that the old system was breaking up and that before long England and France would come into collision with the United Provinces. It is the great blur on de Witt's statesmanship that he did not choose to take this into account.

But so early as 1643 the only sign of the times that was unmistakable was the downfall of Spain. In that year was fought the Battle of Rocroi, a defeat which deprived the Spaniards of any claim to be considered the first military power in Europe. A like fate had overtaken their navy four years previously, when Tromp destroyed "the last of great Spanish Armadas" in the Downs. So clearly, in fact, had the Hapsburgs fallen that we see two parties forming themselves amongst the adherents of the House of Orange. The Princess leads the one, the heir-apparent the other. Whilst the mother is anxious to make peace with Spain and equalise the combatants, the son, governed by his ambitions, still wishes "to wade through slaughter to a throne." We have said already that we believe that Amelia was right. Holland, surrounded by the great powers of Sweden, England, France, and Spain, could not hope to retain her prestige except by a very skilful diplomacy. Her interests were bound to land her ultimately in disputes with the three first-mentioned countries. In America and the Indies she would find England opposing her; in the Spanish Netherlands she would be bound to oppose France, and in the Baltic Sweden was already her rival. An alliance with her old enemy was probably the true policy, for Spain,

¹ Thorold Rogers' "Holland" p. 244.

humiliated by her defeat at the hands of France and harassed by the revolt of Portugal and the Portuguese colonies, could scarcely have disdained an arrangement that would help her so powerfully in her duel with the Bourbons. Had a treaty been concluded on the basis of commerce between the two nations that still possessed something not far short of a monopoly of the trade of world, it is not improbable that they would have escaped many humiliations. They might still have lost much of their wealth, but they would at least have been saved from the ignominy of becoming the satellites of their greater neighbours. As it was, the eighteenth century saw Holland dragged at the tail of England, and Spain at that of France, whilst the nineteenth has seen them both reduced to the rank of second-rate powers.

The great question, then, that occupied the public mind during the last years of Frederic Henry was whether or not peace should be made with Spain. In 1647 the Stadtholder passed away, but not before he had committed the United Provinces to a cessation of hostilities. His old age does not seem to have been worthy of his great reputation. He grew irritable and uncertain, jealous of his son, and the slave of his wife. It could no longer be said of him that "he made every man his friend, and seemed to have enemies only that he might be reconciled to them."¹ But he had become a victim to paralysis, and it is only fair to attribute his mental debility to his physical infirmities. His death brings to an end the influence and the policy of Amelia de Solms. William and his mother had long been estranged at heart, and from this time their relations consist in little more than a cold civility. Henceforth the policy of the House of Orange is directed by Mazarin.

¹ Quoted by Lefèvre-Pontalis, p. 36.

Many influences had contributed to make the new Prince look to Paris for his orders, but not least among them must be reckoned that of his wife. Naturally drawn towards her mother's country, her father's misfortunes had only strengthened its claims on her affection. For by 1647 Charles' affairs were desperate, and if there was yet hope it was the hope of foreign intervention. To what alliance of states for this purpose was it more natural for Mary to look than to an alliance between France and the Netherlands? William was only too ready to gratify her desires so far as it was in his power. The French were the traditional friends, as the Spaniards were the traditional foes, of his House; and he hoped to make both alike the instruments of his ambition. The Spaniards were first to be beaten, and then the French, partners in his victory, were to place him on the throne of the United Provinces and restore his father-in-law to that of England. With some such scheme as this he is at any rate generally credited. But his policy was not purely selfish. Early in 1648 he had been forced, unwillingly enough, to complete his father's work and conclude the Treaty of Munster with Spain, by which the independence of the Dutch was acknowledged by Philip IV. There seems to be little doubt that he regarded this peace in the light of a national disgrace. Possessed of a keen sense of duty, he thought it shameful to violate the agreement of 1635 with France, and, whilst his father was still alive, he had been active in opposing what he considered to be at once a dishonourable and disastrous policy. As his conduct has formed the subject of a great deal of controversy, and as our judgment of his merits as a statesman must depend in some degree upon his line of action in this affair, it is as well to examine shortly the circumstances under which the treaty of Munster was concluded.

Let us admit at once that from the moral standpoint of the nineteenth century, we can say little in defence of the Netherlands. Harassed by the incessant hostility of Spain, in 1635 they had sought the aid of Richelieu, and had obtained it, owing largely to the insertion of a clause in the treaty of alliance, which stipulated that the Provinces should not make any treaty of peace or truce except conjointly with the King of France and with his consent!¹ The French put themselves under a reciprocal obligation. For thirteen years both nations adhered to the agreement. Then in 1648 the Dutch made peace at Munster without the consent of the King of France. Various explanations were offered. It was "said that in forming the project contained in the treaty of 1635, the United Provinces did not suppose that matters would march so quickly, or that in so short a time such remarkable progress would be made against Spain".² The simpler minds feared the effect of French proximity upon the restless disposition of the people: the subtler dreaded a rising of the Dutch Catholics, a division in the Republic which might throw the weaker provinces into the arms of France, or an attempt on the part of the Prince of Orange to possess himself of the crown.³ These reasons appear to us to be perfectly valid. The easy victory that the two countries had obtained over the Hapsburgs, had upset the balance of power. Spain was no longer an enemy to be feared; France, on the other hand, was growing dangerous. It had been shown beyond a doubt that Mazarin was perfectly willing to treat with Philip IV. in 1648, but we are very far from agreeing with the Editor of the Orange-Nassau Archives that, "had the

¹ Groen van Prinsterer, "Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau," Deuxième Série, tome iv., pp. lxxvii, lxxviii, lxxix.

² *Ibid.*, p. 189.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 189, 190.

Netherlands enabled him to do so, they would have stimulated his gratitude to such an extent that they need no longer have feared his designs."¹ "Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra" is an exceedingly beautiful motto, but it is hardly a safe one to adopt in dealing with such practical casuists as Mazarin and Louis XIV. There is but little to be said, if we consider only the material interests of a nation, for a man who allows his purist sympathies to get the better of his patriotic ambitions by aiming at a higher international morality than his age allows of. That dangerous maxim of Mirabeau, "La petite morale est ennemie de la grande morale," has in this case a real and valuable application. In the seventeenth century gratitude was not numbered among international virtues; and we are confident that no sense of obligation would have deterred Mazarin from fashioning a new device, now that force had failed him, to gain the object of his desires. But, in fact, that this would have been the case need rest on no assumption. "Déjà le 20 Janvier, 1646," writes Mignet, "il en fait mention aux pleins potentiaires à Munster; 'l'infante étant mariée à sa majesté, nous pourrions aspirer à la succession des royaumes d'Espagne, quelque renonciation qu'on lui en fît faire.'"² Comment seems scarcely necessary. Mazarin would take the Spanish Netherlands when and how he could get them; if they could be made the dowry of Maria Theresa, so much the better. In the face of this it is almost impossible to maintain that William would have benefited his country had he helped the Cardinal to realise his project at the Peace of Westphalia.

Still, in so far as his action was prompted by a desire to protect the national character from the deleterious effects

¹ G. van Prinsterer, "Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau," p. lxxxviii.

² Mignet, "Négoc. relatives à la succession d'Espagne." (Quoted by G. van Prinsterer.)

of a broken oath, William was certainly right. "Pactum serva" is a principle that will obtain a fair hearing for the weakest of statesmen; and William deserves every credit for his policy, where it was dictated by a high-minded integrity. But it is impossible to deny that other motives were potent in forming his conclusion. An ardent soldier, and one, moreover, who was justly conscious of his capacity for war, he clung firmly to the idea that military success was the surest pathway to the throne. Mazarin was careful to encourage him in this belief: "You may suggest," he writes to Servien, the French ambassador, "that circumstances might arise in which, if he were assured of the protection and good-will of their Majesties, he might attain to a greatness far other than that of his predecessors."¹ As it chanced, the desire to revoke the Treaty of Munster, which William began to exhibit on his accession, was fostered by events in England. The Royalist failure in the Second Civil War had been insufficient to provoke the Hollanders (with whom the decision really rested) to enter upon hostilities with England; nor did the execution of King Charles, which followed in 1649, serve to alter their decision. Representing as they did the opposition to the court, they could not but feel sympathy for those who were fighting a somewhat similar constitutional battle in England, and they had declined to do more than make an offer of mediation between King and Parliament. Mary was overcome with grief at the death of her father, to whom she had been especially attached, and it seemed to her but a poor compliment that the Dutch should acknowledge King Charles II. and almost simultaneously admit an agent of the English Parliament, Dr. Dorislaus. This man, who seems to have attracted more attention than he really

¹ Quoted by Lefèvre-Pontalis, p. 37.

merits, was the son of a Dutch minister, and had been parliamentary counsel at the trial of Charles I.¹ Hence it would have been hard to devise a greater insult to Mary or indeed to the Netherlands, than his selection as English envoy, and it is difficult not to feel that he richly deserved the death which he met on the night after his arrival at the hands of some of the refugee followers of Montrose.² The murderers escaped punishment, owing, it is said, to the influence of William, but the indignation of the burghers made it expedient that the King of Scots, for so Charles II. was generally called, should leave the Hague, which he accordingly did. The Prince and Princess accompanied him to Breda, where they entertained him magnificently. Out of his private fortune, William made his brother-in-law what amends he could for the apathy of the Republic and in the following year helped to equip the expedition to Scotland.³ His generosity must not be overlooked, for he was at the time engaged in his famous struggle with the mercantile interest in Holland.

This contest was occasioned by a dispute concerning the disbandment of troops at the conclusion of the war with Spain. The decay of the navy, the natural incidence of the burden of taxation upon the richest province, and a dread of the designs of the Prince of Orange, which was not, as we have seen, without justification, combined to make the Hollanders anxious for a considerable reduction in the military establishment. At their instance, the States-General had consented to suppress twenty-eight thousand men,⁴ partly Dutchmen and partly foreigners, nor did the Stadtholder offer any opposition. But they proceeded to

¹ Thorold Rogers' "Holland," p. 251.

² Gardiner, vol. x., pp. 72, 73.

³ Everett-Green, p. 154.

⁴ L. Pontalis, p. 38.

demand a further disbandment of two thousand nine hundred men, who represented a part of their provincial contingent. This caused a rupture between the central Government and the provincial States of Holland. It has been the fashion to criticise severely William's share in the dispute. But that he was eager to provoke a civil war, it is argued, he might have given in on so unimportant a question as the retention or dismissing of three thousand troops.¹ The presence of this force might perhaps have exerted a greater effect in case of war than William's critics are willing to allow; but, however this may be, it is not easy, looking at the matter from the opposite point of view, to defend the attitude of the burghers. As the largest tax-payers they had no doubt a perfect right to claim a voice in the management of the army; but William had recognised this fully when he refrained from opposing their original request. In objecting to a further decrease in the military strength of the Republic he was entirely justified by virtue of his office as Captain-General. No doubt a little less obstinacy on both sides would easily have availed to bring about a compromise, but that was precisely what neither party was prepared to accept. The quarrel was in fact only the final expression of a mutual distrust that had long existed. Just as in England the King and the Parliament were alike firmly convinced that the command of the militia was essential to their well-being, so here neither the Stadtholder nor the Estates felt that they could give in without an abrogation of principle. Under such circumstances it is useless to attempt to apportion the ultimate blame.

The Princess Royal had, throughout, encouraged her husband in his policy of resistance,² but she did not spare herself in attempting to bring the affair to a peaceful con-

¹ See, for instance, L. Pontalis, p. 38,

² Thorold Rogers' "Holland," p. 852.

clusion. An intense consciousness of what she owed to her dignity had always been one of her most marked characteristics; in 1646 she had refused to be present at the marriage of her sister-in-law to the Elector of Brandenburg; because, as Electress, Princess Louisa claimed precedence of her. On the present occasion, however, she condescended to visit the wives of the more important members of the provincial assembly, in the hope of influencing their votes; ¹ an unbending that provoked much comment. But her canvass, perhaps deservedly, was unavailing. The Estates hastened their deliberations and ordered the obnoxious companies to be suppressed. William no longer hesitated to take up the glove, and on the next day obtained the official support of the States-General, who decreed that the companies should be retained. Once irritation had been set up there was no difficulty in fostering it, and ultimately four provinces agreed virtually to suspend the constitution by conferring special authority upon the Stadtholder, which empowered him to confer with the town-councils of Holland, accompanied by six deputies and attended by a military escort. ² At Delft the leader of the national emissaries accused the burgher-members of the Estates of a desire to withdraw. The insinuation was hotly denied. The burgomaster and ex-burgomaster of Amsterdam, two brothers of the name of Bicker, fearing a similar scene in their city, declined to admit the Prince, unless he came without the deputies.

Their alleged motive in taking this course was possibly genuine; but it is well to remember that Amsterdam was the stronghold of the opposition and that its magistrates may not have been sorry to drive matters to an extremity. Some few months before, Brusset, in writing to Mazarin, had noticed a revulsion of feeling against the peace with

¹ L. Pontalis, p. 39. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

² *Ibid.*, p. 41.

Spain, "sur laquelle j'entends que la plupart des villes de Hollande murmurent fort et qu'il n'y a quasi qu' Amsterdam qui les tienne en bride; encore n'est ce que par le seul intérêt de quelques familles qui en profitent; celle des Bickers est la principale." He goes on to counsel the Cardinal to pay some attention to the son of the head of this family, who was then in Paris.¹ If the French ambassador is to be relied upon, a good deal of responsibility for the dispute must therefore rest with the leading members of the burgher aristocracy, but his statements cannot of course be accepted without reserve.

Anyhow, whether they had desired it or not, the Bickers had turned the scales in favour of war. Although the deputies for Amsterdam offered an apology for the conduct of their fellow-townsmen, and although the States-General were in a fair way to come to terms with the provincial States about the military question, yet a resolution on the part of the latter body, asserting that their permission was necessary to enable the Stadtholder and the national deputies to confer with the town-councils,² decided William to execute a *coup d'état* that had long been suggested. Six months before Count William of Nassau had written in cipher to him that he "ought to think of seizing Amsterdam,"³ and he continued to press the scheme during the early days of the crisis. But from this very fact it seems likely—and we believe no evidence exists to the contrary—that William gave no assent to these proposals until he had been refused admission into Amsterdam; and it is therefore unjust to assert positively that he intended throughout to provoke a civil war and by this means attain his object. On the other hand, it is not easy to deny that

¹ Groen van Prinsterer, pp. 340, 341.

² L. Pontalis, p. 43.

³ Groen van Prinsterer, p. 337.

he showed no disposition to accept a peaceable settlement after he had been, as he conceived, grossly insulted.

Shortly told, his plan of action was as follows. Six of the prominent members of the opposition in the provincial States, amongst whom was Jacob de Witt, the father of the future Grand Pensionary, were to be arrested and conveyed to the Castle of Loevenstein. At the same time Count William of Nassau was to be despatched to capture Amsterdam, marching his force in detachments and by night for the sake of secrecy. It was intended to obtain entrance into the city by the aid of some fifty devoted officers, who were to be concealed in the Utrecht boat, and, on reaching their destination, were to seize one of the gates, hold it, and admit their confederates. The movements of the Princess Royal, it is curious to notice, were to be used by her husband as a blind, just as they had been on a previous occasion by her mother; for the garrison of Utrecht were to leave that town, ostensibly to act as her escort, but in reality to join the invading force and aid Count William.

Ill-luck ruined the plot. The cavalry lost their way in the underwood; the officers were discovered in their hiding-place; and so ignorant were Count William's subordinates of his intentions, that one of them allowed the Hamburg mail to pass and warn the burghers of the projected attack. The Prince of Orange was much disturbed at hearing of the failure, but determined to accomplish by force that which he had failed to carry out by fraud. Leaving the Hague, he placed himself at the head of his army and would have begun the siege of the town had it not been strongly represented to him that its recalcitrant citizens had a weapon at their disposal with which he would be powerless to cope; a weapon that would not merely bring safety to the besieged, but disaster to the besiegers. The inhabitants of Amsterdam were not ignorant of the deeds of their fore-

fathers, and did not hesitate to threaten that they would defeat their own Stadtholder by the same means that had been employed to destroy the Spanish tyrants. Had William advanced, the sluices would have been opened, the town rendered unapproachable and his army surrounded and submerged by the incoming tide. As it was, he realised his impotence and sadly accepted the inevitable. Contenting himself with obtaining the dismissal of the Bickers, he withdrew, and soon after liberated his imprisoned enemies on condition that they resigned all their public offices.¹ The question of the troops ended in a compromise. Thus all that the prince had gained had been the expulsion of the obnoxious magistrates from their magistracies, whilst he had lost prestige to an extent for which his material success did not compensate him. How much he had really hoped to obtain by his *coup d'état*, it is impossible to determine, but the opinion of Brusset is worth quoting:—"J'entends," he wrote, "que les pratiques vont à donner quelque changement au régime de cet estat; qu'il se propose de le remettre tel qu'il estoit anciennement au conseil d'Estat. J'en parlay hier à M. le Prince d'Orange; je ne l'en trouvoy pas fort esloigné, croiant que cela lui seroit avantageux, son Altesse ayant deux voix dans ledit conseil et nulle dans l'assemblée de Mrs. les Estats."²

The consciousness of failure kept William away from the Hague for some weeks. Pretending to seek rest from mental exertion by physical exercise in the hunting-field, he was in reality finding it by increased political activity. Turning his attention from his domestic disappointments, he secretly set to work with the aid of Estrades, Mazarin's emissary, to draw up a scheme—it is doubtful whether

¹ L. Pontalis, p. 54.

² Groen van Prinsterer, p. 377.

we may call it a treaty¹—for a combined attack on the Spanish Netherlands in the following May and a war with England in favour of the Stuarts; a stipulation was also inserted by which the contracting parties undertook, as in 1635, not to make a separate peace with Spain. Whether this agreement represents a determination on the part of the prince to throw over constitutional forms and commit the States-General to war without obtaining their consent, or whether he intended to submit it for their approval, will always be a fruitful subject for discussion. We know, however, that in the August before (the draft is dated Oct. 20)² he had proposed to them through one of his creatures that the United Provinces should offer to mediate between France and Spain, hoping in this way to embroil them with the latter country:³ “Je ne désespère pas que nous n’ayons bientôt la guerre contre les Espagnols ; mais il fault bien prendre ses mesures.”⁴ The mediatory negotiations, however, do not seem to have proved as contentious as he had expected; at all events up to October an accommodation was far from being despaired of.⁵ The inference, therefore, must be that the secret agreement was the last card of one who, being determined to have a war with Spain, would not shrink from unconstitutional means to obtain it. But William was not destined to emulate the deeds of his ancestors. Another struggle, and one in which he could cherish no hope of victory, was at hand. On his return to the Hague he received a challenge from the great duellist; on the 6th November he was dead. Fate, which had been so cruel to him in his life, was at least merciful in his death. He had attained manhood

¹ See Groen van Prinsterer, pp. cxx, cxxi.

² Seeley, “Growth of British Policy,” vol. ii., p. 7.

³ Groen van Prinsterer, p. 408.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 409.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 427.

just too late to take the lead in the struggle against Spain, he would have been well past his prime before Europe entered upon her great contest with France. It was lucky for his fame that he was removed from the scene of his ambitions before he had time to prosecute them further.

For his military ardour and the hopes that he cherished for the child that was yet unborn, had led him to run counter to the national will, and to take up a position which was false to the traditions of his family. "If my goods are stolen," had said an opposition pamphlet, "if my hands are tied, my freedom taken from me, what matters it to me if he who does this is a Spaniard, a barbarian, or a fellow-countryman?" William, doubtless, did not intend to act otherwise than rightly. He believed in the mission of the House of Orange to hold the confederation together, and he may fairly have argued that the preponderating power of Holland required the strengthening of the central executive. But though we may palliate his attack upon Amsterdam, we cannot defend his seizure of the six members. That was an action as unwise as it was unconstitutional, for it justified the fears of his enemies. A continuance of his domestic policy could have led to nothing but civil war. Nor was his foreign policy better calculated to meet the desires of the richer and more capable part of the nation. His attempt to bind the Netherlands to France would merely have promoted the ascendancy of that country; whilst he himself, unable to enforce his will but with the aid of his more powerful neighbour, must have been confronted with the choice of John Balliol or Louis Bonaparte—slavery or abdication. "Les esgards, Monseigneur," Brasset had written to Mazarin, "que vous avez pour Mr. le Prince Guillaume sont fondez en beaucoup de prudence et de raison, aussy bien que le jugement que vous faictes qu'il est plus facile de

gouverner un homme qu'une multitude."¹ Strong, prudent, determined, at once ardent and collected,² William was no match for the subtle Italian. The net had been carefully spread; had he lived much longer he would have been vainly struggling in its meshes.

The death of her husband left Mary a broken-hearted widow of nineteen. A week later she gave birth to the child, who was one day to become King of England. It is this event which lends an interest to her widowed life. Had the posthumous infant proved to be a girl, the Princess and her daughter would have retired into the seclusion of private life; there could have been no question of having a woman for stadtholder. But as the mother of the feeble boy who represented the House of Orange, Mary was bound to retain a certain influence; she must be at least the nominal head of her son's following. And Mary, young as she was, showed herself conscious of her duties: "I desire to be married only to the interests of my son" was the reason she gave for remaining single. But as time went on another care was laid on her. The death of her husband had destroyed the expectations of Mazarin, and, after a vain attempt to ingratiate himself with the Dutch republicans, the cardinal decided to throw over the Stuarts altogether and form an alliance with Cromwell. This revolution rendered Henrietta Maria impotent to help her son, unable even to obtain a home for him at her nephew's court. Hence Mary, as the only member of the family who possessed a recognized position and adequate income, became more and more the counsellor and confidant of Prince Charles.

To secure the stadtholdership for her son, to aid her

¹ Groen van Prinsterer, p. 172.

² "Il a du feu et du phlegme," Brienne.

brother to regain "his own", these became the objects of her existence. And it is this desire to satisfy the claims of her family that ennobles and illuminates a life that was not otherwise remarkable. For patriotism Mary did not possess; the idea of identifying her interests with those of her people was as foreign to her nature as to that of her father.

To do her justice, however, it is only fair to remember that the States-General never gave her cause to love them. As soon as the formal condolences had been offered and the formal mourning worn, they proceeded to destroy William's work down to the very foundation. At the instigation of the Estates of Holland, a great assembly was called at the Hague in 1651 and the constitution was set upon an entirely new basis. It would be impossible within the limits of this article to deal with the changes in detail. Suffice it to say that the effect of the conference was to weaken the confederation by leaving the office of Stadtholder unfilled in five provinces and entrusting the provincial administration to the provincial Estates. Nominally, the control of foreign affairs, of peace and war, and of all important national interests was vested in the States-General, but in reality the central government was dependent on the local assemblies, since it was within the power of these to refuse to carry out the mandates of their superior. Provincial independence was further increased by the abolition of the offices of admiral and captain-general, their place being filled by the Council of State, the local councillor deputies, and the local admiralty boards. In practice the main result of these changes was to establish the preponderance of Holland and make her chief official—the Grand Pensionary—virtually prime minister of the United, or, as was sometimes and more correctly said, of the Disunited, Provinces. The new constitution was, of course, a victory

for the republicans, but it need not have been by any means so complete had not the House of Orange exhibited an entire incapacity to present an united front to its opponents. Something has been said already of the two parties that grouped themselves round the Princess Royal and the Princess Dowager. Their divisions seem to have begun over the trifling question of a suitable name for the young Prince. Mary was anxious that he should be called Charles, but her mother-in-law considered the name unlucky and pronounced in favour of William. On this occasion, at all events, the Princess Royal showed herself conciliatory and the Princess Dowager had her way. It was not, however, to be so always. A fresh dispute arose as to who was to be the child's guardian, Mary claiming the position as his mother, Amelia alleging that her daughter-in-law's youth rendered her incapable of fulfilling its duties adequately. An indisputable proof, however, of her husband's intention that she should enjoy the guardianship was produced by the Princess Royal, in the shape of a will dated Dec. 21st, 1649;¹ and this was re-inforced soon after by the discovery of a copy of an order to Count Dohna, the Governor of Orange, enjoining him, in case of William's death, to hold that place for the Princess Royal.² These documents obtained a decision in Mary's favour, from the States-General, but soon after a revision was granted and this time the verdict was not so favourable. For, in the meanwhile, the evidence that had been elicited relative to the recent attempt on Amsterdam had created a feeling very hostile to the Princess Royal, since it was shown that her influence had not been the least powerful factor in the promotion of the enterprise.³ The new arrangement

¹ Everett-Green, p. 170.

² *Ibid.*, p. 171.

³ Carte's Ormond Papers, vol. i., p. 44.

only gave her a voice in the government of her son, the other voice being divided between the Elector of Brandenburg and the Princess Dowager. If, as indeed was most probable, disputes arose, they were to be submitted to the arbitration of four persons, two chosen by each party, who were enacted to choose a fifth to give a casting vote, in case of necessity. To these and other less important provisions Mary, after some hesitation, assented.

It might, indeed, have gone ill with her had she refused them. The States-General, now little more than a tool in the hands of the Estates of Holland, had already admitted an embassy from the English Commonwealth to offer "a more strict and intimate alliance and union whereby there may be a more intrinsical and mutual interest of each in other than hath hitherto been, for the good of both."¹ The negotiations that followed are not particularly instructive. The English ambassadors, St. John and Strickland, showed an eagerness to hasten the slow Dutch mind, that is the more pardonable when we remember that they were subjected to continual danger and insult from the mob, their windows being broken and St. John narrowly escaping assassination.² The States-General, on the other hand, did not appreciate the tyrannical tone adopted by the sister-republic and were not anxious at all for a political union, which project they saw was only a polite way of intimating that they were to be eaten whole, their colonies included. At length they ferreted out, for some reason best known to themselves, the ancient *Intercursus Magnus* that Henry VII. had concluded with Archduke Philip. It "stipulated (we quote from Mr. Gardiner) not only that neither of the contracting parties should give aid to the enemies of the other, but

¹ Quoted by Firth, "Cromwell," p. 313.

² Whitelocke's Memorials, Apr. 1651, and Seeley, vol. ii., p. 20.

also that each should lend military aid to suppress them at the expense of its ally; and that neither should receive or support rebels or fugitives of the other, but that each should expel them if they had already found a refuge on its soil." ¹ St. John, disgusted at the treatment he had received ² and probably inferring that the Dutch had no intention of acceding to the English demands, now proposed to withdraw. The United-Provinces, however, begged for a prolongation of the embassy, which was granted. To test their sincerity the ambassadors suggested that the provisions of the *Intercursus Magnus* should be adapted to present circumstances, or, in other words, that the Stuart princes should be expelled from the Netherlands and the property of the Princess Royal confiscated, if she dared to receive her brothers. This brought the negotiations to a crisis. The fact was that the Dutch felt that the English Republic was yet green in its estate. "They inquired much," we read in Whitelocke, "after the affairs in Scotland and seemed inclinable to a good correspondence with England" and "that Holland is more inclinable to an agreement with the ambassadors than the other provinces are." ³ In the end they made some cautious proposals: each party was to aid the other at the expense of the party benefited, no help was to be given in either country to persons obnoxious to the other, the colonies of both peoples were to lie open for commerce. ⁴ Though in this official reply there is no reference to the Stuarts in the narrative of the ambassadors, the Dutch are credited with the following statement: "We cannot banish from our soil all persons who are banished out of England. Our country is a refuge

¹ Gardiner, vol. xiv., pp. 362—3.

² Whitelocke, April 1651.

³ Whitelocke, May 1651.

⁴ Gardiner, pp. 364—5.

for the exiles of all nations.”¹ At any rate, they were considered to have declined the proffered alliance, and St. John took an amicable leave without further delay.

How far must we consider the Princess Royal responsible for the war that followed in 1652? She had had, of course, no influence over the negotiations, which had been carried on by the States-General. There is, however, no doubt that the Orange party was exceedingly anxious to provoke a rupture between the two Republics. They hoped that in the presence of danger there would be a reversion to the old system² and that the infant Prince would be appointed Admiral and Captain-General with Count William Frederic of Nassau—him that had led the attack upon Amsterdam—as his lieutenant. Mary certainly did what she could to stir up strife, though it was necessarily by indirect means. “Every day the Princess Royal and her brother, the Duke of York, rode slowly past the ambassador’s residence with ostentatious pomp and an imposing suite, staring at the house from top to bottom, in a manner to encourage the rabble, which her procession gathered up in its way, to commit an insult.”³ But it is absurd to suppose that this conduct, however unseemly and ill advised it may have been, had any serious effect upon the action of the English Parliament. War did not break out till the following spring, and in the interval the real grounds of the quarrel had become apparent. Already before St. John had left Holland a commercial treaty very prejudicial to English interests, had been concluded between the Netherlands and Denmark. In October (1651) this had been answered by the famous Navigation Act, which aimed a death-blow at the Dutch monopoly of the carrying trade. Whilst, on the one hand, an impartial

¹ Geddes, Administration of John de Witt, vol. i., p. 178.

² Groen van Prinsterer, vol. v., p. 63.

³ Geddes, p. 173.

investigation seems to establish commercial rivalry as the true basis of the quarrel, on the other it is important to notice that the Battle of Worcester (Sept. 1651) had removed all danger of Stuart aggression. Help from the United Provinces might possibly have turned the scale in the early part of 1652, when Charles was still at the head of an army; a year later he was an impotent and helpless fugitive and his place of residence could never have been of sufficient importance to justify a costly war.

An account of the struggle that followed, of the rivalry between Blake and Tromp, of the three-days' battle off Beachy Head, of the gallant death of Tromp off the Texel, and of the gradual exhaustion of the Dutch in men and money and ships, can find no place in this essay. We are concerned only with the fortunes of Mary of Orange. But upon these the war was not without its influence. A revulsion of feeling, consequent on the Dutch reverses, set in. Riots became common. The Grand Pensionary's life was in serious danger. Their misfortunes, men said, had come upon them because they had no longer a Stadtholder. The clergy were foremost in the fray; even from the pulpits they accused the States-General of a desire to see the Dutch navy beaten so as to be reduced to make peace with England. "There is a general expression and feeling that the country is betrayed, as if the prisoners of Loevenstein had given it up,"¹ wrote Van Sypesteyn to De Witt. The upshot of it was that, in 1653, Mary had the satisfaction of seeing her son elected Stadtholder of Zealand and of several of the northern provinces.²

Meanwhile De Witt, the Grand Pensionary, who was allied by marriage to the Bickers, had been doing his utmost to bring about a settlement. But the only terms

¹ L. Pontalis, p. 155.

² Whitelocke, July 1653.

to which Cromwell would assent, included a guarantee that the Prince of Orange should be excluded from power, and were consequently very unpopular. To obtain such a guarantee from the States-General was indeed impossible, but as the Protector was willing to be content with a similar undertaking from the Estates of Holland, De Witt finally arranged a peace on this basis. A secret resolution was passed by the Estates excluding the Prince of Orange from all power, civil or military, in their province, and agreeing to vote against his appointment as Captain- or Admiral-General in the national assembly.¹ In justice to the Grand Pensionary it should be observed that he made every endeavour to secure a peace without making the required stipulation, and that he only consented to its delivery to Cromwell when it was certain that nothing less would satisfy him. In no other country would it have been possible for one part of the nation to conclude a peace without the knowledge of the other; but it was the peculiarity of the United Provinces that the privilege of nominating ambassadors often rested with the provincial assemblies.² On this occasion two of the ambassadors had been nominated by Holland and thus considered themselves directly responsible to the Grand Pensionary of that province. Although, however, we are obliged to acknowledge that De Witt was perfectly right in supposing the struggle with England to be hopeless, he had undoubtedly justified the outcry that was raised by his proceedings; for these amounted to nothing less than an impertinent assertion of the supremacy of Holland. It was proposed by those deputies, who were most devoted to the House of Orange, that Cromwell should be openly defied and the young Prince immediately appointed to the chief military and

¹ L. Pontalis, p. 183.

² *Ibid.*, p. 64, and note.

naval command. The moderate Orangemen were anxious to revoke the guarantee, or at any rate demand an explanation from the overbearing member of the confederation. The Princesses for once acted in concert and addressed a strong remonstrance to the Estate of Holland. But in the end it all came to nothing. The Estates, indeed drew up a kind of defence in the shape of a report, and the Grand Pensionary was despatched to propitiate the Princesses and assure them of the goodwill of his province. But a complaint addressed directly to Cromwell by the Zealanders met with a reply that brought the Republic to its senses:—If the Act of Exclusion were recalled the United Provinces would provoke a resumption of hostilities.¹ Probably the Orange party might have made more capital out of the war than they actually did, so strongly was the current running in their favour at one moment. But they lacked what their opponents possessed—a strong leader. The Princesses were seldom at one; Mary remained true to her husband's policy, Amelia, on the other hand, seems to have inclined to a pacific arrangement with the Hollanders: whilst Count William of Nassau, who about this time married the daughter of the Princess Dowager, was never able to shake off the suspicion of self-interest—he was already Stadtholder of Friesland and Groningen—that clung to his endeavours on behalf of his nephew.

But the Princess Royal's attention was really centred elsewhere. In October 1651 her brother had landed in Holland, a wretched outcast, disguised as a sailor and almost unattended. Mary had gone in person to his aid, and with such secrecy that for a time his arrival remained unknown. After a short stay in Holland he went on to Paris, where his miniature court very soon divided itself

¹ For an account of the negotiations see L. Pontalis, pp. 164—190.

into two well-defined factions. At the head of the one were the Queen-Mother and Lord Jermyn, at the head of the other Hyde and Nicholas. To these last Mary gave her support, perhaps because, as a staunch Anglican, she was able to appreciate the injury that might be done to her brother's prospects by her mother's aggressive Romanism. But, in point of fact, it mattered very little what Charles' partisans did or did not do, for never had cause been more hopeless than his was at this time. Each year the clouds were thickening. Under the iron hand of the Protector the smouldering discontent in Scotland and Ireland was so vigorously repressed that the fire of loyalty seemed everywhere extinct. The treaty of 1654 with the United Provinces had contained a clause banishing the Stuarts from Holland,¹ and though this provision was not interpreted too severely, Charles soon learnt that he was no welcome visitor at the Hague. In 1657 the hope of a French invasion of England was removed by the secession of Mazarin. That astute ecclesiastic was far too clever a politician to encumber himself with principles and saw no kind of reason why he should not ally himself with a rebel government if it suited his purpose. As the treaty of Westminster had destroyed the hopes of the Stuarts in the Netherlands, so that of Paris destroyed them in France.

Mary had done what she could for her brothers, but it did not amount to very much. She had aided them financially so far as her income would allow; further, many thought, than she could afford to do, consistently with the interests of her son. She had also entertained the young Duke of Gloucester at the Hague. From time to time she accompanied King Charles in his expeditions. It was

¹ L. Pontalis, p. 177.

during one of these tours that Mary and her two brothers had an interview with the famous ex-queen of Sweden, Christina, a lady who would have been entirely in her element if she had been born a hundred years later and a French subject. As it was she secured an exceptionally high reputation for eccentricity, which was not at all undeserved, since some little time before she had taken it into her head to drink King Charles' health in public and wear his portrait round her neck, and had even gone so far as to send him a valuable jewel.¹ It does not appear, however, that her affection for the exile was greatly strengthened by the meeting, though she is reported to have declared that "if she had another crown to dispose of, she would . . . bestow it on that poor good king of England."²

In the winter of 1655 Mary paid a visit to Paris, to which later events give a certain importance, since it was on this occasion that the Duke of York made the acquaintance of Anne Hyde, who at the time belonged to Mary's suite. In spite of the negotiations with Cromwell, the princess obtained an excellent reception, Mazarin being amongst the foremost to do her honour. After a seemingly interminable series of entertainments she was recalled to Holland in November by the news that Prince William had got small-pox. By the time she had reached home, however, he had recovered. Not long after she visited her brother at Bruges.

It would be a mistake to credit the Princess Royal with a strenuous policy in the Netherlands during the years between 1654 and 1658. The outlook for the two Houses, which she had connected, became steadily gloomier, and the most sanguine of temperaments must have searched in

¹ Everett-Green, p. 214.

² Thurloe, vol. iv., p. 88 (quoted by Everett-Green).

vain for a rift among the clouds. But the apathy with which Mary was so often accused of regarding her son's affairs had more method in it than at first sight we are inclined to allow. The ability of De Witt and the tender age of Prince William would probably have constituted her apology for inaction. She thought—and under the circumstances it is not wholly easy to condemn her view—that the true source of strength for her party was sitting still. If energetic measures were to be taken, they must be taken with the aid of, not in opposition to the English Government. In short she proposed to obtain his father's dignities for her son by restoring her brother. Later events have vindicated her policy and may even be said to have raised it to the rank of statesmanship. But it is idle to pretend that she was more clear-sighted than the ablest men of her time, not one of whom would have approved her doings. Like most women, she probably allowed her decision to be formed by her weaknesses and then justified it afterwards, to herself and to others, by giving it the gloss of calculation. She was very fond of her brother, she was very anxious that he should regain his throne both for his own sake and for that of their family, and, finally, and most important of all, she detested the vulgarity, as she thought it, of the burghers. Thus we find De Thou, the accredited French ambassador to the Hague, warned that “de son naturel et par la nourriture entre les Anglais, elle ne descend pas volontiers à des démonstrations de bonté et de caresses aux personnes de l'estat, croyant ces choses trop au dessous de sa condition et se persuadant que les amis de la maison d'Orange, en luy demeurant fidelles ne feront ce qu'ils doivent.”¹ It is not difficult to see how Mary persuaded herself that

¹ G. van Prinsterer, vol. v., p. 169.

she was doing her duty when she was merely gratifying her prejudices. That the course she took proved in the event to have been right was little else than a piece of undeserved good-fortune.

In striking contrast is the conduct of the Princess Dowager. "Bien que la haine des principaux de Hollande contre la maison d'Orange et la dernière injure qu'ils luy out faicte luy deust donner une juste aversion contre les estats de cette province, au moings contre les chefs de ce parti, elles les caresse néanmoins; elle ne parle de l'affront qu'ils ont fait à sa maison qu'avec des termes mesurés et sous couleur de bonne politique, pour s'accomoder au temps, elle se rend complaisante à ses messieurs" . . .¹ (the passage is taken from the instruction to De Thou, written in 1657.) Although the Princess Dowager's policy is here put down to avarice, the desire to preserve her scattered properties, and the hope of a pension, we are inclined to think, as on a previous occasion, that Amelia de Solms was not moved only by selfish motives; the surrender that she made of her grandson's education later on is enough to show that she had more than an interested affection for him. And, if this be granted, we may credit her once more with a clearer insight into the politics of the time than her contemporaries. Probably it seemed to her that little advantage could accrue to her family from a connection with a defeated and exiled house, although, attracted by the idea of a royal son-in-law, she contemplated at one moment a marriage between her daughter and King Charles,² until the poverty of his prospects induced her to throw him over. On the continent it was supposed naturally enough that Cromwell was each year establishing himself more firmly in his Protectorate and that he would prove the progen-

¹ G. van Prinsterer, p. 171.

² *Ibid.*, p. 145.

itor of a new dynasty: whilst Charles by the disaffection of Mazarin and the Battle of the Dunes had lost all hopes of foreign intervention. Thus, to imagine that the Prince of Orange would ever become Stadtholder by his uncle's aid must have appeared little better than a fantastic dream. Nor was it likely that the old alliance between the court party and Mazarin would be able to effect anything. Cromwell has often been blamed for allying himself with France instead of with the decaying power of Spain, and so disturbing the European balance; but his critics entirely forget that neither Mazarin nor Louis XIV. would have dared to interfere with the Netherlands whilst Oliver was alive.¹ Indeed the dependence of the lesser Republic upon the greater was perhaps the most prominent feature of the political situation. Small blame to the Princess Dowager "if she supposed," in face of the hostility of England, that the only hope for her grandson lay in a gradual reconciliation with the Hollanders. For the time, no doubt, such a policy must have meant political extinction, but when the personal influences of Cromwell and De Witt were removed, there was no insuperable reason why the head of the House of Orange should not have returned to power, no longer as the foe of the mercantile interest, but as its ally and nominee. The process of assimilation might indeed have been long and difficult, but could it have been carried through, it would have established a national party and done more to restore the prestige of the United Provinces than all De Witt's secret diplomacy. If it be said that the Princess Dowager too frequently allowed her private passions and interests to turn her aside from the pursuit of these objects, it is but just to remember that her plans were so hampered

¹ See Firth, "Cromwell," p. 388.

by the ill-feeling between her and her daughter-in-law that they could scarcely have succeeded, however single-hearted she had been.

Of the constant hostility between the two princesses no better illustration could be found than the quarrel which arose concerning the regency of Orange. In Nov. 1657, Mary having now attained her twenty-fifth year, the Court of Orange declared her sole Governor of the principality in accordance with her husband's will. But the Governor of the town, Count Dohna, had no intention of surrendering either his power or his salary. He was, moreover, a nephew of the Princess Dowager and consequently hostile to the Princess Royal. Mary, in her distress, determined to appeal to the French King, relying on the influence of her mother to further her suit. She addressed a letter to Mazarin asking for his aid and informing him of the approaching arrival in Paris of the President of the Parliament of Orange to set forth her claims,¹ which were supported by the body over which he presided. But the Princess Dowager was not to be outdone, and also wrote to the Cardinal claiming a share of the Government for herself as the mother, and for the Elector of Brandenburg as the husband, of her daughter, the heiress-apparent to the principality. De Thou, soon after, disclosed his view of the matter in a letter to Mazarin:—"Certainement, à dire le vray, ce seroit un grand avantage, pour le service du Roy et la seureté et repos de son Estat, et mesme pour le bien du petit Prince, qu'il n'y eut aucunes fortifications à Orange, puisqu'elles ne luy (donne que) le tiltre de souverain, mais, outre la jalousie que cela donne, l'entretien des garnisons luy couste plus de cinquante-mille livres, outre le revenu de ladite principauté, laquelle despence va

¹ G. van Prinsterer, p. 181.

seulement au profit d'un des Gouverneurs. . . ." ¹ Ultimately De Thou's advice was taken and Prince William deprived of his little principality. Under pretext of seeing his cousin righted, Louis ordered Count Dohna to surrender. The Governor in reply made a bold speech affirming his eternal allegiance to the Guardians of his Prince, but very soon succumbed to a large bribe.

The affair caused an outcry in the Netherlands, but it was not easy for the States-General to take any action since, as the French ambassador pointed out to them, they had been guilty of exactly similar conduct when they had seized Rees, Emeric, and Ravestin. ² The more reasonable section of the public was forced to admit that the King of France had some justification for removing this "stone of stumbling" from the midst of his dominions. Still it was felt that the national honour had been wounded and that Prince William had been made to pay the penalty of his guardians' squabbles. Of course, each of the parties responsible for the loss accused the other. The Princess Royal laid the blame on the shoulders of Count Dohna; the Princess Dowager accused her daughter-in-law of having originated the evil by calling in the French. Impartial history would probably decide that Mary was right in her claims and wrong in her method of asserting them. Her attitude certainly compares unfavourably with that of her mother-in-law, when we recall the high-spirited reply which Amelia returned to the French envoy some months later:—"Surquoy je vous diray que je veux bien qu'on sache que les Princes d'Orange ont tousjours esté serviteurs des Roys de France, mais jamais leurs subjects, et moins encore leurs esclaves, et par conséquent il nous convient bien d'agir avec eux avec toute sorte de civilité, mais pas

¹ G. van Prinsterer, p. 185.

² Ibid., p. 194.

avec des soumissions et souplesses qui pourroient estre préjudiciales et faire tort au droicts du Prince mon petit-fils." In the eyes of the Dutch, at any rate, the chief blame rested with the Princess Royal, and she incurred a corresponding amount of unpopularity. Meanwhile the Princess Dowager did what she could to repair the injury to her grandson by assuring the States-General that such treatment was only what they must expect at the hands of the French, and that the sooner they allied themselves with the Hapsburgs the better.

In reality, however, the amicable understanding with France had answered very well, and the prestige of the United Provinces among the nations of Europe had not lately been so high as it was in the beginning of the year 1660. De Witt had obtained some credit for his country by intervening, in conjunction with Cromwell, to save the Protestant subjects of the Duke of Savoy; he raised it still higher by an agreement in 1659 with England and France to put an end to the war between Sweden and Denmark. Moreover, the death of Oliver in 1658 had relieved him of a tyrannical master. At home, however, his policy of disintegration, witness his assertion that "these provinces are not one republic; each province apart is a sovereign republic and these United Provinces should not be called a republic in the singular, but federated or united republics, in the plural number,"¹ had created an indefinite, but none the less real, hostility towards the new constitution. The invaluable "Instruction à M. de Thou" has only to be read in order to see how wide was the gulf between the one favoured province and its six outcast brethren.² It only needed an opportunity and a leader to fan the sullen discontent into a consuming rebellion. In the beginning

¹ Seeley, vol. ii., p. 36.

² Groen van Prinsterer, p. 173.

of 1660, indeed, De Witt seemed to have consolidated his power, but before the year was out his ascendancy over the Republic was to receive a blow from which it never entirely recovered. All through this period that we have traversed the influences from abroad have controlled the domestic politics of the Netherlands. The outbreak of the constitutional struggle in England promoted the resistance of the burghers to their stadtholders, just as William's own policy had been a reflection of his father-in-law's; the imprisonment of Condé by Mazarin provoked the imprisonment of the six members at Loevenstein; the triumph of Cromwell, the popular champion of England, created an impression favourable to De Witt, the popular champion of the sister-republic; the despotism of the Protector was the signal for the despotism of the Grand Pensionary. And so we find that the restoration of the royal line in England was the event that made certain the restoration of the House of Orange in the United Provinces.

The diplomatists of past centuries rarely possessed any excessive amount of self-respect, but, as they were skilful enough to conceal their more discreditable performances, they have generally managed to exchange the severity of contemporary criticism for the tolerant, if rather cynical, judgments of a public that is prepared to forgive freely on condition of being adequately amused. Thus the conduct of the Hollanders in hearing of the revulsion of feeling in England is of unusual interest. Their sycophancy was so obvious and outspoken that we are tempted to wonder whether they were conscious of it. "Whoever is the king of England," they said, when they learnt that Charles II. was to be restored, "be it the devil himself, we must be friends with him." Hence from the moment when Monk declared for a restoration of the monarchy, the poor outcast, who

had been forbidden till then to enter the territories of Holland, was feasted, cheered and congratulated until the roots of the divinity that hedges a king had been entirely laid bare.

It would be inexpressibly wearisome to narrate all the doings of their High Mightinesses during the few weeks that the new monarch deigned to spend among them before he entered into his kingdom. But it is natural to recall how on one occasion De Witt, who was no lover of inconsistency, undertook to explain away the previous behaviour of himself and his party towards their distinguished visitor. "We must even admit," he said, "that for some years past interest of state has done violence to our natural inclinations, since it was not in your august person that we found the representative of that country, and thus your Majesty may judge with what affection and zeal we shall in future cherish and maintain union and close correspondence between your kingdom and this republic; since, now that we see your Majesty restored, our natural inclination and the interests of the state are united." We can imagine Charles II. replying with that easy courtesy, which was almost the only characteristic that he possessed in common with Charles I.:—"I take into consideration that you were forced to treat with people who, having revolted against my father, were equally persistent against me; but now you will have to do with men of honour."¹ Before ten years were out he had perfected the comedy by concluding the Treaty of Dover with Louis XIV. for a joint attack upon the United Provinces.

Mary was not slow to take advantage of this revulsion of feeling in favour of her family. When her brother took leave of the Estates of Holland he commended to them

¹ L. Pontalis, p. 248.

especially his sister and his nephew, and begged that their interests should not be neglected.¹ De Witt was somewhat embarrassed, but replied in vague language to the effect that a Prince of Orange, who was also a nephew of the King of England, would always be the object of their solicitude. In point of fact, Charles rather overacted his part, and in the course of the next year managed to alienate some of the towns who had hitherto supported the Orange interest,² but were fearful that the country would become a dependency of England (as was only too likely). But the immediate effect of the English restoration was to procure for Prince William a good deal of public attention and some material advantage. At Mary's instigation and under pressure from the King and the Duke of York, the Hollanders undertook the supervision of his education, removed the legal barrier to his appointment as Stadtholder in Holland, and withdrew their opposition to his appointment as Captain- and Admiral-General of the forces of the United Provinces. So soon as she had seen these changes accomplished Mary started to visit her brother's court.

It must have seemed to her as she left the country of her adoption for that of her birth, that the waves of distress and disaster had at length spent their force. Her family was once more installed in its ancestral possessions and her brother had regained a kingdom, infinitely more powerful than that which her father had lost. She had already been able to measure the effect of the returning fortunes of the Stuarts on the United Provinces. The unpopularity that had dogged her movements ever since her husband's ill-fated attempt on Amsterdam was now at any rate carefully concealed, if it was not entirely dispelled. Moreover, as the sister of the King of England, she was

¹ L. Pontalis, p. 249.

² G. van Prinsterer, p. 249.

likely to be entrusted with the more delicate negotiations between the sea Powers. Nor need her expectations end here. The Estates had been persuaded to remove the legal barrier to the revival of the Stadtholderate, and her son, a clever if eccentric child, must soon be fitted to enter upon the traditional career of his family. Everywhere the clouds seemed to be breaking away with the promise of a brighter future that should be some compensation for the past.

But it was not to be. Three months after Mary set foot in England, that hideous disease, which was rightly named the foe of the House of Orange, laid its hand upon her. It is possible that she might have recovered, had she been attended by any but the court physicians. As it was, the doctors, who had been held responsible for the death of the little Duke of Gloucester because they had not bled him sufficiently, did their utmost to atone for their misconduct by bleeding his sister so liberally that she was very soon incapable of fighting against her illness. She maintained, however, a perfect calm in the presence of death, and after making a will in which she commended her son and her son's interests to the care of her relations, she passed quietly away, four days after the small-pox had seized her. "I could not but admire," said the young Lord Chesterfield, who was present when she died, "her unconcernedness, constancy of mind and resolution, which well became the grandchild of Henry the Fourth of France."¹

It only remains to attempt to estimate Mary's character and work—to attempt, for the task is one of extreme difficulty since she was but thirty years old at the time of her death. How are we to measure fairly the value of a life that for all practical purposes lasted only ten years?

¹ Chesterfield Memoirs, p. 20.

How can we possibly determine what it might have been by what it was? Thirty or forty years of active service, however uneventful they may be, give us at least something to lay hold of. Some principles, good or bad as the case may be, must in that time have hardened into practice; and we feel justified in inferring that only very peculiar circumstances could avail to destroy them, and that even then the destruction could not be complete. But a decade gives us nothing safe on which to base a judgment. In such cases it is eminently true that "time and circumstance and opportunity paint with heedless hands and garish colours on the canvass of a man's life; so that the result is less frequently a finished picture than a palette of squeezed tints."¹ Hence in dealing with Mary it is important to remember that we are looking rather for promise than for performance.

This essay has been so generally confined to an attempt to present the Princess Royal in relation to the history of her times that very little has been said of her as a woman. We shall not endeavour at this point to supply the deficiency now, for those who desire it will find a plenteous crop of gossip and anecdote ready to hand in the pages of Mrs. Everett-Green. But in so far as this aspect of Mary lends colour to her external surroundings we cannot afford to neglect it wholly.

The licentious age in which Mary lived coupled her name after her husband's death, with more than one lover. Grammont distinctly, Burnet darkly, affirmed the existence of scandals, which it can serve no good purpose to revive. But the evidence in our opinion is insufficient to convict Mary even of indiscretion. She herself indignantly denied the allegations of her enemies, and so soon as she

¹ Lord Rosebery, "Pitt," p. 10.

learnt the current tale, acted in a manner to which no-one could take exception.

To her religion and to religious observances Mary remained true to the end. She was a staunch Anglican more probably by instinct than by conviction. But, anyhow, she would have been faithful to the religious beliefs that had been held by her father, and for which, in some sense, he had died. No efforts on the part of her mother—and the queen spared none—availed to shake her untutored prejudice against Rome. In her manner Mary curiously resembled her son. Like him she knew how to elicit an affectionate attachment from her attendants, like him, too, she maintained in general a reserve,¹ that was not perhaps wholly dissociated from pride. But, if we must allow that she discharged her social duties inefficiently, it is at least fair to remember that nothing more incongruous could have been devised than that the daughter of Charles I. and Henrietta Maria should preside over the Dutch *bourgeoisie*. Mary has been rather foolishly blamed for allowing her chief adherents to gain an influence over her counsels. Even if we admit the charge, we may well inquire what else she should have done. For she was little more than a girl at the time of her husband's death, not fully cognisant of the ways of the world and entirely devoid of any practical knowledge. Is it reasonable to blame her for taking the advice of Heenvliet and Lady Stanhope, the guardian and governess her father had chosen for her, and of Louis of Nassau, one of the staunchest of William's following; more especially when it has yet to be shown that the advice was bad?

Mary was, perhaps, the best of the children of Charles I. who lived to grow up; or rather we may say she showed the greatest promise. She does not seem to have been

¹ "Her speech precious because not frequent." (Manley.)

troubled either by the indolent cynicism of her eldest brother or the bigotry of her second; and she certainly escaped the love of intrigue that was so prominent in Henrietta. It is the fashion to think of the Stuarts as representing a particular type of character. But the fact is, if we examine the matter, that they are curiously unlike each other, and that it is only their almost invariable ill-luck which has caused them to be classed together. At the same time the popular idea has a certain truth, for all their misfortunes sprang from the one moral feature that they had in common—a kind of dogged persistence in pursuing the object that had captured their fancy, which sometimes merited the name of perseverance, but more often of obstinacy. This characteristic is apparent in the Princess of Orange no less than in her relatives, and it stood her in good stead. For the marvel really is that she held her ground so well, not that she failed to adopt more energetic measures to improve it. A woman who, before she has reached the age of twenty, is deprived under exceptionally cruel circumstances of her father and her husband to both of whom she is devotedly attached, and who is left to combat a hostile party in the state in the interests of her infant child whilst her supporters are weakened by factious divisions, must indeed have a resolute hand and a stout heart if she emerges from the ordeal with no loss of prestige. We cannot, of course, claim that Mary should be ranked with Blanche of Castille or Anne of Beaujeu. She probably did not possess their abilities, she certainly had not their opportunities. But, though in the main her policy was, and, broadly-speaking, was of necessity, a policy of inactivity, of holding-on, yet, when the fortune of war had turned, she showed herself capable of advancing her outposts. It was something to have obtained from the Estates of Holland a withdrawal of the constitutional difficulty to

her son's appointment as Stadtholder, and to have induced them at the same time to acknowledge their interest in his bringing up. To this extent Mary had secured her son's position before she set sail for England; and her achievement made a fitting crown to the ten years of courageous and unrecompensed resolution that had preceded it.

For Englishmen the main interest in Mary of Orange must lie in the fact that she was the mother of William III. We are, perhaps, too much inclined to think of the Whig Deliverer as an alien. He was, no doubt, rather a Dutchman than an Englishman, and he never pretended that the glades of Hampton Court or Windsor had ousted "the prim gardens of Loo" from their place in his heart. But it may be that the elements of his strange character were not so entirely supplied by the House of Orange-Nassau. The cold reserve blossoming beneath the sunshine of friendship into a vigorous goodwill, the patience that waited to pluck the fruit till it was fully ripe, the inability to catch the popular affection, the incapacity to understand the meaning of patriotism, the tendency to look upon a nation rather as an instrument than as an agent—these things are characteristic rather of the Princess Royal than of her husband.

It would be idle to pursue the subject further. Mary's personal qualities, like her political intelligence, were never fully developed. This essay has endeavoured to show the promise of the bud, but has only attempted to guess at the shape and colouring of the flower. If Mary is chiefly memorable as the link that connected such astonishingly different characters as Charles I. and William III., her story is by no means without a pathos of its own, for it is the story of a brave woman struggling against tremendous difficulties—sometimes indeed with hesitating steps, but never with uncertain resolve—and dying just in the moment of success.

HENRIETTA, DUCHESS OF ORLEANS

DAUGHTER OF CHARLES I.



HENRIETTA IN CHILDHOOD.

IV

HENRIETTA, DUCHESS OF ORLEANS, DAUGHTER OF CHARLES I.

EVERYONE who has read Bossuet's funeral oration upon Queen Henrietta Maria of England will remember how the preacher paused to remind his audience of the strange welcome which her youngest daughter had met with at the hands of an unchivalrous people. The story to which he alluded was indeed remarkable. No hour could have been less auspicious for the birth of an English princess than that at which Henrietta was born. The Civil War was at its height. Fortune, which had hitherto seemed disposed to favour the Royalist cause, was now turning against it, and whilst the spirits of the Parliament-men rose, those of their antagonists were sinking fast. In the North, between the Scots and the Fairfaxes the army of Newcastle maintained a precarious existence. In the South, an unexpected disaster had frustrated the well-laid schemes of the Royalist generals. They had contrived by a dexterous manœuvre to cut off Waller from London and to throw open the way into Sussex and Kent; Manchester and Essex must hasten to the rescue, and Rupert would then be free to extricate the army of Newcastle from its perilous situation. But the rashness of an unruly cavalier and the skill of the Parliamentary commander shattered these fair hopes at the very moment when they seemed on the point of fulfilment. Attacking Waller at Cheriton, the King's forces were deci-

sively repulsed. In the general panic which ensued it was decided that the Queen, being near the time of her delivery, should leave Oxford without delay. Various towns were talked of as fit places of refuge—Chester, whence she might cross over to Ireland, Bristol, whence she might escape to France—but the place which the King ultimately selected was Exeter. There, on June 16, 1644, Henrietta was born. No sooner had the event taken place than tidings were received that a hostile army was advancing against the city, and it was realised that, in spite of the vigorous preparations made by the townsmen for defence, the Queen's position was full of danger. She accordingly applied to the Parliamentary commander for a safe-conduct to Bath, but her request was insolently refused; and within a fortnight of the birth of her child the danger of investment had become so imminent that she was compelled to resolve upon flight. Writing to the King [June 29] that she was determined "to risk this miserable life of mine, a thing worthless enough in itself, saving in so far as it is precious to you," she rose from the sick-bed where she had lain ill almost to the point of paralysis, and escaped in disguise from the city. The expression which she had employed in her letter to Charles did not exaggerate the danger which the undertaking involved, but fortune abetted the fugitive, and she passed unscathed through perils by land and by sea to the shores of her native country.

Scarcely had she departed when Charles reached Exeter. The infant daughter whom he now beheld for the first time, and in whom he had been encouraged to look for "the youngest and . . . the prettiest of his children," he greeted with emotion as the parting pledge and *souvenir* of the Queen whom he had come to rescue. All that his affection could suggest was done for the young Princess before he retired from the West. By his orders she had already been

baptised¹ in the Cathedral according to the Anglican rite, and her household was now augmented by the appointment of an Anglican chaplain. Her temporal wants having been also provided for, she was confided to the care of Sir John Berkeley, who held the city for the King, and of Lady Dalkeith, her capable and trusty governess. Save for an abortive attempt to appropriate her revenues to military purposes, a year or more passed without incident, but in the autumn of 1645 Exeter was once more besieged. On this occasion, in spite of a determined resistance, the town was forced to capitulate [April, 1646]; but its staunch governor would not hear of surrender, till it had been expressly stipulated that, pending the announcement of the King's pleasure, the Princess should be free to reside wheresoever her guardian might please. The clause, however, was not observed with that scrupulous good faith upon which the party who had guaranteed it were wont to pride themselves. Henrietta was removed to Oatlands, and her departure thence was forbidden. Nor was this all, for although the funds assigned for her maintenance were no longer available, both generals and Parliament ignored the claims made on her behalf. At length a demand more urgent than those that had gone before elicited a response, but not such as its author, Lady Dalkeith, had desired or could contemplate with equanimity. It was ordered by the Commons that the Princess's retinue should be dismissed, that her person should be removed to St. James's Palace, where her brother and sister were already detained, and that provision should be made for her maintenance by a Committee authorised for the purpose. In accordance with the

¹ The register calls her "Henrietta" simply; the name "Anne" was subsequently assumed by way of compliment to the Queen Regent of France. Both names occur in the signature of an autograph letter to Cardinal de Retz dated 2 October [1669].

King's injunctions that she was to remain with her charge at all hazards, Lady Dalkeith applied to the Speakers of both Houses for permission to accompany the Princess. Both applications proved unsuccessful, but the applicant was not a woman to be thus easily thwarted. Possessed of the courage and resource which the undertaking required, and undaunted by its perilous character, she resolved to flee with her charge to the Queen in Paris. When once the resolution had been made, no time was lost. Patched and tattered garments were substituted for the apparel which Henrietta ordinarily wore, and the name "Pierre" was given her as resembling more nearly than any other her own lispng version of the title "Princess". Donning a ragged gown and stuffing it with scraps of linen to impart an appearance of deformity to her tall and elegant figure, Lady Dalkeith hoped to pass disguised as a valet's wife, the *rôle* of husband being assigned to a French serving-man who, on being admitted to the secret, had generously proffered his escort. Suddenly, on July 25 [1646], it was discovered at Oatlands that pupil and-governess had disappeared. By the fugitives' desire three days were allowed to elapse before the fact was revealed to the Parliament; but the precaution seems to have been superfluous, for when the news came it was received with indifference, and no orders were given for pursuit.

Meanwhile, on foot, and with the infant in their arms, the confederates had been hastening towards the coast. Reaching Dover without obstacle, they crossed the Channel in the ordinary packet, and landed safely at Calais. No longer apprehensive of molestation or detention, they then discarded the disguise for which there was no further necessity; and it is said that Henrietta, who had shown an infantile scorn of all precautions, hailed the re-appearance of her own costly frocks with every mark of satisfaction.

Nor had she any further occasion for complaint, for, intelligence of their arrival being despatched to the English Queen in Paris, carriages and servants were forthwith provided, and the remainder of the journey was accomplished under the most favourable conditions.

The joy of the Queen at recovering the child whom she regarded as her "enfant de bénédiction" knew no bounds. In the first ecstasy of her delight she vowed that the Princess should become a Roman Catholic, and would not rest content till she had expressed her gratitude in this somewhat singular manner. It was subsequently asserted that the impolitic measure had received the sanction of Charles I., but the assertion must be regarded with suspicion. Cyprien de Gamache, who could not have been ignorant of such a fact and would have been the last to suppress it, has left his opinion upon record that the King "would not have consented to her being a Catholic"; and his opinion would seem to be borne out by the proof of loyalty to his Church which Charles had given in the matter of her baptism. But whatever her husband's views may have been, there were many around the daughter of Henry of Navarre who warmly applauded her resolution, whilst the greatest of them all solemnly declared that Providence had designed the English rebellion for the express purpose of ensuring the conversion of the young Princess.

But whilst the Queen was still exulting over Henrietta's unlooked-for escape, a grim tragedy was being enacted in England. There the drama which she had painfully followed was drawing to its close with the captivity and execution of the King. For so terrible an end she was wholly unprepared, and, had her worst fears been compared with the reality, the gloomy suspense in which she awaited the issue might have passed for buoyant optimism. The truth, when revealed to her, was stunning, and made her callous to the

dangers and difficulties in which she herself was becoming involved. Yet her situation was one which might in other moods have caused her no slight anxiety. No sooner had the Fronde commenced than Paris became the arena of contending factions, leaving the hapless Queen the tenant of a deserted palace, menaced by the passions of a turbulent populace, and well-nigh destitute of the very means of subsistence. Awaking to a sense of her lonely and precarious position, she pleaded for the company of Charles II. who had taken refuge with his sister in Holland; and the exile hastened to Paris in obedience to her summons. Nevertheless she was not to enjoy his society for long, for as soon as her safety was assured, the zeal of his adherents lured him from his filial duties, and he left her to make a wild bid for his crown.

In spite of the anxiety with which she followed her son's desperate fortunes, Queen Henrietta paid the most scrupulous attention to the education of her little daughter. No better occupation could have been devised for the unhappy lady who had sustained the loss of husband and of throne, and it formed for a while the main interest of her life. If she paused at the outset of her task to pass in review the events of Henrietta's childhood, the dismal retrospect may have inspired her with some misgiving. Yet there was one encouraging feature, and she may have hoped that at all events in so far as the moral discipline of the young Princess was concerned, the uses of adversity had produced their proverbially sweet results. The friend and biographer of Henrietta observed that the complete seclusion in which she lived enabled her to acquire the virtues which are fostered by the conditions of private life; nor would it have been amiss to add that she reaped the converse benefit of immunity from the peculiar temptations which assail the occupants of a palace. The position of a royal family exempts its members

from many a petty defect, at least from such as spring from that craving for social advancement which forms the ignoble preoccupation of many minds; but education on the steps of a throne is not invariably wholesome, nor has every princess experienced the good fortune which Henrietta enjoyed of being nurtured in a moral atmosphere of which fortitude, humility, and submission were the dominant elements. Her time was for the most part spent in the convent of Chaillot, where her mother loved to dwell. In the seclusion of this retreat life threatened to be a somewhat uninteresting matter to a young and spirited child. Visitors to the convent were surprised at the severe simplicity of her dress and habits, but it was only those who came there on the festivals of the Church who saw how complete was the system of moral and physical discipline which the Queen had prescribed for her. On those occasions the nuns were placed in a novel and perhaps uncomfortable position, for when they sat at table, they were served by the little Princess. Such exceptional facilities for acquiring the virtue of humility might not commend themselves to every royal neophyte; but Henrietta performed her strange duties with a manifest pleasure which endeared her to all beholders and filled Cyprien de Gamache, her preceptor, with unbounded delight. As for her amusements, they were of a very mild order. In the circumstances in which she was placed Queen Henrietta naturally shrank from the gaiety and pleasures of the French Court, and she disliked them as well on her daughter's account as on her own, for she was convinced that they would exercise a pernicious influence on the health and imagination of a girl. Others, however, who were familiar with the young recluse, looked askance upon her mode of life, and set themselves to undermine the resolution which Henrietta Maria had formed. After the most

strenuous endeavours they at length succeeded. In February, 1654, upon the occasion of the marriage of the Prince de Conti, Henrietta was permitted to appear at Court. Though not yet ten years old, her winning manners attracted general notice, and on again appearing in a royal ballet a few months later she acquitted herself so creditably that she heightened the favourable impression which she had already made.

Meanwhile, in spite of these events, she had been striving to carry out her mother's wishes and to resume her old life of solitude and study. To do so would in any case have been difficult, but it was made impossible by the influence of the Queen Regent of France. Anne of Austria was amongst the warmest of Henrietta's admirers, and she now gave a signal proof of the sincerity of her regard. The time had come when she must choose a bride for her young son, the King, and she now told her sister-in-law that Henrietta was the princess whom she would most willingly select for the great place which was about to be filled. Nothing could have been more surprising or more acceptable to the exiled Queen. However sincere her former objections may have been, she speedily withdrew her opposition to the appearance of her daughter at the diversions of the Court, and it was with her entire approval that the Regent determined to give a ball in honour of the English Princess [1655]. Much was hoped of the occasion; what came of it was worse than nothing. Louis, whose sense of duty should have compelled him to open the dance with his little cousin, even if his inclination did not prompt him to do so, completely ignored her existence, and prepared to lead out a lady who had succeeded for the nonce in firing his young imagination. His mother instantly intervened, but Henrietta Maria judged that his wrath was more to be feared than his neglect, and

hastened to assert—with a diplomatic sacrifice of the truth—that her daughter had injured her foot and was quite unable to dance. To this the Regent angrily replied that the King should either dance with the Princess or should not dance at all. The King, however, was intractable; and when she remonstrated with him upon his discourteous conduct and revealed her design, he scornfully disposed of all that could be urged in Henrietta's favour by emphatically declaring that he disliked little girls. His aversion to the marriage, ominous enough in itself, was the more formidable on account of the attitude of Cardinal Mazarin. In the political creed of that astute ecclesiastic a policy of magnanimity had no place, and an alliance with the House of Stuart had nothing to offer in the way of such prospective advantages as might have induced him to espouse Henrietta's cause. The avowed disapproval of the King and the ill-concealed reluctance of the Cardinal dealt the death-blow to the hopes which the two Queens had entertained. It might perhaps have been foreseen from the beginning that other counsels would ultimately prevail, for it was extremely improbable that an exiled princess would mount the throne of France as the consort of Louis XIV.

The frustration of the great hope which they had cherished was a keen disappointment to the English Queen and her daughter, but joyful tidings were soon to reach them. In England that for which they had almost ceased to hope had come to pass. With the death of Cromwell, the abdication of his son, and the discord which divided the dominant faction against itself, the star of Charles was at length in the ascendant. Henrietta, who had contracted a deep affection for the brother whose favourite plaything she had been, anxiously awaited the issue, and when the tidings of his triumphant return came, received them with unfeigned delight. Early in June, 1660, Charles wrote to

her to announce his arrival in England and to give her some notion of the exuberant enthusiasm with which he had been welcomed. "To know that you have reached England," she replied, "and at the same time that you have not forgotten me, has given me the greatest joy in the world; indeed I wish I could adequately express to you what have been my thoughts thereupon, and you would see how true it is that there is no one more your servant than I."

To what extent Henrietta herself was to benefit by this sudden and unlooked-for change in the fortunes of Charles was soon shown by the formal demand of her hand in marriage on behalf of Monsieur, Duke of Orleans, the only brother of the French King. As soon as this proposal was made to her, Henrietta Maria transmitted the news to her son, assuring him that his sister was nothing loath, and that Monsieur awaited his reply with extreme impatience. His anxiety relieved by a prompt and favourable answer, the course of his new-born love ran smooth for the moment; but there was a trial in store for him, for Henrietta and her mother had promised to pay a visit to the English Court. Every arrangement had indeed been made, and the departure from Paris took place. After a long and tedious journey they reached London in November 1660. There, in spite of some present sorrow and of many affecting memories of the past, a family re-union of the happiest kind took place. For Henrietta, who was too young to be haunted by thoughts of an order which had been swept away, this visit to her brother's kingdom was the most intense of pleasures. It was a triumph as well. She won the heart not only of every courtier, but of the whole nation. Manifold tokens revealed the admiration which she everywhere excited. Every book was dedicated to her, every entertainment organised in her honour. Whilst the

citizens flocked to catch a glimpse of her as she passed through the streets of their capital, the courtiers vied with each other in their efforts to win her favour. Even the Parliament succumbed to the epidemical enthusiasm. Not content with having presented an address of congratulation upon her arrival in England, the House of Commons now proceeded to vote her a gift of £10,000, and—what was more remarkable—they despatched the money itself on the very day on which the resolution was carried. In a letter to the Speaker, Henrietta graciously expressed her thanks: she was conscious, she said, that her knowledge of the English tongue was defective, but she trusted that she made amends by keeping an English heart. That the Parliament was of that opinion may be legitimately inferred from the generosity with which they contributed to her dowry.¹

In the meantime it was becoming apparent that Monsieur's rapid triumph was a source of regret in various quarters. That it might be so considered by the spoiled favourites of Charles was a matter of small concern, but more formidable rivals were in the field. Amongst those who were suitors for Henrietta's hand were now to be found the Emperor, the King of Portugal, and the Duke of Savoy, and they showed little inclination to desist from their suit even when their offers were emphatically refused on the ground that the Princess was already the affianced bride of another. At the intelligence of these events Monsieur's jealous nature promptly took alarm; nor was he comforted by the assurance of Henrietta herself

¹ The equivalent in French money of the sum voted by them was 560,000 *livres*. To this the impecunious Charles contrived to add gold and jewels of about half that value, whilst Louis and his brother promised her an annual revenue of 40,000 *livres*, together with the Château of Montargis, sumptuously furnished, for a place of residence.

that she neither regretted nor would withdraw her promise. His only reply was to entreat the Queen to return with her daughter to Paris without delay. Terrified lest Henrietta should be attacked by the small-pox to which the Princess of Orange had already succumbed, she responded readily to his appeal, and preparations for their departure were begun forthwith. As soon as these were completed they set out for Portsmouth, where a superb vessel lay in readiness to carry them to France. They had not been embarked long before they experienced the ill fortune which invariably pursued the Queen whenever she ventured upon the seas. A violent storm burst upon the fleet. The ships which formed their escort were scattered or destroyed. The flag-ship which carried them was for a time in the gravest peril. At length the fury of the wind abated before any grave mishap had occurred, but the vessel had suffered too severely to proceed with safety, and was forced to return to Portsmouth to refit. There fresh troubles were in store for the travellers. Henrietta became seriously unwell, and it was feared that the small-pox, which had already proved so fatal to the Queen's children, might carry off another victim. Fortunately, however, there was no foundation for the gloomy prognostications in which the physicians indulged, and the patient was soon in a condition to resume her journey. Thenceforward she was disturbed by nothing more perilous than the importunities of the Duke of Buckingham. Though by no means the most dangerous, the Duke was amongst the most ardent of Monsieur's rivals. He had followed up his meteoric infatuation for the Princess of Orange by laying the tribute of his fickle love at Henrietta's feet, and now, with his indulgent master's consent, he was accompanying her to Paris. His antics, which had already made him the laughing-stock of the Court, served for a while to

relieve the monotony of the journey; but so grotesque did his conduct become that, by the time Havre was reached, it was a cause rather of annoyance than of amusement; therefore a pretext was devised for bidding him go on alone to Paris. There he quickly excited the furious indignation of Monsieur, and it was politely intimated to him that his absence from England was a calamity which that country could be no longer expected to endure.

Now that Henrietta had returned to France there was no reason why the marriage should be further delayed, and as soon as the papal dispensation had been procured, the ceremonies connected with it were proceeded with. In consequence of the Lenten season they were marked by an extreme simplicity. The contract was signed on March 30 [1661], and on the following day the formal act of betrothal took place. Then, in the Queen of England's private chapel, in the presence only of some few members of the French Royal Family and of Lord St. Albans, the English ambassador, the marriage service itself was celebrated.

The bride was not unworthy of the great position which she was thenceforth to occupy. She possessed in full measure the charm which characterized the members of her House, and the courtiers who thronged her palace declared, in the language of enthusiastic panegyric, that France had never seen a princess so remarkable for beauty, grace, and wit. Had they been aware of the terms in which Pepys had spoken of her, they would neither have commended his taste nor concurred in his opinions. "The Princesse Henrietta is very pretty," he had written in his Diary, "but much below my expectation; and her dressing of herself with her haire frized short up to her eares, did make her seem so much the less to me. But my wife standing near her with two or three black patches on, and well dressed, did seem to me much hand-

somer than she." It may be doubted whether the comparison would have been so unfavourable to the Princess in the opinion of an impartial critic. She was generally reputed to be the most beautiful woman of her time. Her portraits may perhaps suggest the reflection that in that case her less favoured rivals can have had little of which to boast; but we are told that her beauty was of an evasive kind, more dependent on the expression and animation of the face than on any regularity of feature or purity of outline. Contemporary writers frequently attempted to describe her appearance, and never without admiration. They concur in praising her refined and delicate features, her exquisite nose and mouth, the colouring of her lips and the whiteness of her teeth, the softness and lustre of her deep blue eyes,¹ and the aureole of auburn hair in which her face was set. The extreme delicacy of her complexion delighted them no less, but it also filled them with foreboding, for it seemed to presage an early death. There were other grounds for that apprehension. "Tout en elle... trahissait la poitrine;" and such was the slender frailty of her person that Louis could flippantly rally his brother upon the eagerness which he displayed to marry the bones of the Holy Innocents. There was a slight stoop about her shoulders which has been severely termed a deformity, for it was an almost imperceptible blemish, and even to Monsieur himself the discovery of it came as one of those post-nuptial disillusionments to which mankind is liable. Gamache commends both "her exquisite figure" and "her sweetly majestic carriage," declaring that "all her motions were so correct, so well regulated that there was nobody but praised her;" and it was generally con-

¹ "Choisy dit, il est vrai, que les yeux de Madame étaient noirs. Mais les yeux bleus, ceux surtout qui sont d'un bleu de saphir, et ce sont les plus beaux, paraissent noirs quand la pupille est dilatée." Anatole France.

sidered that she was possessed of the quality which La Fontaine described when he wrote of

“La grâce plus belle encore que la beauté.”

Up to the time of her marriage Henrietta had been but little known at the French Court, and those who had occasionally seen her in the Queen of England's apartments had been accustomed to regard her as a timid and spiritless child. They were now surprised by the easy grace with which she discharged the duties of her new position, by her gaiety and vivacity, her winning manners and unflinching tact. Competent judges of such qualities extolled her taste and discrimination in art and letters, the subtlety of her wit, the sprightliness of her imagination; and those who lived to endure the malicious back-biting of la Montespan and the sterilising reserve of Madame de Maintenon were often heard to deplore the change which had come over the Court since the days of the young Madame. “She had all the qualities that go to make a charming woman,” said the Abbé de Choisy, “and all that are needed for the conduct of important affairs, had opportunities for displaying them presented themselves.” The most censorious of all her critics admits that she “was thought the wittiest woman in France.” “Madame,” said a shrewd ecclesiastic who knew her well, “avoit l'esprit solide et délicat, du bon sens, connaissant les choses fines, l'âme grande et juste, éclairée sur tout ce qu'il faudroit faire, mais quelquefois ne le faisant pas, ou par une paresse naturelle, ou par une certaine hauteur d'âme qui se ressentoit de son origine, et qui lui faisoit envisager un devoir comme une bassesse. Elle mêloit dans toute sa conversation une douceur qu'on ne trouvoit point dans toutes les autres personnes royales. Ce n'est pas qu'elle eût moins de majesté; mais elle en savoit user d'une manière

plus facile et plus touchante ; de sorte qu'avec tant de qualités toutes divines, elle ne laissoit pas d'être la plus humaine du monde." To her was attributed the introduction of that politeness and grace which made France consider herself the ultimate arbiter in all matters of taste, the school and model of all human manners. In the eyes of an historian her figure stands clearly defined as "l'idole de la cour et la muse des écrivains et des artistes."¹ All the wit and learning of the age gathered round her. Among her intimate friends were the two great generals of the day, Condé and Turenne, wits like La Rochefoucauld and Bussy, men of learning like Cosnac, Tréville, and Bossuet. The most brilliant women of the Court, Madame de Sablé, Madame de Sévigné, and Madame de la Fayette, delighted in her society. Racine, Boileau, and Molière were early taken into her favour. No one was more quick to appreciate their talents, more eager to aid and protect them; and they acknowledged that, although they did not always follow her suggestions, they never listened without interest and profit to her just and stimulating criticism. Racine, dedicating a tragedy to her, declared, in somewhat high-flown language, that an author might feel satisfied that he had acquitted himself with credit when he had succeeded in pleasing the Princess who was the arbiter of what is beautiful. One day, when the author of *Le Lutrin* was comparatively unknown, she noticed him in the midst of a group of courtiers, and greeted him by quoting a line from his own poem. It was Molière, however, who owed most to her patronage and protection. Everyone will remember how she stood sponsor to his infant son when he was pursued by the most spiteful calumnies, and how, when pedants and bigots had conspired to destroy his *Tartuffe*, she entered the lists as his champion

¹ Henri Martin.

and contributed to his ultimate triumph. Amongst the dedications of his plays there is one which is marked by a serious and earnest tenderness; it is that which is prefixed to *L'Ecole des Femmes*, addressed to Madame. "On n'est pas en peine, sans doute, comme il faut faire pour vous louer: la matière, Madame, ne saute que trop aux yeux; et de quelque côté qu'on vous regarde, on rencontre gloire sur gloire et qualités sur qualités. Vous en avez, Madame, du côté du rang et de la naissance, qui vous font respecter de toute la terre. Vous en avez du côté des graces et de l'esprit et du corps, qui vous font admirer de toutes les personnes qui vous voient. Vous en avez du côté de l'âme, qui, si l'on ose parler ainsi, vous font aimer de tous ceux qui ont l'honneur d'approcher de vous: je veux dire cette douceur pleine de charme dont vous daignez tempérer la fierté des grands titres que vous portez, cette bonté toute obligeante, cette affabilité généreuse que vous faites paraître pour tout le monde." This is no sham tribute in the mouth of Molière: it was not by chance that some of the most charming of his creations, Léonor, for instance, in *L'Ecole des Maris*, and Henriette in *Les Femmes Savantes*, were instinct with Madame's own peculiar charm.

To perform in a ballet and to patronise a dramatist was no trivial matter in seventeenth-century France. The theatre then constituted a social and religious question of the most formidable description, and its existence was in jeopardy. Narrow and bigoted theologians, with a powerful party of fanatics at their back, poured opprobrium on the stage, inveighed against the playwright, anathematized the actor. It was only after a long struggle that the triumph of the drama was secured. Richelieu, who regarded the stage as a valuable instrument of civilisation, had been confronted by the vulgar prejudice which sought to degrade

it. Under Mazarin his views had indeed survived in an indulgent section of the clerical party, but it had been no easy matter to set at rest the uneasy conscience of Anne of Austria. In the early days of Louis the contest had begun afresh, and Henrietta took a bold line in ignoring the declamations of a noisy priesthood. Piety stood aghast. "Elle affectoit de faire l'esprit fort." Had she not applauded the comedies of Molière, and wept over the tragedies of Racine?

Of a very different order of beings was Madame's husband, Philip, Duke of Orleans. Warned by the lessons of the preceding reign, Mazarin had desired that the brother of Louis XIV. should be fitted to play only the most insignificant part, and to concern himself with nothing but the most paltry affairs. The system of education which he devised succeeded beyond his most ardent expectations. Monsieur grew into a man ignorant, effeminate, and vain, devoid of affection, but consumed by jealousy, destitute of ambition and of intelligence, without an honourable sentiment, a noble aspiration, or a single great quality, the dupe of all who stooped to flatter him and the easy prey of every sycophant. Fired by the example of the Abbé de Choisy, who had contrived in the course of a vicious career to offend the taste of even that indulgent age, the Duke would appear at masquerades in feminine attire and would study the effect of his patches and paint with more than feminine vanity; nor was he easily restrained from mimicking his profligate friend's more grotesque and less pardonable antics. Had he belonged to a prominent section of the society of our own time, he could not have been more addicted to giving parties and holding receptions, nor more absorbed in the pursuit of pleasure and the study of dress. However specious the pretexts which he devised, the constant recurrence of his receptions was attributed—and

with justice—to the vanity which made him long for a Court of his own; his spirits would rise or fall according to the number of his guests, and he was never so happy as when he was able to edge his way through crowded rooms, directing the attention of all to the magnitude of the assembled company. His love of dress was inordinate. He welcomed state functions and family bereavements with equal pleasure since both furnished him with opportunities of displaying himself in new and sumptuous costumes; and it was observed that, though he danced well, he could not dance like a man because his shoes were too high-heeled. When he was with the army, the soldiers used to say that he was more afraid of being sun-burnt, and of the blackness of the powder, than of the musket-balls; and it may well have been true, for he could show upon occasion that, little as the virtue had been developed, he did not wholly lack the personal valour in which the Bourbons were seldom deficient. He habitually behaved towards the King with a submission that was almost servile, but he was as irritable and petulant as a spoiled child, and once, in an access of ungovernable passion, he dashed a bowl of soup into his brother's face. Not the least singular of his foibles was the affectation of religious zeal, and he could address his dying mother in the language of an exalted piety that seemed the outcome of a life of prayer and penitence. Secretly he leaned towards depravity; yet, though he set small store by chastity, he opposed to the blandishments of the most seductive women a cold and apathetic indifference. His second wife believed that he was never in love during his life, and Madame de la Fayette, who knew him well, declared that to inflame his heart was a thaumaturgic feat beyond the power of women. But if he was impervious to their charms he thirsted eagerly for their ad-

miration, and he would never forgive a lady who scorned to simulate grief at his departure for the seat of war. Every action of his life augmented the reputation which he had so justly acquired for incompetence and folly. When political malcontents urged him to make a bid for the throne of Naples, he replied that the town was said to be subject to earthquakes and in the immediate vicinity of a volcano: a kingdom with such a capital had no attractions for him. Indeed, his puerile inability to cope with serious affairs would of itself have justified the contempt with which he was universally regarded.

The France of Louis XIV. occupies a conspicuous place in the history of Europe. A host of writers have dwelt upon its power and prestige, the splendour of its King, the pomp and magnificence, the refinement and elegance, of its Court. But historians judge an epoch from a distance. Concerning themselves only with its broadest features and most dominant characteristics, they describe it with a precision and simplicity which are apt to deceive in that they necessitate the sacrifice of those minor details without which the picture is incomplete. Nothing is so false as the assumption that all is great in a great age. Good and evil mingle in proportions which never greatly vary, and every age is marred by much that is petty and vile. The vaunted reign of Louis XIV. was no exception to the rule.¹ The worldly wisdom of a brilliant but hollow society divested life of every troublesome obligation, and avowed that amusement was its end and object. Its boast was that never in any country or in any age had social charm made life so agreeable. In the expressive phrase of Taine, the courtiers under the *ancien régime* were men for whom life was a play. Everything was permissible, provided that

¹ See M. Gaston Boissier's brilliant essay on Madame de Sévigné: *Grands Ecrivains* Series.

it made existence more interesting or more agreeable. All the world was of opinion that it might be desirable to die in the grace of God, but they cordially agreed with the lady who found it irksome to have to live in it; *ennui* was the only evil which the courtier feared in this world and the sole cause of his apprehension as to the next. Modesty, kindness, loftiness and purity of sentiment were not included in the catalogue of moral virtues. The restrictions which the Decalogue had sought to impose upon the most powerful of human passions were seldom suffered to throw the shadow of constraint across the most interesting of human relations. Marriage, with its onerous duties and tiresome limitations, was regarded as a fruitful source of misery. Unable to establish a social *régime* under which marrying and giving in marriage should be dispensed with, the courtier nevertheless endeavoured to enjoy some of its more terrestrial advantages by divesting the superfluous institution of its sacramental character, and debasing it to the level of a civil contract with no claims upon the fidelity of either party. Conjugal love was held up to ridicule as a species of felicity unfit for a gentleman; conjugal fidelity was relegated to the degraded position of a *bourgeois* convention. The King set the example; the courtier hastened to pay him the compliment of that sincere flattery which takes the form of imitation.

To the members of this society the central point of the universe is the person of their sovereign. It is in the royal presence that the subject lives and moves and has his being—the rest is nothing. “I would as soon die,” cried the Duc de Richelieu, “as be two months without a glimpse of royalty.” There were men who enjoyed the reputation of having spent forty-five years of their life upon their feet in the presence of royalty, and it was in no jesting spirit that one of them insisted that the proper rules for the

conduct of life were to speak well of everybody, to ask for everything that was going, and to sit down when you got the chance. "He who will consider," observed La Bruyère, "how the face of the sovereign makes all the happiness of the courtier, how he busies himself and fills his whole life with seeing him and being near him, will understand in some measure how it is that the sight of God makes all the glory and felicity of the saints." The ironical parallel recalls the terms of fulsome adulation in which Louis was wont to be addressed. The Parlement informed him that it looked upon him as a living image of the Divinity. "The Prince," thought the Duc de Montausier, "is the lieutenant of God in his kingdom, and one of His images in the earth." When the distinction was so slight, some confusion ensued; and it was doubted whether the services in the royal chapel were held for the worship of God, or designed for the gratification of His representative.¹

Such were some of the principles of the Court in which Henrietta now took a prominent place. She was received with an outburst of enthusiasm. "The men thought only of paying their court to her, and the women of gaining her good graces." The King, who had despised her so recently, repented of his error, and strove to atone for it by courting her with the most determined assiduity. Callous to public opinion and indifferent to the jealous feelings of his Queen, he scarcely attempted to disguise his admiration. When the Court went to Fontainebleau in the summer of 1661, she became the life and soul of its pleasures. There was not a project formed that had not her gratification for its object. No sort of gaiety and dissipation was left untried: conventionality was thrown to the winds. Fascinated by the vast and mysterious forest and

¹ See, for example, St. Simon's *Mémoires*, v. 423, 424.

allured by the prospect of privacy which it offered, Madame often consented to accompany the King upon expeditions which began at the setting of the sun, and had not always terminated when it rose again. Such indiscreet conduct could not fail to provoke comment, and it placed a dangerous weapon in the hands of those who were enraged by the deference with which Louis treated her. Anne of Austria, who could countenance her son's deviations from the path of virtue when the tempter was without intelligence or ambition, was infuriated by his attachment to a Princess whose influence seemed likely to extinguish her own. Enchanted by the importance which he himself derived from it, Monsieur had at first contemplated his wife's triumph with satisfaction; but it required no great skill on the part of her ill-wishers to stir his slumbering jealousy into activity. On all sides efforts were made to alienate the King from Madame. Counsel, insinuation, argument, all means were employed. Louis was informed of his wife's jealousy, and his fears were adroitly aroused by a suggestion of the disastrous effect which it might produce. He was reminded of the measures which he had taken for the better government of the Church, and it was softly insinuated that his conduct might seem to be somewhat at variance with the austere principles which he had inculcated. Then the enemies of Madame followed up their advantage by a more dexterous manœuvre: they magnified her genius, and pointed out to the King that, even if she did not seek to govern him, it would nevertheless be assumed that he was merely the slave and instrument of so accomplished a counsellor. Louis at once took alarm, and decided that he would counterfeit a passion for one of her maids-of-honour in order to conceal his real sentiments. But the lady whom he made the recipient of his attentions was Mlle. de La Vallière, and ere long his simulated

devotion became a profound reality. It was not without mortification that Henrietta saw herself supplanted in his affections by the naïve girl who had been chosen to play so very different a part; but she was too proud to show her vexation, too gentle to harbour animosity against its authors. When she afterwards hit upon the notion of producing a friendly duel between Corneille and Racine, she suggested as a theme for their plays the love and the parting of Titus and Berenice; and in the eyes of contemporaries the interest of Racine's drama was not a little increased, not only by its direct references to the rupture between the King and Marie de Mancini, but also by its more veiled allusions to the abrupt close of Madame's own short romance.

The life of pleasure into which Madame had recklessly thrown herself at Fontainebleau and the bitter deception in which it ended, exercised the most deleterious influence upon her health. She became pale and emaciated, was racked by a cough which sometimes threatened suffocation, and could not sleep without the aid of opiates. But although she had to be carried to Paris in a litter and was unable to leave her bed, her room was thronged with visitors from early morning till late at night. Thus, in the midst of diversions which did much to raise her spirits, the winter passed; and she was already nearly restored when she became involved in another and more serious intrigue.

Those who are familiar with the charming book in which Madame de la Fayette has told the story of Henrietta's life at Court, will remember how conspicuous a place in her narrative is occupied by the Comte de Guiche. He was a man who seemed to himself and to many of those who knew him to be destined for the part of hero in some romantic tale; and if love of self, love of fame, a reckless indifference to the feelings of others, and a supreme dis-

regard of consequences be held to be qualifications, then he was not ill fitted for that singular vocation. Son of the Maréchal de Gramont and son-in-law of the Duc de Sulli, he enjoyed a liberal share of the world's most coveted gifts, and fortune had added a faultless perfection of face and manner. But his mind had not been formed on the graceful pattern of his person, and the overweening conceit, which was the dominant trait in his shallow character, blinded him to the distinction between notoriety and renown. The prime favourite of Monsieur, brother of Madame's bosom-friend, nephew of the lady who was about to become the governess of her children, and an indispensable ally in the amusements she planned, everything conspired to throw him in her way; and when the King forsook her he was free to make use of his opportunities. It was not without pleasure that he noticed how profound was the impression made upon the Court by the discovery of his passion for its favourite, for he had been seduced rather by the perilous glory of loving so high than by any real desire that she should play the part of Guinevere to his Launcelot. Before long the gossip of the courtiers came to the ears of Monsieur, who upbraided his friend with incontinent violence: whereupon Guiche, blurting out an insolent retort, withdrew from Court.

All this while the heroine of the affair had been blissfully ignorant of what was happening, and, when she heard of it, her first feeling was one of anger with the man who had presumed to minister to his vanity at the expense of her good name. Here the matter would have ended but for the intervention of a certain Mlle. de Montalais, one of Madame's maids-of-honour. This Montalais was a scheming, unscrupulous woman, at home in every murky by-way of Court intrigue, whose object was to insinuate herself into the confidence of some great person. Her own mistress

was the obvious victim, and she saw her opportunity in the passion, or policy, of Guiche. As soon as he returned to Court, she went to him and promised him her aid. Then her campaign opened. Seeking a private interview with her mistress and throwing herself at her feet, she drew an affecting picture of the young nobleman's love and unhappiness, and Guiche, who little needed such encouragement, was enchanted to hear of the complaisance with which the discourse had been received. He was now emboldened to take more perilous measures. The novels of the time had led him to suppose that no lover can ever allow a day to pass without inditing at least four epistles to his mistress, and Montalais was soon busily employed as the bearer of his letters to the Princess. These she took and read—a harmless if foolish proceeding, for the language in which the Count enveloped the outpourings of his soul defied interpretation. The whole affair was nothing but a piece of innocent folly, as is proved by an anecdote which belongs to the period of Madame's illness. One day in broad daylight and in the presence of many ladies of the Court, Guiche made his way to the side of her sick-bed in the disguise of a fortune-teller. The risk of detection was great and its consequences would have been serious for them both: yet they could find no more important topic to discuss than the foibles and idiosyncrasies of Monsieur.

Such was still the posture of affairs when the secret was betrayed to the King. Louis, still too young to be a stern judge of such faults, readily promised to deal indulgently with the peccant Count, although he roundly rebuked Henrietta for the imprudence of which she had been guilty. Consequently, when she casually learnt that Guiche was ordered to join the troops in Lorraine, she was not a little astonished. In the dramatic relation of Montalais her sur-

prise lost none of its significance, and Guiche, mistaking it for displeasure, vowed that he would decline an appointment which was none of his seeking. Even after Henrietta herself had solemnly commanded him to submit, he would not obey till induced by the promise of a parting interview. A meeting was accordingly arranged, and one day, in the absence of Monsieur, he was admitted by Montalais to a private gallery. There Madame joined him. No sooner had she done so than the Duke unexpectedly returned, and it was only by precipitately retreating to the recesses of the nearest chimney-piece that Guiche escaped detection. But even that ignominious expedient was to be of no avail. Two ladies of the household, made suspicious by the ascendancy which Montalais had established over the mind of her mistress, had remarked the stealthy introduction of Guiche into the palace, and set about compassing the ruin of their rival by revealing what they had discovered. Monsieur, when the information reached him, comported himself with unwonted moderation. Chafing as he usually did under a sense of inferiority to his brilliant wife, he was enchanted with the prospect of assuming a tone of superiority towards her, of receiving her confessions, censuring her conduct, and enjoying the novel sensation of assuring her of his forgiveness. Going to Henrietta's apartments, he told her that he had expelled Montalais from the palace, and having delivered himself of that significant announcement, waited in chilling silence for a reply. How best to answer his veiled indictment must have been a difficult matter to decide on the spur of the moment, all the more so as there was nothing to show how far he was acquainted with the true facts of the case; but Henrietta, whose straightforwardness always extricated her from positions that others might have found embarrassing, faced the situation in a manner at once prudent and courageous. She

frankly told him the whole story of what had occurred, and assuring him that she had never before had a private interview with Guiche nor received many letters from him, pledged her word to break with him for good and all. A complete reconciliation then took place, Monsieur being satisfied with his advantage and with the punishment of Montalais who had instigated the intrigue. To solicit the disgrace of Guiche was clearly out of the question, for to do so was to court a scandal, and he was therefore allowed to depart unpunished.

A new actor now appeared upon the scene. Guiche had left behind him a confidant and a *soi-disant* friend named the Marquis des Vardes. In all Europe it would have been difficult to find a more consummate villain than this man, and history has done well to heap infamy on his name. With the society of that time, however, he was a favourite, and he had enjoyed the favour of some of the greatest ladies of the day, for he was a man of wit, resource, and address, whose victims only discovered when too late how dangerous were his powers of flattery and deceit. Proficient in the arts of the sycophant he stood high in the favour of the King, but his ambition knew no bounds, and he would pursue any object however base or employ any means however vile. When an advantage was to be gained or peril avoided, he was equally ready to forsake a mistress or betray a friend, and his life was an ignoble tale of intrigue, treachery, and dishonour. Subdued by the spell which Madame cast upon all who approached her, he had formed the characteristic determination of supplanting Guiche in her affections, and the feline cunning with which he laid his plans showed that the notion was more than a transient caprice. The first step had been to procure the removal of Guiche. In order to achieve this he had gone to the Maréchal de Gramont and had descanted with

such disinterested fervour upon the dangers which his son was courting by his reckless conduct, that the Marshal hastened to entreat the King to relegate him to an honourable exile. When once the Count had departed it was an easy matter to keep him supplied with picturesque accounts of Madame's infidelities, and he hoped that it might not be more difficult to persuade the Princess that the Count had forsaken her. Henrietta, regarding him as the exile's friend and ignorant of the treacherous game he was playing, was willing enough to admit him to favour, and he was already congratulating himself upon the success of his manœuvres when a trifling incident wrought a revolution in his policy. The name of Guiche occurring in the course of conversation, Henrietta referred with such feeling to the absent warrior that she extinguished the presumptuous hopes of Vardes. His schemes frustrated, his jealousy aroused, and his passion baffled, Vardes gave himself over to the worst feelings of his evil nature, and determined to ruin the lady who had thus unwittingly slighted him. Artfully masking his resentment, he went to her (with a well-feigned air of apprehension) and cajoled her into the belief that she had become the object of the secret antipathy of Louis. She accordingly wrote to her brother in a tone of sombre foreboding, and Charles, not unnaturally concluding that the conduct of the French King had furnished her with substantial grounds for apprehension, replied in terms which were scarcely favourable to that august monarch. This was the end for which Vardes had schemed. Obtaining possession of the letters, he took them and laid them before his master: Madame, he said, was a dangerous person utterly unworthy of the confidence which had been placed in her, and it was fortunate that any mischief she might meditate would come to the knowledge of so loyal a subject as himself. He was satisfied with the effect which he had

produced on the mind of the King, but he had not reckoned with the jealousy of the Comtesse de Soissons, his mistress. Tortured by the fear of losing her lover, Madame de Soissons was bent upon separating him from the Princess, and this she thought she might best effect by disclosing his wicked policy. She therefore sought an interview with Madame, and told her how Vardes had brought about the removal of Guiche and how he was now labouring to ruin her with the King.

The position of the detected intriguer, already seriously menaced, was now made still more critical by the return of Guiche. Sooner or later he must discover that foul means had somewhere been employed, and Vardes looked forward with some uneasiness to the time when he should learn that it was no open enemy who had tricked him, but his own familiar friend. For the present, however, Guiche was without suspicion, and as Monsieur would only tolerate his presence at those receptions where private converse was impossible, he requested Vardes to do him the favour of carrying a letter to the Princess. There was no alternative for Vardes but to comply with the request, although he was far from confident of obtaining an audience of Madame. She was indeed in no mood for granting him favours, but he proved so importunate a suitor that at length she consented to receive him. Throwing himself upon his knees before her and bursting into floods of tears, he entreated her to forgive him and to aid him in concealing the past. She replied with dignity that she had been basely deceived, and desired that the Comte de Guiche should be made acquainted with the truth; and forthwith, in spite of lamentations and entreaties, dismissed him from her presence. Happily for herself she had resolutely declined to accept the missive from Guiche, for his infamous agent had told the King of its existence and had confidently

predicted that she would take it in violation of all her promises.

Hitherto Madame had spared her enemies, and had even protected La Vallière, their weak and helpless instrument; but it would have been a mark of superhuman magnanimity or of a pitiful lack of spirit to submit tamely to the villainies of Vardes. Already he had given her sufficient provocation, and now his impotent fury vented itself in open insult. One day the Queen and her Court were twitting the Chevalier de Lorraine with a tender passion for one of Madame's maids-of-honour, when Vardes remarked with a leer that he might as well have aspired to the mistress instead of contenting himself with the maid. It was only natural that so outrageous an affront should provoke the vehement indignation of Henrietta, and it was by her request that its author was lodged in the Bastille. But his incarceration was a triumph rather than a punishment, for his many acquaintances flocked to visit him, and his friends presumptuously boasted that Madame, in spite of all her influence, was powerless to get him really disgraced. "The thing is so serious," she writes in a plaintive letter to Charles, "I feel that it will influence all the rest of my life. If I cannot obtain my object, it will be a disgrace to feel that a private individual has been able to insult me with impunity, and if I do, it will be a warning to all the world in future, how they dare to attack me. . . . As I have already told you, it is a business which may have terrible consequences if this man is not exiled. All France is interested in the result, so I am obliged to stand up for my honour."¹ That Henrietta should have invoked her brother's aid shows how grave was her apprehension as to the issue of the duel. She did not know that Louis,

¹ Here, and in most other cases where I have quoted from Henrietta's correspondence, I have adopted Mrs. Henry Ady's translations.

aware of the deception which had been practised upon him, was about to mete out to her antagonist the punishment which his flagrant crimes deserved. Vardes was removed from the Bastille to be subjected for a space to a more rigorous confinement in the grim citadel of Montpellier. Thence he was ordered to his paltry government of Aigues-Mortes, where he was left during many years of exile to reflect upon the fruits of his insolence and treachery.

Of the Comte de Guiche little more need be said. Henrietta had long ago resolved that she would give him no further encouragement, and he was still vainly striving to shake her resolution when a strange chance came to his aid. In January, 1665, a great masked ball took place at the house of the Duchesse de Vieuville, and the Duke and Duchess of Orleans were amongst the guests. In order that their identity might be the better concealed they assumed the simplest costumes, drove in a hired coach, and made a random choice of partners from amongst a party of masks who arrived at the same moment with themselves. The cavalier whom Henrietta thus fortuitously selected was none other than the Comte de Guiche. At the same instant each recognised the other, and stifling the exclamations of surprise which started to their lips, they passed silently through the crowded rooms to a spot where they could converse unobserved. There was much that Guiche wished to say, but he knew that the suspicions of Monsieur would be aroused if he should notice his wife's absence, and prudently withdrew when only a few hurried words had been exchanged. Henrietta, much agitated by the unlooked-for interview, followed, and prepared to descend the staircase; but her foot slipped on the top-most step, and a serious accident must have ensued had not the ubiquitous Guiche leapt forward and caught her in his arms.

They were to meet but once and never to speak with one another again, for Guiche was about to set out upon the expedition which was to end only with his life. On the eve of departure he made a determined attempt to bid his Princess farewell. Disguising himself in a footman's livery, he took his stand at her palace gates, to await the coming of her litter and approach it as it passed. But he had dragged himself from a sick-bed and could not bear the strain of so rash an experiment; and when the litter came, he swooned and fell. It could not, of course, be supposed that a Princess would give heed to the indisposition of a menial servant, and Madame's attendants made haste to bear her away from the scene of so commonplace an occurrence.

There is a short and curious sequel to the wearisome tale. In 1666, a pamphlet was published in Holland which purported to give a full and true history of the amours of the Duchess of Orleans. One copy reached the King of France and was placed by him in Madame's hands. It was easy to foresee the effect of such a work upon a jealous husband and an uncharitable and scandal-loving world, and Henrietta was filled with despair. The conduct of the Bishop of Valence, to whom she appealed for help, only increased her distress. Without offering any advice, and with the full knowledge that he alone had been informed of her sorrow, he mysteriously disappeared, and for ten days was nowhere to be found. When at length he reappeared, he showed how well he had been employed. As soon as he had heard of the predicament in which Henrietta was placed, he had despatched an emissary to Holland who had procured an order prohibiting the publication of the libel and had bought up every sheet that had already issued from the press. With these concealed beneath his cassock the worthy prelate had little fear of Henrietta's

reproaches. Turning to his hidden weapon of defence, he presented her with copy after copy of the obnoxious work, remarking as he did so that no hands but her own should be trusted to commit them to the flames.¹

It is upon the relations which existed between Henrietta and the Comte de Guiche that the question of her moral frailty or innocence really depends. The halo of romantic interest which has been cast around their intimacy has tended to deepen the obscurity in which such a subject is naturally wrapped, but the verdict of contemporaries may be set forth for what it is worth. It is entirely favourable to Henrietta. The stern Queen-Mother, who disapproved of her conduct, "thought her, in fact, full of innocence." Madame de Motteville reviewed her career, and could find nothing criminal in it. Even anonymous pamphleteers accused her of nothing worse than folly. The Princess herself, in her last agony, solemnly assured her husband that she had never been untrue to him. Had she been habitually false to her marriage vows, she could hardly have made such a statement when, knowing herself to be at the point of death, a lie must have expired upon her lips; nor could the friend who knew the secrets of her heart have ventured to place it upon record. It must, however, be admitted that Henrietta was foolish, injudicious, fond of being admired, eager to please. Madame de la Fayette herself, whose portrait of her mistress is "drawn by Reverence and coloured by Love," does not attempt to disguise it. Secure in her own consciousness of virtue and forgetting that innocence is not always its own pro-

¹ Madame followed his advice. Two copies only had eluded the vigilance of the Bishop's agent—namely, the copy in the possession of Louis XIV. and another which had been sent to Charles II., and these were handed over by their owners and shared the fate of the rest. The holocaust was then complete but for one copy which the Bishop had secretly preserved as a curiosity. It would seem that before his death this too was destroyed.

tection, Henrietta scorned to pay a scrupulous regard to appearances. Indeed, it is to her very indiscretion that M. Anatole France attributes her success. "Elle a un certain air languissant, et quand elle parle à quelqu'un, . . . on dirait qu'elle demande le cœur, quelque indifférente chose qu'elle puisse dire. '*On dirait qu'elle demande le cœur,*' voilà le secret de Madame, le secret de ce charme qui agit sur tous ceux qui la virent et qui n'est pas encore rompu : j'en appelle à tous ceux qui ont essayé de réveiller son souvenir."

After the rupture with Vardes and the final departure of Guiche, Henrietta turned her attention to affairs of a more abiding interest than the annals of a Court intrigue. It is her political influence that constitutes for the historian of England the main interest of her career. "The chief agent between the English and French Courts," says Macaulay, "was the beautiful, graceful, and intelligent Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans"; and it is in this character that she will dwell in the memory of the English reader, either as a confederate in a nefarious conspiracy, or perchance as a pleasing vision suddenly coming to illumine the dark story of the Treaty of Dover, and passing as suddenly away under a veil of mystery which he cannot penetrate. She already had some acquaintance with the conduct of international concerns, for the sovereigns of England and France had early realized how advantageous it might be to employ her as an intermediary in their negotiations, in which they had frequently been harassed by the incompetence and folly of their political agents. Lord Hollis, the ambassador of Charles, had shown himself punctilious, irritable, and exacting, tenacious of the smallest right, roused by the merest trifle, and so little amenable to reason that he had converted even the preliminaries of his presentation

to the French King into a fruitful source of dispute. It had often taxed the dexterity of Madame to counteract the effect of his behaviour, but she had availed herself of his impracticable qualities to get into her own hands the conduct of every important negotiation.

After the arrival of Hollis the inimical attitude of England towards the United Provinces was the salient feature of the political situation. The jealousy between these old commercial rivals had been embittered by serious friction in their colonial settlements, and a warlike temper prevailed [1664]. Charles was eager for a quarrel. In the days of his exile the Dutch had driven him from their territories; when he was a king, their victorious fleets had bidden him defiance almost at the entrance of his capital. Their overwhelming naval power and the arrogance of their language humiliated him; he hated their republican government, their democratic religion, and the simple manners which put to shame the elegant corruption of his own. Before he could safely attempt to indulge his animosity, however, he must ascertain whether Louis intended to respect the treaty by which he was pledged to support the Republic. Writing to Henrietta that he "would not have this businessse passe through other hands" than hers, he begged her to use her best endeavours to extract an assurance from Louis that he would desert the Dutch in the event of England declaring war upon them. When that event took place, however, Louis proved inflexible, and after protracted negotiations [1664—1666] war between England and France was also declared. Had Henrietta known in what spirit the war was to be waged, the failure of her diplomacy would have filled her with no very sombre forebodings, for it did nothing to disturb the friendship which at bottom subsisted between the belligerent monarchs.

Louis, however, was now meditating the adoption of a

startling policy. Its immediate effect was to produce a panic in the breasts of the English people which Charles was powerless to withstand. Sincerely though they hated the Dutch, they were possessed by a chronic terror of France, and at the first sign of French aggression in the Netherlands they were prepared to throw themselves into the arms of their old rivals. Such a sign they now detected. By the treaties of Westphalia and the Pyrenees France had attained her coveted boundaries towards the East and South, but on the North she was hemmed in by an artificial and imperfect frontier. To remedy the defect at the expense of the Spanish Netherlands was now the aim of the French King, but he had only to reveal his intention to raise a ferment of indignation and alarm [1667]. Their old jealousies forgotten, a Triple Alliance was hastily negotiated between England, Sweden, and Holland. For the moment unprepared to face the coalition Louis accepted the terms of the allies and signed the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle [1668]; but his projects were postponed and not abandoned. His enemies, indeed, were soon to regret the very success upon which they now prided themselves. Delay whetted his appetites, and he soon embraced a policy in which the acquisition of the Netherlands, once the goal of his ambition, was merely a necessary but unimportant preludè to the conquest of Holland itself. The new scheme was something more than the wild imagining of an angered and imperious despot. He would have to reckon with the opposition of the continental powers, but he might safely encounter it. Sweden was impoverished, Germany divided, and the Hapsburgs had emerged from a lengthy strife bereft of resources and prestige. He would have little to fear from the wrath of Europe if only he could procure the friendship or at least the neutrality of England. To do so was therefore the paramount object

of his policy. For the fact that she had so recently and so publicly pledged herself to make common cause with his foes, he cared but little. The cynical immorality of her statesmen was well known to him, and there was nothing which he might not hope to obtain from a fickle and shameless King and a corrupt and greedy Court.

The ministry which he must cajole or suborn was already divided. There was a party lead by Arlington, who, as the husband of a Dutch lady and as the advocate of the balance of power, was the declared opponent of the French alliance; and it had seemed of late that the real confidence of the King and the real power in the Cabinet belonged to that diligent, astute, and circumspect minister. But French diplomatists had remarked the desires and hesitations of Charles, and they could count upon the support of the Buckingham faction which was eager for the friendship of their master. The poverty of Charles and the parsimony of a disaffected Parliament soon brought about the triumph of Louis, and it was openly announced in England that a commercial treaty was to be negotiated with France. But this was by no means all. In concert with Madame and with some few of his most trusted servants Charles was busily engaged in discussing the details of a secret treaty, by which he was to bind himself to assist Louis against the Dutch in return for a handsome bribe and for the promise of French help when he should set about establishing Popery and autocracy in his own dominions. Grave difficulties arose in the course of the negotiations. In the first place it was not easy to decide which should have the priority, the subversion of the English Church and constitution, or the extinction of the United Provinces. In the second, some dispute arose as to the proportions which the French subsidy was to assume. Rumours of the negotiations had got abroad in England;

the ardour of the opponents of royal authority had been curbed; and the Commons had become unexpectedly docile. Charles availed himself of their docility to gain both political and financial successes, and when once his internal position was stronger and his treasury less exhausted, he was able to invent delays to spur the generosity of Louis. He declared that the naval contribution required of him against the Dutch was beyond the powers of his purse, and vowed that he must perforce maintain an attitude of neutrality at least during the earlier stages of the contest. At last both monarchs agreed that they would endeavour to compose their differences by invoking the assistance of Madame. Long ago Buckingham had told Colbert that the surest way to bring about an alliance was to induce the Duchess to visit England. Charles now revived the idea which had already occurred to his favourite. On January 2nd, 1670, he let Colbert know that "he longed eagerly to see and converse with his sister next spring, and hoped the King would permit her to visit this country": and Louis replied that he would do his utmost to overcome the difficulties which stood in the way of arranging the visit.

Such difficulties as there were arose from the obstinate refusal of the Duke of Orleans to sanction the proposal. His relations with his wife had been more than usually strained. He had fallen under the dominion of the most worthless of all his favourites, the Chevalier de Lorraine, a man with the face of an angel, indeed, but, as unfortunate maids-of-honour had discovered, without any other trace of celestial qualities. With this minion, whose every whim and caprice Monsieur was only too eager to gratify, Henrietta had become engaged in a distasteful contest. He had procured the exile of the Bishop of Valence and the dismissal of Madame de Saint Chaumont, the truest and best of her friends; and elated by the success of his

manœuvres he had treated the Duchess herself with an intolerable combination of insolence and contempt. The King at length had been constrained to intervene. By his orders the Chevalier was arrested and imprisoned. "You will need all your piety," wrote the Duchess to Madame de Saint Chaumont, "to enable you to resist the temptation, which the arrest of the Chevalier will arouse in you, to rejoice at the evil which has befallen your neighbour! You will soon hear how violently Monsieur has acted, and I am sure you will pity him in spite of the ill-treatment which you have received at his hands." The Duke was beside himself with fury. Persuaded that his wife had brought about the Chevalier's ruin, he hurried her off to Villers-Cotterets, hoping it would be some revenge to condemn her to a solitude only diversified by his own company. His motives were not misconstrued. Writing to inform Marshal Turenne of her departure, Madame said to him: "You will understand what pain I feel from the step which Monsieur has taken, and how little compared with this I mind the weariness of the place, the unpleasantness of his company in his present mood, and a thousand other things of which I might complain."

No sooner had she departed than the Court began to bemoan her absence. "Since Madame has left us," wrote Madame de la Suze to one of Henrietta's ladies, "joy is no longer to be seen at Saint Germain, . . . and unless she returns soon I cannot think what we shall do with ourselves. Nobody thinks of anything else but of writing to her, and the ladies of the Court are to be seen, pen in hand, at all hours of the day. I hope you will soon return, and with you the Graces, who always follow in Madame's train." In the critical stage which the negotiations with England had now reached, Louis relished his brother's conduct even less than did his courtiers, and as soon as

Monsieur had had leisure to repent of his precipitate retreat from Court, he despatched Colbert to Villers-Cotterets to see if he could be induced to patch up the quarrel. Informing him that the Chevalier de Lorraine had been released from prison and was free to go whithersoever he would save only to the Court, the minister proceeded in his master's name to desire the Duke to return to Saint Germain. The request accorded too well with Monsieur's secret inclinations to be the subject of much debate, and before evening he and his Duchess had set out for Paris (Feb. 24th, 1670). A complete reconciliation between them was therefore supposed to have been achieved, but the behaviour of Monsieur scarcely warranted the supposition. He was still inflexible in his resolution to see whether a course of tyranny would not drive his wife into consenting to the recall of his exiled minion. "He never sees me," she complained, "without reproaches, . . . he sulks in my presence, and hopes that, by ill-treating me, he will make me wish for the Chevalier's return. I have told him that this kind of conduct will never answer." On the other hand, the King received her with unprecedented honour, and loaded her with marks of confidence and affection. Superb gifts were showered upon her, apartments adjoining his own were placed at her disposal; he devoted every afternoon to conferences with her, and would frequently take her advice upon domestic problems independently of his ministers. The projected alliance with Charles also called for much earnest discussion. It was now definitely agreed that Henrietta should go to England, but Monsieur had discovered the secret nature of her impending mission and was extremely mortified at having been excluded from participating in the plot. At first he vehemently declared that Henrietta should not leave Paris; then he relented so far as to say that she might visit Charles if he himself were

allowed to accompany her. Charles immediately devised the most specious pretexts for declining the unwelcome honour, but it was idle to aim at conciliating so obstinate a creature, and Louis peremptorily commanded him to desist from all further mention of refusal, since Madame's journey was for the good of the State and therefore was to be neither prevented nor postponed. The imperious monarch was not to be jested with when he adopted this solemn tone, and Monsieur reluctantly yielded. By the morning of May 25, Henrietta had been installed in the Castle at Dover, which had been prepared for her reception.

No time was to be lost if she was to justify the expectations which Louis had based upon her dexterity and influence. It was more than probable that, in spite of the docility of Charles, the execution of her programme would be attended by many and grave difficulties. In her own name and in the name of the King of France she was to urge the expediency of introducing the Roman Catholic religion and of reviving the absolute power of the Crown. When circumstances should be propitious for making so astounding a revelation, Charles himself was to make a public profession of his belief in the Roman Catholic creed. In the meantime the policy which Henrietta advised him to pursue was to "flatter the English Protestant Church, and by alternately coaxing and persecuting Dissenters to render them at last . . . subservient to his will." Then, turning to foreign affairs, she advocated the adoption of equally startling measures. She urged Charles to ally himself with France against his old commercial rivals, the Dutch, and to bind himself to support the claims of the House of Bourbon to the dominions of the Spanish Crown. Should he undertake to follow the course which she had indicated, she assured him that Louis would be prepared to assist him in the event of domestic insurrection and in any event

to replenish his impoverished exchequer with no grudging or niggardly hand. "She concluded her harangue," wrote one who was present at the meeting, "and spoke the rest with an eloquence of a more transcendent kind, and which, though dumb, infinitely surpassed the force of her reason or of her more charming words." "The wonderful patheticness of her discourse" made a deep impression upon her brother's mind, and she disposed so effectually of the few objections which he ventured to urge that before a week was over she had obtained his signature to the treaty. No material changes had been made. It provided that the King of England should at his own pleasure make a public declaration of the Roman Catholic faith, in consideration of which he was to receive 2,000,000 crowns from the King of France within the next six months; that the Treaties of Aix-la-Chapelle and of the Triple Alliance should be faithfully observed; that the King of England should assist the King of France in asserting any new rights to the Spanish monarchy which might revert to him; that the two Kings should declare war against the United Provinces, France attacking them by land with the aid of 6,000 English troops, the Duke of York attacking them by sea, in command of the combined naval forces of the two countries; that the English spoil should be Walcheren, Cadzand, and the mouth of the Scheldt; that the interests of the Prince of Orange should be provided for; and finally, that the unfinished commercial treaty should be concluded with all possible expedition.

The Secret Treaty of Dover is not amongst the incidents in our history upon which we are wont to look back with pride or pleasure, and the Princess who negotiated it has met with much severe criticism at the hands of English writers. It cannot indeed be disputed that the introduction of Popery was a wild design on the troubled morrow of a

revolution; nor can it be denied that the direct results of the clandestine compact were the humiliation of Holland and the exaltation to its zenith of the power and glory of France. But the apologist of Henrietta will not be silenced by the denunciations of her detractors. If it be argued that the sister of Charles should have shrunk from engaging him in an alliance so pernicious to the interests of his country, he may reply that as a French-woman and as the grand-daughter of Henri IV. she could not but desire a treaty which should permit her brother-in-law to carry on the career of conquest that had been interrupted by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. He may go further than this. He may urge that, so far from intending to betray her country or its King, she believed herself to be erecting their fame and prosperity upon indestructible foundations. Had she not the express assurance of Louis that the subjects of Charles were to be rewarded with the commerce of the world? Louis indeed was to conquer the land, but was not England to be mistress of the seas? What would it matter that France ruled continental Europe when England, availing herself of the alliance to take the place of Spain and Holland, was to become the empress of the world? As regards the religious question, Henrietta was deceived by the history of the last two centuries. Not only had she been taught from her youth up that her first care should be to work for the conversion of a heretic prince, but the theories which had for so long prevailed concerning the relations of the State to the individual inspired her with the notion that the monarch must be held accountable for the religious belief of his people. It was therefore her obvious duty to endeavour to establish in her brother's dominions the faith in which she had been reared; and the extraordinary facility with which her compatriots had consented to change their creed in the past

led her to assume that her task would not be difficult of accomplishment. Her policy was dictated in part by loyalty to her Church, but mainly by love of her kindred. That sentiment was the ruling power in her life. One day the false news that James was dead had almost killed her: she had laboured for Charles through health and sickness, through joy and sorrow, through good report and through evil. Sensible, zealous, true, and with a business capacity that surprised the most experienced statesmen, she had often given the best of counsel both to Louis and to Charles. When Louis had hesitated to decree the arrest of Fouquet, she had told him that he lowered himself by showing fear of his minister. When French diplomatists were negotiating for the purchase of Dunkirk, she had striven earnestly to dissuade Charles from consenting to so humiliating a bargain. Her advice was sound. The sale of Dunkirk began the ruin of the Stuarts.

Whatever may be thought of the part which Madame played in the negotiations which led to the Treaty of Dover, it must be admitted that one incident is recorded which does her the highest credit. In her train had come the now notorious Louise de Kerouaille. The Breton maiden with her beautiful and innocent face made a deep impression upon the susceptible Charles, and he begged his sister to allow her to remain in England. It was the only favour which he asked of her, but she absolutely refused to grant it. The girl returned to her parents by Madame's express command; nor did she venture to accept the overtures of Charles till her mistress was dead. "Madame's death," said Bussy, "has been the cause of la Kerouaille's good fortune."

On June 12 the Duchess of Orleans sailed from Dover, and a few days later she reached Saint-Germain. There the fame of her diplomatic mission was in all men's mouths,

and a veritable triumph awaited her. The Court greeted her return with unfeigned delight, while the King received her as one whom he delighted to honour. No one knew better than he how important her undertaking had been, with what skill it had been conducted, with how complete a success it had been crowned, and from him her services met with a public recognition of the most flattering description. In private she was further rewarded by other and more substantial tokens of the royal gratitude, Louis presenting her with a large sum wherewith to redeem the jewels which had been pawned to defray the cost of her recent journey. Monsieur, however, took a very different line: he had taken offence at the mere notion of her errand and now his envy was increased tenfold by the honours and rewards which followed upon its successful performance. When she was preparing to go with the Court to Versailles, she received a peremptory command to accompany him to Saint Cloud. There was no alternative but obedience, and she was forced to submit with the best grace she could, however severe the ordeal of exchanging the brilliant ovations of Paris for the solitude of Saint Cloud, and the humiliations of life with Monsieur, with its incessant round of complaint, tyranny, and insult. Once only, on the occasion of the King's birthday, was she suffered to visit Versailles; and then, having been consulted by Louis upon affairs of State and surprised in earnest conversation with him, she was ruthlessly dragged away despite remonstrances and tears.

Upon Henrietta's return from Dover it was observed that both her health and her spirits had revived in the air of her native land. A short spell of the Duke's society revealed the illusory character of the seeming recovery. So ominous was the change that came over her appearance that all who saw her at Versailles were filled with apprehension: "Madame," said Mlle. de Montpensier, "has death

painted on her face." Always frail and delicate, her health had been shattered by the constant strain of illness, anxiety, and fatigue. The gaiety and vivacity of earlier days had given way to a settled gloom. A spell of sultry heat prostrated her; a pain in the side, till now slight and intermittent, had become persistent and acute. On June 27, in accordance with her usual practice, but in direct defiance of the remonstrances of her physicians, she bathed in the river which flowed through the grounds of her palace; but on the following day the imprudent pleasure had perforce to be relinquished. On Sunday, June 29, her indisposition was markedly more grave. Early in the afternoon and in spite of the fact that a vigorous conversation was being carried on by those around her, she fell into a profound slumber. During her sleep the ladies who were with her noticed with astonishment and alarm that her face was strangely altered: when she awoke, she complained that the pain in her side was more violent than ever. Her favourite beverage, a glass of chicory water, was made ready and brought to her. In the act of stretching out her hand to put down the cup, she was seized with a paroxysm of pain. A cry which she was unable to stifle, the expression and the livid colour of her face, and the tears which started to her eyes revealed the extremity of her anguish, and those who knew how patient and courageous she was, immediately realised that the sudden mischief was of no light or fanciful kind.

In the general panic which ensued only her physician was undismayed, and pronounced, with the blind assurance of the ignorant, that she was suffering from a somewhat severe colic. Such a statement might convince others, but the patient herself was not to be comforted. She was possessed by a dark and terrifying idea. It seemed to her that only the agency of poison could account for anguish

so swift, so mysterious, so intolerable. The sinister conviction gained in strength from the very efforts that were made to dispel it. Various antidotes were administered, but one and all were without effect. Distinguished physicians declared "on their lives" that there was not the smallest danger, but they could do nothing to alleviate her sufferings. Clearly she was at the point of death, and it was idle to pretend that it was still in the power of remedies to prevent or even to retard its approach.

Alarming reports of her illness had spread abroad, and throngs of anxious enquirers hastened along the avenues of Saint Cloud. All night long the sick-room was filled with sorrowing friends. To one or another of these the dying woman from time to time addressed a few gracious words of farewell. Monsieur came and stood by her bedside. The victim of his cruel tyranny and the object of his yet more cruel suspicion was at length nearing that tranquil haven where she would find eternal calm from those

"troublous storms that toss
The private state and render life unsweet."

Embracing him in her own sweet and gentle way, she said: "Alas! Monsieur, you have long ceased to love me; but that is unjust; I have never swerved from my loyalty to you." Presently the King himself reached the palace, accompanied by his Queen and other ladies of the Court. At last the optimism of the physicians had been somewhat shaken, and they now confessed to a belief that Madame's illness was extremely dangerous. The reserved and haughty prince, who believed that nothing became his majesty so ill as to be conquered by his feelings, strove in vain to conceal his emotion when Henrietta turned to him, and bade him take his last farewell. "You are losing," she

said, "a very good servant who was always more afraid of losing your favour than ever she feared death." The chief place in her affections, however, and the most tender of her thoughts were not for Louis nor for any in his kingdom, but for the brother whom she had loved and served so well, and she charged the English ambassador with many messages for his master. Tenderly and earnestly she lamented that when she was gone Charles would have lost the friend who loved him best in all the world.

In the meantime Mlle. de Montpensier, who realised the gravity of Madame's condition and was shocked by the apathy and indifference of Monsieur, had been endeavouring to open his eyes to the truth and to awaken him to a sense of his duty. She reproached him with having so utterly ignored his wife's spiritual needs, and urged him to summon a confessor without delay. His first and only care, if such a course was to be pursued, was to find a priest whose name would look well in the Gazette, and he decided to send for Bossuet. But Bossuet was in Paris, and as some time must necessarily elapse before his arrival, Henrietta desired that one of the canons of Saint Cloud might also be summoned to minister to her till the bishop should come. Her choice fell upon a man called Feuillet, a Jansenist who enjoyed some renown on account of his austere piety and of the uncompromising indignation with which he denounced the shortcomings of the mighty ones of the earth.¹ Acting promptly in response to her call, he had soon reached the palace. The spectacle which he

¹ M. Alexis Larpent suggests that a careful investigation might result in showing that towards the end of her life Madame entertained Jansenist propensities. In a letter of 16 July, 1670, (quoted by the historian of Port Royal) Le Camus said of her: "Elle cherchait la vérité d'une religion et n'était encore déterminée à rien." But for this meagre statement I have searched the authorities in vain for any direct allusion to her religious opinions; but one or two facts are recorded which seem to give some colour to M. Larpent's

there beheld would have melted any heart not turned to adamant by the influence of a narrow and perverted zeal. By such a zeal, however, was Feuillet possessed, and he quelled the pity which the sight of his penitent aroused, as though it were some insidious foe creeping within the stronghold of his faith. His duty, as he conceived it, was to bring, not solace, but rebuke, not to comfort, but to chastise; and he was sincerely convinced that his conduct was only laudable in proportion to the severity of his speech. When at length, with every mark of the most profound devotion, Henrietta had received the last consolations of religion, it had become apparent to all that her life was fast ebbing away. She herself awaited the end with manifest impatience. "What! Madame," exclaimed Feuillet, "you have been sinning against God for twenty-six years, and your penitence has endured but for six hours." To this brutal rebuke the Princess submitted with all humility; and asking at what time Our Saviour had died, prayed that she might be vouchsafed the grace of dying at the same hour.

Presently, to her great joy, Bossuet entered the sick-room. With a piety not less sincere than that of Feuillet, and with tact and sympathy of which the Jansenist was wholly devoid he spoke to her of consolation, hope, and peace. For some time she listened attentively to his words, but weakness and pain were slowly gaining the mastery over her indomitable spirit. Turning to him with a sweet, resigned smile, she craved a few moments' repose, but scarcely had she done so when she beckoned to him to

suggestion. Many of her more intimate friends were more or less closely connected with and under the influence of Port Royal: her choice of Feuillet in the circumstances narrated above, so curious in itself, is all the more significant in the light of Le Camus' statement: and it is strange that her memory should have been cherished in the Jansenist families of France.

return. It was half-past two in the morning. The end was at hand. A strange look was in her face, the precursor and harbinger of death. Holding a crucifix before her, the Bishop said: "You believe in God, you hope in God, you love Him." Audibly and firmly she replied: "With all my heart." She then took the crucifix, and pressed it tenderly and reverently to her lips. Almost immediately, however, it fell from her grasp; she had lost consciousness; and with a slight quiver of the lips her spirit passed quietly away.

Death had not tarried: only a few short hours had passed since the moment of her first attack, and now his purpose was accomplished. The Great Visitor had come to her in the very moment of triumph, at the zenith of her brilliant career, while her powers were still undiminished and her intellect still unimpaired; yet she had faced him boldly and had received him without flinching. Never even during the last hours of excruciating torture, had her courage and tranquillity deserted her. She had borne her sufferings with serene fortitude and had awaited her fate with patient resignation. No vain regret, no weak repining, no querulous complaint had marred the final scene. "*Madame fut douce envers la mort comme elle l'était envers tout le monde.*"

The tidings of the sudden calamity were received with consternation in all quarters, and wherever she had been known every heart was chilled by a sense of irreparable loss. At once a countless multitude of panegyrics were penned in her praise and in sorrow for her untimely death. She had passed away, wrote Cardinal Barberini, "to the infinite grief, not only of France, but of all Europe." "Never," said the witty Rochester, "was anyone so regretted since dying was the fashion." Never assuredly had anyone been more regretted by the Sovereigns of England and of

France, for she had served them with a fidelity unalterable through all the vicissitudes of fortune, and their amity and alliance were justly regarded as the fruit of that loyal service. Louis was deeply moved. "The tender love I had for my sister," he wrote to the King of England, "was well known to you, and you will understand the grief into which her death has plunged me. In this heavy affliction I can only say that the part which I take in your own sorrow, for the loss of one who was so dear to both of us, increases the burden of my regret." Light-hearted and thoughtless though he was, even Charles fell a prey to the most poignant grief. Yet grief was not the predominant sentiment in the breasts of the King or of his subjects. Everywhere dark rumours were current that the English Princess had fallen a victim to the machinations of some dastardly foe, and a ferment of passionate indignation ensued. The habitually phlegmatic populace of London reached an unwonted pitch of excitement. The streets resounded with their cries of fury; it was feared that they would scarcely be restrained from taking a summary vengeance upon the luckless ambassador of Louis; and acute observers believed that the wrath of the nation would inevitably lead to an open rupture with France.

Was there any foundation for these hideous suspicions, or any truth in the dramatic passage where St. Simon accounts for Madame's death by setting forth, with a wealth of circumstantial detail, the story of a base and treacherous crime? Since the most distinguished physicians in France, when summoned to her bed-side, had been helpless in the face of the sudden attack which had prostrated her, it seemed impossible to explain the phenomenon on any hypothesis other than that of poison; and it certainly was not explained by the tissue of absurdities which the doctors

who performed the post-mortem examination brought forward to account for it. Thus the death of Madame went to swell the fascinating list of historical riddles, and it is only within our own time that it has been dislodged from the debateable ground. In the two centuries and more which have now elapsed, medical science has made great and beneficent strides, and with the searching light of its ample knowledge it has dissipated the obscurity which so long enveloped the subject. Madame was not killed by poison: she died of an acute peritonitis. On no other theory is it possible to account for the indisposition which preceded her last agony, the acute pain in the side of which she so frequently complained, the paroxysm which seized her as she swallowed the chicory water, the astonishing rapidity with which death did its work, and the various phenomena which, however utterly they were misunderstood, have yet been elaborately described in the reports of the doctors who were present at the post-mortem examination. To assume that because a violent pain resulting in death immediately followed upon the drinking of the chicory water, the water must therefore have been poisoned, is to forget that one event may precede, without being the cause of, another. Yet it cannot be urged that there was any inherent impossibility in the theory of poison; the incarceration of the man in the Iron Mask,¹ the narrow escape of the Duke of Burgundy, the nefarious conspiracy which involved an innocent queen in the sordid incidents that make up the affair of the Diamond Necklace,

¹ It may be interesting to note that Madame's detractors have not scrupled to assert that the mysterious prisoner was no other than a son of hers either by Louis or by the Comte de Guiche. Other imaginative theorists prefer to make him a son of Cromwell, a son of Christine of Sweden and Monaldeschi, a son of the Grand Monarque's Queen by a negro servant, and so forth. See "The Man in the Iron Mask" by Mr. Tighe Hopkins, p. 15 and note.

are sufficient to prove that the darkest crimes could be perpetrated in the Court of France and even upon the very steps of its throne.¹

After the post-mortem examination had been performed, the embalmed remains of the Princess were laid out in a richly decorated coffin in the chamber where she had breathed her last. Thence, at midnight on July 4, they were removed to the spot where their last resting-place was being made ready. Officers-at-arms escorted the hearse, and princesses of the blood followed it. The whole of Madame's household and a throng of noble ladies swelled the procession. Down the sombre avenues of Saint Cloud and through the silent streets of Paris it passed slowly on till the cathedral of Saint Denis was reached. There, watched over by nuns and guarded by troops, the body was left for a space. At length, on August 21, the last ceremonies were performed with extraordinary pomp and splendour. Seldom, even in the great

¹ But the theory does not stand investigation. It is said that sublimate was mixed with the chicory water. But the water itself was not poisoned, for others besides Henrietta drank it, and without any ill effects. Nor is it conceivable that the lady who prepared the beverage, and whose loyalty is beyond reproach, could have failed to remark that the cup had been tampered with, had such been the case. Moreover, Madame only sipped the water and did not complain that it had any unusual or unpleasant flavour; but sublimate is comparatively harmless unless consumed in large quantities, and its taste is nauseating. Finally, the circumstances of the case require a drug which acts with lightning rapidity without producing any perceptible effect upon the mouth and throat of the person who swallows it. Not only does sublimate not possess those properties, but no such drug exists. The circumstance that the doctors were unable to diagnose the disease is wholly without importance. Peritonitis has now long been dreaded as one of the most terrible of the many fleet ministers of death, but at that period its existence was unknown. Molière may have exaggerated the pedantry and formalism of the doctors of his time, but it would have been impossible to exaggerate their ignorance; and if it be urged that Valot and Esprit, the men who attended upon Madame, were the most learned physicians in France, it will be enough to reply that they were the men whose likeness Molière drew in the Tomès and Bahis of his *Amour Médecin*.

temple where so many royal generations had been laid to rest, had such an august and solemn spectacle been seen. Every part of the cathedral was draped with richly brodered hangings and illuminated by the blaze of countless lights. Around the spot where the body lay beneath a sumptuous canopy, a vast and illustrious congregation was assembled. At the altar stood the Archbishop of Rheims, and with him were four Bishops in pontifical robes. In the pulpit stood Bossuet. Never before had even that great orator pronounced so sublime a discourse. The funeral oration upon Queen Henrietta had indeed shone with the effulgence of his genius, but now it was his very soul that poured itself out. "His hearers listened in breathless silence," says Madame's most recent biographer, "as he spoke of the beauty, of the talents, of the irresistible charm which had made this Princess adored by all. He dwelt on her rare gifts of mind, on her fine taste in art and letters, on the incomparable sweetness of her nature, on the royalty of heart and soul which made this daughter of Kings even greater than she was by birth. He extolled the services which she had rendered to France, the love and honour in which she was held by the two greatest Kings of the earth. And he recalled her famous journey to England, upon which so much had depended, the success which had crowned her efforts, and the joy and triumph of her return." Then he spoke of those short but terrible hours in which the tragedy which he deplored had been enacted. "O nuit désastreuse! ô nuit effroyable! où retentit tout à coup comme un éclat de tonnerre cette étonnante nouvelle; Madame se meurt! Madame est morte!" What did it avail them that she, for whom they grieved, had shown no dismay in the presence of that appalling calamity? "Triste consolation, puisque, malgré ce grand courage, nous l'avons perdue! . . . La voilà, malgré ce grand cœur, cette princesse

si admirée et si chérie! La voilà telle que la mort nous l'a faite."

When the preacher paused to master his emotion, a storm of sobbing swept over his audience; and long before those mournful sounds were hushed, the poor remains of the gentle Princess had been committed to the tomb in the spot where her royal kindred slept.

NOTE. ¹

Henrietta's children were:—(1) Marie Louise d'Orléans, born March 27, 1662; married against her will to Charles II. of Spain in 1679; after ten years of an unhappy married life, died suddenly, like her mother, under circumstances that were considered most suspicious.—(2) Philippe Charles, Duc de Valois, born July 16, 1664; died December 1666;—(3) Anne Marie, Mademoiselle de Valois; born August 26,

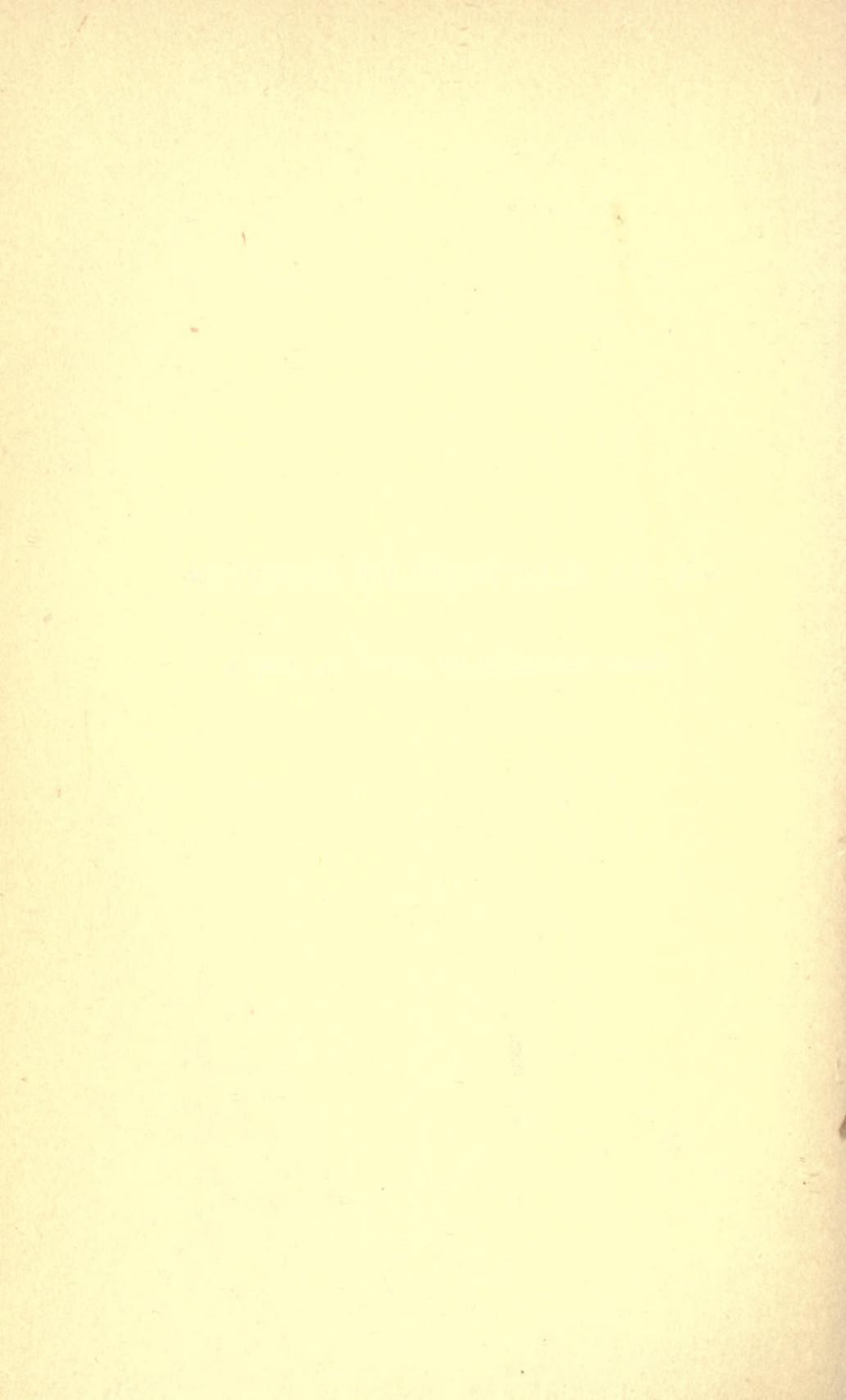
¹ Authorities for the life of Henrietta may be given as:—

Madame de la Fayette: "Histoire de Henriette Anne d'Angleterre," with introduction by M. Anatole France. Bossuet: "Oraison Funèbre de Henriette-Anne d'Angleterre." Memoirs of Mlle. de Montpensier, Mme. de Motteville, Daniel de Cosnac, Abbé de Choisy, Duc de Saint-Simon. Burnet: "History of His Own Time." Cyprien de Gamache: "Court and Times of Charles I." Michelet: Article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, August 1, 1859. Comte de Baillon: "Henriette-Anne d'Angleterre, Duchesse d'Orléans, Sa Vie et Sa Correspondance avec Son Frère Charles II." Julia Cartwright (Mrs. Henry Ady): "Madame, Memoirs of Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans." Mrs. Everett-Green: "Life of Henrietta in her "Lives of the Princesses of England." Mignet: "Négociations relatives à la Succession d'Espagne." Littré: "Médecine et Médecins," the article entitled "Henriette d'Angleterre, est-elle morte empoisonnée?" Funck-Brentano: "Princes and Poisoners" (Eng. trans.), chapter on the "Death of Madame." Dr. Cabanès: Article on her death in *La Revue Hebdomadaire* for July 1, 1899. References to Henrietta may also be found in most works upon the period, such as the Memoirs of Ludlow, de Retz, Evelyn, Conrart, Dalrymple, Reresby; Pepys "Diary"; Estrade, "Négociations"; Voltaire, "Siècle de Louis XIV.," Sainte Beuve, "Port Royal"; Macaulay, "History of England"; Henry Martin, "Histoire de France."

1669; married in 1684 to Victor Amadeus II., Duke of Savoy, afterwards King of Sicily and Sardinia; died in 1728. From the youngest of these children is descended Princess Mary of Modena, wife of Prince Louis of Bavaria, who is at the present time the lineal representative of Charles I.

SOPHIA, ELECTRESS OF HANOVER

GRAND-DAUGHTER OF JAMES VI. AND I.





THE ELECTRESS SOPHIA.

V

THE ELECTRESS SOPHIA, GRAND-DAUGHTER OF JAMES I.

THE Jacobite legend of the "wee wee German Lairdie" whom the Act of Settlement removed from his spade and his kailyard, to place on the throne of the Stuarts, has served unduly to depreciate the position in European politics of the House of Hanover, and the personality of the heiress of the Protestant succession. "The most excellent Princess Sophia" of the Act of Settlement has been, till recently, regarded as the fortunate beggar maiden, who, if she had lived some months longer, would have been transformed into a Queen by the Whig party, masquerading as King Cophetua. The Electress of Hanover occupied a more important place in the eyes of Europe than was possible for the mere puppet of the Revolution Whigs, and she had other interests in life than the ambition to succeed Queen Anne. Naturally and inevitably, the prospects of the English succession were of importance to the granddaughter of a King who had subordinated his entire policy to the chance of obtaining the Tudor inheritance; but the feeling of personal independence is much more conspicuous in the attitude of Sophia of Hanover than in that of James of Scotland. Naturally, too, from the standpoint of an English reader, the most important dividing line in the personal history of the Princess, is connected with the Revolution of 1688, and we propose to follow this line of demarcation.

While the House of Stuart occupied the British throne, Sophia was only a member of a younger branch of the Royal Family; with the Fall of her cousin, James II., she came to hold a widely different position, even if it is true that English historians have, to some extent, exaggerated the importance which she assigned to that position.

I.

The twelfth child of Elizabeth of Bohemia was born in an hour of hope, if also of danger. About three months before her birth, the great Swede, Gustavus Adolphus, had intervened in the Thirty Years' War, and the spirit of Protestant Europe had been, once more, aroused, when on the 14th October, 1630, there came into the world the infant who was to be perhaps the most remarkable of that illustrious family which included Rupert and Maurice and Elizabeth, the friend of Descartes. The name Sophia was chosen for her by lot, from among a number of Christian names not already monopolized by one or other of her brothers and sisters, and in connexion with her alone it has become memorable in English history. Her early years were spent at Leyden, apart from her mother, who found, in her dogs and her monkeys, a more agreeable solace for the troubles of her chequered career than her infants could afford. Of these early days, spent with some of her brothers, Sophia herself has left us an interesting picture in her fascinating "Memoirs," written about 1680. The children were surrounded with all the ceremony of a German Court; nine profound reverences to her brothers and to attendants were, complains Sophia, the accompaniment of the dinner hour every day. Her caustic pen gives us a somewhat cruel description of her governess, Madame de Ples, who had

stood in the same position to her father, the Elector: "from this you may judge her age." Madame de Ples was assisted by two daughters "who looked older than their mother, and were righteous in their dealings with God and man alike; they wept to the one and never disquieted the other, car leur extérieur estoit horrible et fort propre à inspirer de la terreur aux petits enfans." Modern readers will readily admit that Sophia had considerable justification for the savage tone of these references. It can have been no pleasant experience to rise at seven o'clock in the morning and to study "Pibrac's Precepts for the Guidance of Man," while her instructress performed such toilet operations as cleansing her teeth, nor is it marvellous that the unfortunate pupil adds that her consequent grimaces "have remained longer in my memory than all that she wished to teach me." Throughout the day, what time could be spared from ceremonials, was given to instruction, "unless a kind Providence sent one or other of my teachers a catarrh, *pour me soulager*." There was no room in the household economy for the spontaneity of childhood, no scope for the irresponsibility of vigorous young life. Sophia seems to have found relief for her high spirits only in devising tricks to irritate her blind governess.

The group of children at Leyden had been gradually growing smaller. Rupert and Maurice, Elizabeth and Henrietta had gradually been summoned from the nursery and the schoolroom: the daughters to join their mother, and the sons to make their way in the world. At last, there were left only Sophia herself and her younger brother, Gustave, who had been born shortly before the death of the Elector Palatine in 1632. The unfortunate boy was in delicate health from his birth and, in January 1641, he died. Sophia was now left alone, and on this account, she was immediately taken from Leyden to the Hague,

where her mother and sisters were residing ; her reflections on leaving Madame de Ples and her early home are but a variation on the familiar theme of crabbed age and youth, "car entre la vieillesse et la jeunesse il y a rarement de la sympathie." The hopes which gladdened the period of Sophia's birth had vanished during the ten years spent by the child in the nursery at Leyden. The fatal month of November 1632 had seen not only the death of the Elector Palatine, but also that of Gustavus Adolphus on the field of Lutzen. The chances of recovering the Palatinate seemed now but small, and the two eldest surviving sons of the Winter Queen, Charles Lewis and Rupert, were prisoners of war, the one in Austria and the other in France. Charles I. was entering upon the final stage of the long constitutional struggle, and could offer no help to his sister. Such were the circumstances in which Elizabeth was living at the Hague, when her youngest daughter was released from the trials of nursery and schoolroom, and, in childish amazement, imagined that she had received a foretaste of the joys of Paradise in the pitiful splendour of an exiled Court. Her mother's House was doomed for nearly two centuries to experience such joys as fall to Royalty in exile. From the loss of the Palatinate in 1623 to the death of Cardinal York in 1807, Europe was never (save for the period of the Restoration) without the spectacle of one or another of the Stuarts holding a toy court on foreign soil, and the fate of the younger branch was even now fast pressing upon the elder.

The troubles of her House had, however, but small effect upon the spirits of Sophia, whose childish pranks served to amuse her elders ; they consisted mainly of practical jokes of a kind which were in favour at the court of her grandfather, James I., but which would scarcely bear repetition to-day. It is somewhat surprising that Sophia, writing in



THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH;
DAUGHTER OF ELIZABETH OF BOHEMIA.

later life, thought them worth recording at all.¹ Of the Court which they enlivened, Sophia has given us an interesting picture in her "Memoirs." Regarding her mother she says but little; the Queen of Hearts, who ruled her husband, seems to have made but little impression upon her children. About her three sisters, Elizabeth, Louise, and Henrietta, "all of them more handsome and more accomplished than myself," she writes with considerable insight and no trace of jealousy. The most interesting of the three was Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of the Elector and Elizabeth of Bohemia. Born in 1619, she was over twenty years of age at the time to which the "Memoirs" relate, and her sister's pen-portrait of Madame Elizabeth paints her with black hair, bright brown eyes, arched eyebrows, a slender aquiline nose, a small rosy-lipped mouth, and a noble forehead. "She loved study, but all her philosophy was unable to restrain her annoyance when, at certain times, the circulation of the blood gave her the misfortune of a red nose, which she immediately concealed from view. I remember that my sister, the Princess Louise, who was without ceremony, asked her, at such an unfortunate moment, if she was ready to go to the Queen, since the usual time had come. The Princess Elizabeth replied: 'Do you want me to go with this nose?' and the other retorted 'Do you want me to wait till you have another?'" Her references to Elizabeth's philosophy are not always in this less than respectful tone. "She was very learned, she knew all languages and all the sciences, and maintained a continuous correspondence with M. Descartes; but this great knowledge rendered her

A small trick played upon Sophia may serve as a specimen:—"Pour divertir la reine, il [un Français, Marigné] m'écrivit une lettre au nom de tous les guenons de S. Mté. pour m'élire pour leur reine. Cette lettre me fut présentée en présence de beaucoup de monde pour voir la contenance que je ferois. Mais je la trouvois trop jolie pour m'en fâcher et j'en riois comme les autres." "*Memoiren d. Herzogin Sophie,*" ed. Köcher.

a little *distracte* and often gave us cause for mirth." Some of Descartes' letters to Elizabeth have been preserved,¹ and the relations between them are known to have aroused the jealousy of Christina of Sweden, who, later on, was to give some annoyance to Sophia herself. Elizabeth's devotion to intellectual pursuits led to a rupture with her mother, who wished her to marry Wladislaus VII. of Poland, and, after some years, she entered the Lutheran convent of Herfort, in Westphalia, of which she was Abbess from 1667 till her death in 1680. In her later life, she fell under the influence of the fanatic Jean Labadie, and provided, from 1670 to 1672, an asylum within her domain at Herfort for the wandering Labadists. Sophia wrote, with some bitterness, after his death, of the four fat prebends with which her sister's generosity had endowed the ex-Jesuit.² "The Princess Louise," says Sophia, "was less beautiful, but, to my mind, her disposition rendered her more pleasant." She was so clever an artist that she could depict people without seeing them, but "while painting others she was somewhat given to neglecting herself," thus affording occasion for a small witticism of James Harrington, the author of "The Commonwealth of Oceana," who compared her manner of dressing to the painter of antiquity, who, failing to represent on his canvas the foam on a horse's mouth, lost his temper, and threw his brush at the picture, thereby producing the effect desired. Louise, like so many possessors of Stuart blood, became a convert to Roman Catholicism; at Christmas, 1657, she fled from her mother's house to a Carmelite convent at Antwerp, and thence to her Aunt, Queen Henrietta Maria at the convent of Chaillot. In 1660, she took the veil at Maubuisson, of which she

¹ Œuvres de Descartes, ed. Cousin, vols. ix. and x.

² Bodemann, *Briefe d. Kurfürstin Sophie*, vol. i., p. 258. This collection of letters is elsewhere quoted as "Bodemann."

ultimately became Abbess. Her conversion did not lead her to adopt ascetic principles; if, as Sophia wickedly suggested, Elizabeth of Herfort entertained the Labadists because such hospitality cost little and made a great impression, no such reproach could be made against the jovial Louise of Maubuisson. The third of the group of sisters described in the "Memoirs" was Henrietta Maria, four years younger than Louise, and by seven years the junior of Elizabeth, from whom she differed in being a blonde, and in possessing a devotion to needlework and preserves rather than to philosophy. She married, in 1651, Sigismund Ragoczi, Prince of Transylvania, and died after a wedded life of five months. But Herfort and Maubuisson and Transylvania were, as yet, in the future; Elizabeth was just commencing her correspondence with Descartes, and Louise her studies under Honthorst, when Sophia, at the most impressionable period of life, came under their influence. Escape from her governess did not mean an end of her studies, for she mastered six or seven European languages; from her sister Elizabeth she acquired her first interest in philosophical discussion, and she shared with Louise the instruction, in painting, of Gerald Honthorst. Sophia was never more than an amateur philosopher, and her correspondence with Leibniz cannot compare in philosophical interest with that which passed between Elizabeth and Descartes: but philosophical and theological themes remained, as we shall see, one of her favourite intellectual pastimes, and the lessons that she learned at the Hague or during the summer residence of the Court at Rhenen, helped to enrich her wonderful old age at the Herrenhausen. Of herself at this period of life, Sophia says: "I had light brown hair which curled naturally, my manner was lively and easy, my figure good (though not very tall), and my carriage that of a princess." A number of Eng-

lishmen made their appearance, during these years, at the Court of Elizabeth of Bohemia,—among them James Harrington, whose joke Sophia has recorded, and William, Lord Craven, “un vieux milord, nommé Craven,” who became the most devoted friend of the exiled Queen. Sophia, although she was his favourite, treats him with scant courtesy. There is perhaps a trace of her dialectical training in her amusement at “the good man’s” assertion that he could think of nothing. “Il ferme en même temps les yeux et dit: à cette heure je ne pense à rien.” The “old lord” (he was not yet fifty) kept a store of sweetmeats for his lively favourite, but not even this saved him from the girl’s ill-concealed, if tolerant, contempt. Her references to this benefactor of her House have been taken somewhat too seriously: they represent only a flippant schoolgirl’s amusement at slight eccentricities of manner, and something of that pride of birth which was an un-failing Stuart trait. For Craven, the son of a Lord Mayor of London, was without noble blood. Forty years later, an older and a wiser Sophia made the son of a Lutheran clergyman her confidential friend.

A more distinguished visitor than Craven arrived at the Hague in 1642, in the person of Henrietta Maria of England, who brought with her the Princess Mary, the betrothed wife of the Prince of Orange. Sophia’s description of her aunt is interesting: “the beautiful portraits of Van Dyck had given me so lovely a conception of all the ladies of England that I was surprised to find that the Queen, whom I had seen so beautiful on canvas, was a small woman... with long lean arms, shoulders out of proportion, and possessed of a row of teeth which protruded like a line of defence from her mouth. However, when I had looked well at her, I found that she had very beautiful eyes, a well-shaped nose, and an admirable com-

plexion." The English criticism on Sophia herself was more appreciative. One of the lords in waiting remarked, in her hearing, that when she grew up, she would surpass all her sisters. "That gave me an affection for the whole English nation, so much does one love to be thought beautiful when one is young." This love for England may also have been inspired by the gossip at the Hague, which suggested a marriage between Sophia and her cousin, Charles, Prince of Wales, the only immediate result of which was an attempt by Princess Henry of Orange to injure Sophia's reputation, in order to aid the claim of her own daughter to the hand of the Prince. The Hague was, as Sophia tells us, a veritable school for scandal at the time, but she emerged untarnished from the ordeal. In 1649, the execution of Charles I. (for which Descartes offered Elizabeth the consolation that it would add greatly to the late king's reputation) placed his son in the position of a titular monarch. Charles and his adviser had found an asylum at the Hague, and it was there that Montrose received his commission for his last attempt in Scotland. He was to be rewarded, according to Sophia, with the hand of her sister, Louise. Meanwhile, Charles made love to Sophia, while the indefatigable Princess Henry warned his Scottish supporters that Sophia had been attending Anglican services. It does not appear that Sophia took the matter at all seriously; she did not trust Charles and she had been disgusted by his desertion of Montrose ("très-brave capitaine et un homme de beaucoup de mérite"). Her mother was deceived as to the young king's intentions, but Sophia shrewdly suspected that his real aim was to employ an *affaire de cœur* as a means of obtaining money from the faithful Craven; "I had wit enough to know that the marriages of great princes are not arranged after this fashion." She had noticed, too, that the Princess

Henry's kindly hint had borne fruit: Charles had scrupulously avoided her in the presence of the Scottish commissioners. Thus vanished Sophia's small opportunity of becoming a Queen Consort of England.

A few months before the death of Charles I., the Thirty Years' War had at last been ended by the treaty of Westphalia, which created a new Electorate for Charles Lewis, the eldest brother of Sophia, and restored to him the Lower Palatinate. This accession to the family resources did not benefit the ill-starred Elizabeth of Bohemia, but the Elector invited Sophia, his favourite sister, to visit him at Heidelberg. So Elizabeth was left with only one of her many children (the Princess Louise) to bear her doom of poverty at the Hague. "Our repasts were, at times, richer than that of Cleopatra," remarks Sophia, in this connexion, "for we sometimes had nothing at Court but pearls and diamonds." For herself, she ordered what she wanted from the shops and trusted to Providence, probably in the person of Craven, for the means of payment. Her more serious views of life at this date she summed up in some devotional verses which she terms "assez méchans":

"Seigneur, peut-il qu'un tien enfant
 Batte toujours la castagnette
 Ou bien s'adjuste en coquette
 Et passe le temps en dansant?
 Peut-il que son esprit ne pense
 Qu'à bien gouverner sa voix
 Ou d'un niais faire le choix
 Pour rire de son innocence?
 Si tout cecy te pouvoit plaire,
 Heureux serois-je de tout temps
 Avoir icy les passetemps,
 En l'autre monde le salaire."

In 1550, Sophia proceeded to Heidelberg to join her brother, whom she regarded as standing towards her in

the position of a father and to whom she was devotedly attached. The Elector was living in the town, for the magnificent Castle which Elizabeth of England had entered with such splendour in 1613 had been destroyed in the course of the war. He had married, a few months before, the Princess Charlotte of Hesse, and his relations with this lady supplied the main interest of Sophia's life at Heidelberg. For our purpose, a mere outline of the sordid story will suffice. The Elector was undeniably selfish and callous. His intrigues with Cromwell and the triumphant Roundheads were lacking in common decency, and his conduct to his mother (in spite of the extenuating circumstance of Elizabeth's irrepressible extravagance) has justly provided a theme for the moralizing historian. He had married Charlotte because she was rich; for, in the Thirty Years' War, as in the struggles of the eighteenth century, "a Hessian horse or saddle" had ever been at the command of the highest bidder, and had provided a dowry for the Princesses of Hesse. The Electress, on her side, (as she confessed to Sophia) had been forced into the union, and she was jealous and bad-tempered. Sophia had not been an hour in their company before she perceived that something was amiss, and ere long, each, in turn, had confided their troubles to their guest. To the only daughter of this couple, Elizabeth, (born in 1652) Sophia was appointed nominal governess. She became Sophia's most intimate friend, the Liselotte of her letters. During the seven years of Sophia's residence at Heidleberg; the relations between her brother and his wife grew from bad to worse, and, in spite of the balls and the masques which enlivened Court life, her position was not without its difficulties. The Elector found a solace in the affections of one of his wife's maids-of-honour, named Degenfeldt, and succeeded, for some years, in concealing the fact from the Electress. Sophia,

who writes as a strong partisan of her brother, and who was on the worst terms with her sister-in-law, does not confirm the romantic story told by Baron Pöllnitz in his somewhat imaginative memoirs—that when the Electress, at dinner, charged her husband with infidelity, he struck her in the presence of Ernest Augustus of Brunswick and the Queen of Denmark. The Pöllnitz account goes on to tell how the scandal increased: the Elector announced his intention of marrying the ladymorganatically; his injured wife made a wild attempt on his life, and he forthwith placed her under confinement, whence she escaped by the aid of the philosopher, Elizabeth, who had also been residing at Heidelberg.¹ Of all this Sophia's own "Memoirs" have nothing to tell. How far Sophia suppressed the facts in order to shield her brother, and how far Pöllnitz was guilty of exaggeration, it is impossible definitely to say. It is certain that about the year 1657 a rupture did occur between the Elector and the Electress, but it cannot have had much effect upon the fortunes of Sophia, whose destiny had, by this time, become unalterably connected with that of the House of Hanover.

Various suitors had applied for the hand of Sophia during her residence at Heidelberg. The letters of Elizabeth Charlotte tell us that Ferdinand of Hungary, the heir of the Emperor Ferdinand III., would have married her, but for his premature death; she was actually betrothed to Prince Adolph of Sweden, brother of Charles X., but the engagement was conditional on the acceptance of certain articles by the King of Sweden, and these he refused to sanction. In the interval, another suitor had appeared, and the agreement was cancelled. Sophia does not seem to have been sorry. She says that Adolph had a good presence and

¹ Pöllnitz, vol. i., p. 344—355.

a respectable figure, but a far from prepossessing countenance, and a chin like a shoe-horn. He had also a bad temper and used to beat his first wife; so though the Elector "passionately loved" the King of Sweden, it was, perhaps, better that his sister should not marry Adolph. The Prince Fortunatus who appeared at the right moment was George William of Hanover, and it was with the Hanoverian House, though not with the person of George William, that the name of Sophia was to be indissolubly linked. George William was the grandson of the Duke William, who, in 1569, had founded the New House of Lüneburg, one of the three sixteenth-century divisions¹ of the mediæval Middle House of Brunswick. Duke William had died in 1592, leaving five sons, four² of whom succeeded in turn to Lüneburg-Celle. The fifth brother, George, ruled for some time the principality of Calenberg-Göttingen which had been added to the possessions of the New House of Lüneburg, and it was in virtue of this arrangement that Hanover first came to occupy the position of a capital. George died in 1641, six years before his brother Frederic, on whose death, the family heritage (decreased by the Treaty of Westphalia) was divided among the four sons of George. The eldest, Christian Lewis, who had held Hanover from his father's death, succeeded in 1668 to Celle, and Calenberg (Hanover) fell to the second son, George William. He, in 1656, aspired to the hand of Sophia, who (as she confesses) "did not hesitate to say 'yes'." George William was no hero: but he was a brave soldier and an enthusiastic sportsman,³ good-humoured and self-indulgent. In later life, he was an intimate friend of

¹ The other two were Wolfenbüttel and Bevern.

² Ernest (1592—1633), Christian (1611—1633), Augustus (1633—1636), Frederic (1636—1649).

³ Ker of Kersland's *Memoirs*, Mr. Consul Ker's *Remarks upon Germany*, p. 115.

William III., for whose entertainment he kept some excellent champagne. His love of French society and Italian travel had served to differentiate his manners from those of his German contemporaries, and may have helped to commend him to Sophia. Above all, he was reigning Duke of Hanover, and heir to his brother, the childless Duke of Celle.

The marriage agreement with George William had scarcely been concluded, when the bridegroom began to feel that he could not bring himself to give up the freedom of bachelor life, a freedom, which, as Sophia very frankly states, had degenerated into licence. A visit to his beloved Venice confirmed him in this view, and he began to arrange for his honourable release from his engagement by means of a device which, strange as it may appear to us, was not unprecedented in the history of his own House. Of his two younger brothers, the elder, John Frederic, had become a convert to Roman Catholicism in 1651, and he was, for this and other reasons, on less friendly terms with George William than the remaining brother, Ernest Augustus, who had been his companion in many of his Italian visits. "These two princes were thus closely bound together," says Dr. A. W. Ward, "not only by an affection which withstood the severest of trials, but by a complete congeniality of disposition, habits and opinions."¹ George William now proposed to transfer his bride to his favourite brother, and offered to make, in favour of the issue of their union, a solemn promise to remain unmarried during the lifetime of Ernest Augustus and Sophia. He had at first intended to take the more generous step of at once handing over the Duchy of Hanover to the young couple, but this solution was prevented by the natural

¹ Great Britain and Hanover, p. 31.

opposition of the third brother, John Frederic, whose claim to the succession it would have barred. The final settlement was made in the summer of 1658, and Sophia was duly instructed to transfer her affection from George William to Ernest Augustus. She had seen her future husband as a boy in Holland, and he had made a considerable impression upon her when he visited Heidleberg in the course of the first year of her residence there. He danced superbly, played the guitar, and had beautiful hands. Ernest, on his part, sent Sophia compositions of Francesco Corbetti, and attempted to make them the occasion of a correspondence. But the wise Sophia did not encourage him. "Comme il estoit le cadet de trois frères, on ne le regarda point comme un prince bon à marier." The renunciation of George William had placed him in a new position, and now, after the lapse of seven years, love's young dream might be realized. In June, 1658, "the elector allowed me to receive from the Duke Ernest Augustus a present, and the letter which by use and wont must be written in such circumstances." Was Sophia really in love with George William or with Ernest Augustus or with neither? It is the puzzle of the Memoirs. It may be that she had lost her heart to George William and that these references to Ernest Augustus are merely diplomatic, but it seems at least as likely, in all the circumstances, that she did not really regret the exchange. Perhaps, as Miss Strickland has suggested,¹ the key is to be found not in the Memoirs at all, but in the mysterious incident to which Elizabeth of Bohemia refers in a letter to Prince Rupert.² If so, neither George William nor Ernest Augustus was the real prince whom duty bade her dismiss from her mind as not "bon à marier," but one of the House of Fürstenberg, who

¹ *Lives of the Queens of Scotland and English Princesses*, vol. viii., p. 297.

² Bromley Letters, p. 288 (April 29, 1657).

wrote a pretty letter. The difficulty of determining the truth was as obvious to contemporaries as to modern readers. It certainly troubled Ernest Augustus (at least in the early days of their married life), and excellent wife as Sophia proved, it is possible that she herself was not quite sure till the course of events sent George William from her side.

Ernest Augustus and Sophia were married at Heidelberg in September 1658. In her Memoirs, Sophia recalls in glowing language the affection which had come to exist between them. The household arrangements, however, included one serious menace to married bliss. The Duke George William, Sophia's lover-emeritus, took up his residence at Hanover, where his brother and his bride were living. The position was an impossible one, and the natural result was a comedy of jealousy, of which Sophia represents herself as the innocent victim. George William was ill one day, and, to Sophia's condolences on the consequent postponement of a Venetian visit, he politely replied that when she was at Hanover, he did not wish to be elsewhere. Sophia laughed and quoted a line of a song: "When one cannot have what one wants, one must want what one has." The last words were overheard by her husband, who applied them to his brother and himself, and the incident caused considerable trouble. It did not, however, lead to any coldness between the brothers; in the beginning of 1659, Ernest Augustus left his four months' bride and accompanied George William on an Italian tour. "I weary during their absence," wrote Sophia to her brother the Elector, "for I am the miracle of this age: I love my husband." Her husband's absences were frequent; in the following winter, the two brothers were again in Venice, and Sophia was left to weary at Hanover. The jealousy of Ernest Augustus had again disturbed the even tenour of

life, and it had become clear that some change must be made in the domestic arrangements of the ducal family. In her husband's absences Sophia had the consolation of her niece's company, for Liselotte (Elizabeth Charlotte) had accompanied her from Heidelberg to Hanover, and was still under her charge. She paid occasional visits to her mother, who was still resident at the Hague, and who, as the Memoirs wickedly relate, was very fond of Liselotte—loved her even more than she did her dogs. The next two years of Sophia's married life were fruitful of events. In June, 1660, was born her first child, George Lewis, afterwards George I. The year 1661 saw the departure of Elizabeth of Bohemia for England and that of Elizabeth Charlotte for Heidelberg; the birth of Sophia's second son, Frederic Augustus; and the succession of her husband to the Bishopric of Osnabrück. It had been provided by the Treaty of Westphalia that every alternate occupant of the See of Osnabrück should be a member of the Lüneburg family. In December 1661, the Roman Bishop, Francis William, Cardinal of Wurtemberg, died, and Ernest Augustus became titular Bishop. Although his best title to remembrance is as a soldier, he had originally been educated with a view to some such arrangement as this, for he had studied at Marburg, and had for some time possessed the title of co-adjutor Bishop of Magdeburg. In October 1662, he took possession of his heritage, and made a triumphal entry into Osnabrück. Cynical as this whole arrangement was, the Bishop of Osnabrück did not venture to include his wife in the procession; "*on trouva que je serois hors d'œuvre à cette cérémonie ecclésiastique . . . et M. le duc me fit l'honneur de me recevoir en approchant d'Ibourg, sa nouvelle résidence.*" The castle of Iburg continued to be her home for seventeen years, and Madame Osnabrück had at last the satisfaction of possessing an establishment

of her own. Her other difficulty, the presence of George William, was also destined soon to be removed, but by a means which was itself productive of new troubles.

It was while preparing for a tour through Italy in 1664 that Sophia first heard the ill-omened name of Eléonore d'Olbreuse. This lady was a member of a Poitevin family and had been a lady-in-waiting to the Princess of Tarento. She had attracted the attention of George William, who followed her to Holland, and established a connexion which proved a constant source of irritation to Sophia, and ultimately led to one of the tragedies associated with the House of Hanover. Meanwhile, Sophia and her husband pursued their course by Verona and Venice to Rome. Domestic squabbles hindered Sophia's appreciation of Venice. "My husband asked me if I did not think the town beautiful; I did not dare to say no, although it appeared to me very melancholy, for I saw nothing but water, and heard nothing but the cry "Premi et stali"." Exactly a hundred years later, Gibbon¹ wrote in a similar strain of the great Republic. At Rome Sophia had two troubles—fever, and "the poor Queen Christina" of Sweden, who ignored her rank, and on whom she took her revenge by writing scandal to her brother. The Pope had also offended, by his treatment of her brother-in-law, John Frederic, and he offered her an audience only *incognito*, a suggestion which she declined. Living at Rome and quarrelling with the Pope did not prove specially pleasant, and so the return journey was commenced—by Florence, Bologna, and Milan. In the spring of 1665, they returned to Iburg to find two family complications demanding immediate solution. The eldest of Sophia's three brothers-in-law, Christian Lewis, Duke of Celle, died on March 15th, 1665, and it should now have fallen to George William to

¹ *Letters*, ed. Prothero, I. 75.

choose between Celle and Hanover, but while he was making love to Eléonore d'Olbreuse, John Frederic, "the fat Duke", had seized Celle, and it was only after much negotiation that he agreed to exchange it for Hanover. George William, now Duke of Celle, persuaded Sophia to invite Eléonore to Iburg, and she writes frankly of the good impression made by her guest. In the following November, an arrangement was made: a fixed income for life was settled upon Eléonore d'Olbreuse, but George William reaffirmed his promise to remain celibate as far as concerned the succession. Eléonore wished to be known as Madame de Celle, but the proposal roused the opposition not only of Ernest Augustus and Sophia, but also of the Dowager Duchess, the widow of Christian Lewis, who was much offended at the idea of giving her name "to a simple gentlewoman", and George William decided that she should be known as Madame de Harburg. In September 1666 was born the only child of Eléonore that attained maturity, the unfortunate Sophia Dorothea, the uncrowned queen of George I.

The first ten years of Sophia's married life had been passed in domestic squabbles and in the interests of the nursery. By the year 1668, her children numbered three sons and a daughter, the latter her favourite child, Sophia Charlotte, who was to become Queen of Prussia. Unlike Elizabeth of Bohemia, she was a devoted mother, and her letters and memoirs are full of references to her children. The close of this first decade found the House of Hanover confronted with a political situation which was far more critical than anyone at the time could possibly tell. In January, 1668, was formed the Triple Alliance between England, Sweden, and Holland, to counteract the growing power of France. The traditional policy of the Brunswick dukes, since the Treaty of Westphalia, had been alliance

with Holland, and they had exercised considerable influence in the affairs of Northern Europe. When, in 1670, Louis XIV., by the Treaty of Dover, succeeded in detaching England from the Triple Alliance, the three brothers had to decide on the attitude they were now to adopt. John Frederic of Hanover was the first to take a final step; in 1671 he made an agreement with France. It was possibly owing to the influence of Sophia, who was always tenacious of her English connexions, and whose beloved niece, Elizabeth Charlotte, had just married Philip of Orleans, the widower of Henrietta of England, that Ernest Augustus was inclined to throw in his lot with Louis XIV. But George William of Celle finally decided the attitude of his House, and Ernest Augustus followed him in adopting a line of uncompromising opposition to French claims. From this date (although John Frederic continued to ally himself with France) loyalty to the Empire became the unvarying policy of the House. When, in 1672, England and France declared war upon Holland, George William and Ernest Augustus prepared to take part in the war, and in 1674 Ernest Augustus and his son George Lewis, now fourteen years old, bore an honourable part in the victories of the allies. This policy seemed at the time to place the House of Brunswick in opposition to England: but it was really the crisis which involved the whole question of the succession. To Stuarts and Guelphs alike the fateful choice had come; the former, under Charles II., had declared for France, the latter for Holland and the liberties of Europe. Had either party chosen otherwise, the course of British history might have been changed. Had William III. found the line of Brunswick the trusted friends of Louis XIV., it is scarcely possible that the Act of Settlement should have contained the name of Sophia. The only trace of inconsistency in the attitude of the House vanished when, in 1679, John Frederic died, and Ernest

Augustus became Duke of Hanover. In the wars of the next ten years, the House of Hanover attained fresh military distinctions, and Prince George Lewis could claim a share in the glory gained by John Sobieski in the relief of Vienna in 1683. Finally, both George William and Ernest Augustus were among the North German Princes whose support was given to William of Orange in the formation of the League of Augsburg (1686—1688).

We have already noted the most important events in Sophia's domestic life between the Triple Alliance of 1668 and the war of the League of Augsburg—the marriage of Elizabeth Charlotte in 1671 and the succession to Hanover in 1679. Three more sons were born to her between 1669 and 1674, completing her family of seven. The chief domestic interests of this period of Sophia's life are again connected with the relations of George William of Celle and Eléonore d'Olbreuse. The Duke of Celle was at first content with providing a dowry for Eléonore and his daughter, Sophia Dorothea, and with obtaining the Emperor's consent to her use of the title of Countess of Wilhelmsburg, but the existence of this very dowry led, in 1671, to the development of a new situation. The head of the Wolfenbüttel branch of the family was the childless Duke Rudolph Augustus, and his heir was his brother, the eccentric Antony Ulric, who after occupying an important place among the Protestant Princes of Germany, was finally reconciled to the Roman Church. He was a poet, and the author of a novel known as the "Roman Octavia," in which, under the guise of Roman history, he introduced various episodes from contemporary life, some of which have found their way into histories of his time. Antony Ulric was, as Sophia tells us, "a cadet, poor, and in debt," and he proposed that his son Augustus Frederic should be betrothed to Sophia Dorothea, "hoping by her money to adjust his

financial difficulties." It was obvious that the status of Sophia Dorothea must be improved if she were to become the wife of the heir to Wolfenbüttel, and as Rudolph Augustus was not content with the legitimation of the child, the project of a marriage between George William and her mother began to be seriously discussed. Ernest Augustus and Sophia had no objection to a morganatic marriage, but any more regular union seemed to menace the succession, and Sophia wrote to George William a letter, which she quotes in her *Memoirs*, protesting against Eléonore's receiving the title of Princess. The marriage actually took place in the spring of 1676, but the Duke of Celle re-affirmed his renunciation of the succession for his children, and the Emperor gave his sanction to the agreement, while Sophia and the Duchess of Orleans exchanged witticisms upon "this creature," who called herself a Duchess. As far as the unfortunate Antony Ulric was concerned, all this successful negotiation was fruitless; his son was killed a few months after the marriage of George William and Eléonore d'Olbreuse. He had only been clearing the stage for the tragedy of Ahlden. The events of 1676 had produced a coolness between George William and Ernest Augustus, which continued till the death of John Frederic. The Duke of Hanover had married in 1668, but he left no male heir, and Sophia, when she heard of his death, although "sensible of the loss of a good friend", was able to thank God for having by this event given her husband and children a shelter from their enemies of the house of Celle. The Bishop of Osnabrück, however, although he had now succeeded to the Duchy of Hanover, was tenacious of his claims upon Celle. The union of Celle and Hanover had been forbidden by their father, Duke George, and if George William entertained any design of freeing himself from his obligations, the testament of Duke George gave him an oppor-

tunity of doing so. It was therefore to the interest, as well as in accordance with the inclination, of Ernest Augustus to bring about a reconciliation with his favourite brother, and in 1680, George William agreed to stand by his promise of 1658, and Sophia had the mortification of having to acknowledge Eléonore d'Olbreuse as Duchess of Lüneburg-Celle. Only one further step remained for the consolidation of the House. Sophia's eldest son, George Lewis, was now twenty years of age. If his personality was not specially attractive nor his disposition particularly amiable, he was, at all events, brave and honest, and, more important still, the heir to Hanover and Celle. His mother, who retained a strong affection for her English kinsfolk, at first proposed that he should marry the Princess Anne of York, and, in December 1689, he paid a visit to England, where he was heartily welcomed as the prospective husband of a lady who stood near in succession to the throne. Meanwhile, however, Ernest Augustus had made other plans, and George Lewis was hurriedly summoned, in 1681, to be betrothed to Sophia Dorothea. The match had been suggested in the beginning of the year 1679, but neither Ernest Augustus nor George William approved of the proposal;¹ now, however, circumstances had changed, and the ill-fated marriage was duly arranged, as part of the agreement by which Hanover and Celle were to be united in the person of George Lewis. The marriage was celebrated in November, 1682, and in July, 1683, the Emperor gave his sanction to the "setting-up" of the testament of Ernest Augustus which annulled the prohibition clause of the testament of Duke George. It seems to be quite clear that the alliance was simply part of the family settlement, and the statement of Baron Pöllnitz that it owed its existence to the intrigues

¹ Sophia to the Elector Palatine, 23 Feb. 1679. Bodemann, i., 348.

of Sophia¹ finds no confirmation whatsoever. The interesting story, which finds a place in biographies of Sophia—her sudden appearance at Celle in the early morning of the sixteenth birthday of Sophia Dorothea, her congratulations to the surprised parents, who were still in bed, her conversation with George William in the Dutch tongue so as not to be understood by Eléonore, and the consequent marriage agreement, made in Eléonore's presence, but without her knowledge—all this is most probably to be traced to the "Roman Octavia" of Antony Ulric, who would have willingly claimed the hand of the bride for one of the brothers of the unfortunate Augustus Frederic, and so secured the dowry he had so long desired. It is not probable that Sophia had much love for her daughter-in-law, the child of her successful enemy, and it has been suggested that she disliked the whole agreement which settled the whole of the family heritage upon her eldest son (who, as we know from the letters of the Duchess of Orleans, was lacking, at all events, in demonstrative affection), and barred the claim of her second son, Frederic Augustus, to one of the duchies. Notwithstanding all this, as far as we can judge from the references in her private correspondence, Sophia behaved with considerable kindness to her son's wife, nor is there any historical ground for connecting her with the deplorable results which followed from this purely political marriage. We have no space to linger over the other domestic events recounted in the "Memoirs," including Sophia's two visits to France. The first of these was an incognito visit, in 1679, to the Abbess Louise at Maubuisson, where the Duchess of Orleans met her, and aunts and niece gave way to their emotions quite like ordinary Germans.² Thence she proceeded, still incognito, to Court, where she was

¹ Pöllnitz, *Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 62.

² *Diary of Henry Sidney*, vol. i., pp. 102—3.

received by Louis XIV., who delighted her by his courtesy, and where she witnessed the marriage of Maria Louise, the elder daughter of Philip of Orleans and Henrietta of England, to Charles II. of Spain. In company with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans she visited Versailles. "For myself," she says, "I preferred St. Cloud to Versailles, "où la dépense a fait plus de merveilles que la nature." The visit was a complete success, and Sophia left the gaieties of the French Court with the comforting assurance that she had seen a better opera at Hanover in the days of John Frederic. In the end of 1679, she paid a visit of a different nature to the Abbess Elizabeth of Herfort, who was now suffering from a mortal disease, and who welcomed Sophia as an angel from heaven. The Abbess died in the following year. The second visit of Sophia to France was in the year 1683, when she paid a state visit to Louis XIV., accompanied (as on the last occasion) by her daughter Sophia Charlotte. This second visit has been generally traced to the famous conversation between Gourville and Sophia, when the French diplomatist asked the religion of the girl, and received the reply that they had not yet decided upon her husband.¹ If Sophia had realized her ambition and arranged a marriage between her daughter and the Dauphin, the ultimate result might have been disastrous to the House of Hanover. For the price of the match was the alliance of Ernest Augustus (who had just distinguished himself in the Turkish war) with France, and Gourville states that the negotiations failed because the Duke of Hanover refused to desert the House of Hapsburg and the cause of William of Orange. Sophia returned after a year spent in vain at the French court, and almost immediately arranged a marriage between her beautiful daughter and

¹ Memoires de Gourville (1687), p. 581.

the son of the Great Elector, afterwards the first King of Prussia—Carlyle's "expensive king . . . who had to go with his spine distorted—distortion not glaringly conspicuous though undesirable—and to act the Hohenzollern *so*."

Sophia's "Memoirs," which have hitherto been our main authority, end, somewhat sadly, in the year 1681. She had just lost her sister Elizabeth and her beloved brother, and constant correspondent, the Elector Palatine. Her husband was, as usual, away, and she tells us that she wrote merely to pass the time. "J'espère que le retour de M. le Duc qui sera en peu de jours, me remettra tout-à-fait pour n'aller pas si tost le chemin de tous les mortels." Her husband did not remain long with her, but she never wrote another line of her Memoirs. Her interests were even now beginning to take a new direction, and she had now found a better *confidant* than pen and paper alone. In 1673 John Frederic of Hanover had persuaded Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz to transfer his services from the Elector of Mainz to himself, and three years later, the philosopher had taken up his residence at Hanover. When John Frederic died, Leibniz was retained in the service of Duke Ernest Augustus, and Sophia, left alone with her own thoughts, found in her new adviser an intimate friend. Without any distinct speculative ability, the Duchess of Hanover was possessed of a keen interest in intellectual problems, even when she was not able to understand them, and the deepest thinker of the age proved also a sage adviser, whose practical counsel was of the greatest service to her in the delicate situation in which the English Revolution was soon to place her.

II.

Sophia, like most of the children of Elizabeth of Bohemia, had never forgotten that her grandfather was a King of

Great Britain. She spoke and wrote English fluently, if not always correctly, and she had maintained constant intercourse with her Stuart relatives. Elizabeth Charlotte of Orleans, in one of her letters, remarks that her father, the Elector Palatine, and her aunt, the Electress of Hanover, looked on the English as perfection itself.¹ Throughout the correspondence of Sophia and her brother one finds a constant interchange of English proverbs. "Dis way and that way and wich way you will... The Swedes have brought theire hogges to a faire market... We muchts carrey our bodey swiminley... Je me rejouis that the lion and the lamb lay down together."² These and similar phrases interrupt the flow of their epistolary French. The Elector had even read Shakespeare, and to some purpose (misleading some of his editors by calling Falstaff "Jack")—"But not upon compulsion, saith Jac. Falstaff to his hostesse Mrs. Quickly, when she would make him pay his score."³ The name of King James occurs occasionally in their letters, and the Elector knew a story about a Scottish minister and the King. He hoped⁴ that the fate of Charles XI. of Sweden in his German expedition (1675) would be in accordance with the prayer of a Scottish Puritan minister for the late king James, "breake an arme or a legge of him, good Lord, and set him up againe." Sophia had watched carefully the progress of events in England since the Restoration, and the difficulties of Charles II. "Le pauvre Roy d'Engleterre n'en a pas tant sur le trone; il a plus d'affaires avec son parlement qu'avec ses mestresses."⁵ In all this, there was nothing but a natural interest in the condition of near

¹ Briefe d. Elisabeth Charlotte, vol. vi., p. 118 (18th April, 1720).

² Bodemann, vol. i., pp. 196, 253, 270, 280.

³ Ibid., p. 398.

⁴ Ibid., p. 258.

⁵ Bodemann, i., p. 357.

relatives whose fate had been closely interwoven with that of the Palatine House. It is improbable that even the Exclusion Bill of 1680 could have suggested the possibility of personal or family aggrandisement, for the Duke of York had two daughters, and Sophia was the youngest of her own family. But the events of the year 1688 cannot have failed to suggest to her the possibility of the succession. Mary of Orange was childless. Death had already proved so regular a visitor of Anne's nursery that Sophia, with the callousness of her generation,¹ remarked in reference to the birth of one of her children, that they inherited a heavenly crown, leaving an earthly one for her own.¹ Of her own brothers and sisters who had remained true to the Protestant faith, she alone had heirs. If the people of England were determined to secure the succession of the nearest Protestant descendant of James I., it could only be through herself. The heritage was a noble one, and it must have appealed in a very special way to the Anglo-phile Sophia. On the other hand, King James was her cousin and she had always been on friendly terms with him. Her brothers, Rupert and Maurice, had fought for his father, and his brother, Charles II., had ministered to her mother's wants in her last years. It has been the frequent theme of English historians that Sophia's one aim was the succession to the Stuart throne, while recent German writers, have gone so far in the other direction as to argue that she was really a Jacobite at heart. Probably neither view is wholly incorrect. Sophia would not play false, would not even wrongly win; but, on the other hand, she was not called upon to place obstacles in the path of her own children. It is impossible to imagine her intriguing, as William of Orange was at that moment intriguing, to sup-

¹ *Correspondance de Leibniz avec l'Electrice Sophie*, ed. Klopp, i., p. 73. This book is elsewhere quoted as *Correspondance*.

plant the king who was at once his uncle and his father-in-law; but she knew enough of English politics to understand why the revolution took place at all. "Je crois que tous les bons politiques trouveront que le Roy s'est mal gouverné."¹ During the years that immediately followed the Revolution this balance of feeling and opinion became her normal attitude. She knew that the Prince of Wales was not spurious,² and it is characteristic of her that she did not allow herself to be persuaded that he was, although such a belief would have gone far to render her position less difficult; but it is equally characteristic that she felt that he must make the best of his chances, whatever they might be. If he failed to do so, it was no reason why she should not use her own opportunities as best she might. This watchful neutrality she seems more or less to have maintained till the Act of Settlement conferred on her a vested right, and definitely preferred her claim to that of her Stuart cousin.³

In the beginning of November 1688, Sophia wrote to Leibniz on the subject of William's preparations. She awaits the result with impatience; she believes that William has received an invitation from the Protestants of England to secure their liberties and their religion, and as a good Protestant, she has no word of censure; but she clearly sympathizes with James' unwillingness to believe that his own nephew would lift up his hand against him.⁴ In William's preparations the Duke of Hanover had no share. In spite of his adhering to the Protestant cause, and in spite of the fact that he had, earlier in the year, been a member of the Magdeburg Conference

¹ *Correspondance* i., p. 73.

² *Ibid.*, iii., p. 102.

³ Cf. Dr. Ward's article on the Hanoverian Succession in the *English Historical Review*, vol. i.

⁴ *Correspondance*, i., 58.

which provided for the defence of the empire against the French, Ernest Augustus remained neutral throughout. In congratulating William, Sophia wrote kindly of James. It has pleased God to make William the protector of our religion and one must pray for his prosperity; "but I have no complaint to make of King James, who has honoured me with his friendship."¹ When the deed was done, and James had fallen, Ernest Augustus reverted to his traditional policy, and the vigour with which he prosecuted the wars with France and with the Turks gained for him, in 1692, his investiture as Elector of Hanover (although the actual admission of a ninth member into the Electoral College did not take place till 1714). Bishop Burnet believed that to himself belonged the credit of persuading the House of Hanover to adopt a line of definite antagonism to the French,² and it is in a letter to Burnet that Sophia makes one of her first references to the succession.³ William had proposed that Sophia's name should be inserted in the Bill of Rights, but it was thought wiser not to commit the country to the Hanoverian line, and it was certainly not in the interests of the Grand Alliance to bar the claim of the House of Savoy, who, as descendants of Charles I. through Henrietta of Orleans, were nearer the direct line. Burnet had given enthusiastic support to this proposal, and Sophia thanked him warmly. His kindness had given her greater pleasure than if his efforts had met with better success. "For I am too old to think of any other kingdom than that of Heaven, and for my sons, they must always be dedicated to their king and country."⁴ Meanwhile, the birth of the Duke of Gloucester tended to

¹ *Correspondance*, i., 74.

² *History of my Own Time*, 1st edn. i., p. 757.

³ *Correspondance*, i., 75.

⁴ The allusion is to the Emperor.

diminish the chances of a Hanoverian succession, and as Dr. Ward has pointed out,¹ the question of the succession really remained in abeyance till the death of the little prince. Sophia continued, for three years, to correspond with the exiled James, and she and Elizabeth Charlotte made an amiable attempt to reconcile him to his daughter, Queen Mary. The attempt was foredoomed to failure; but the fact that the Duchess of Orleans could express to her aunt the hope that William would adopt the little Prince of Wales as his heir, indicates how far the succession had vanished from the immediate interests of the House of Hanover. Meanwhile, Sophia's attention was fully occupied. She had to mourn, in 1690, the death of her second son, Frederic Augustus, and in the following year, that of her fourth son, Charles Philip, both of whom, after rendering good service to the Emperor, fell in the struggle with the Infidel. The negotiations which preceded the creation of a ninth electorate for the House of Hanover, in which Sophia had to invoke the aid of William III., required a concentrated attention on the part of the aspirants to that dignity. Soon after success in this matter had been attained, there occurred the tragic incident which closed the public life of Sophia Dorothea, who now bore the title of Electoral Princess. It is doubtful if we shall ever know the whole of that mystery of iniquity which was enacted at Hanover in the year 1694. If Sophia Dorothea was guilty there were many circumstances to palliate her guilt. The marriage had been entirely a matter of convenience; her husband was a cold and austere man, whose behaviour to his mother more than once called forth the indignation of Elizabeth Charlotte,²

¹ *English Historical Review*, vol. i., p. 485.

² "Das der churfürst ein struckener störriger herr ist, habe ich gar wohl verspürt, wie sie hir waren... Wohrinen er aber das groste unrecht hatt, ist mitt seiner frau mutter so zu leben, deren er doch allen respect schuldig ist." Briefe der Elis. Char., vol. i., p. 281. (22 April 1702).

and who behaved no better to his unloved wife. The ducal palace at Hanover was ruled by the infamous Platen gang, the mistresses of the Elector and the Electoral Prince. Sophia Dorothea was probably guilty; she may have been the guilty victim of a conspiracy; but with any such conspiracy there is not a tittle of evidence to connect the Electress. If a conspiracy to ruin the Electoral Princess was in the interests of anyone, it was in the interests of Sophia's enemies. She certainly had not the power, and may not have had the wish, to make, in behalf of the prisoner of Ahlden, an interference which Sophia Dorothea's own parents do not seem to have attempted.

The triumph of the Platens, which had driven the Electoral Princess into an intrigue with Count Königsmark, had led Sophia, seven years before the fall of her daughter-in-law, to desert the Court at Hanover for the Herrenhausen, some three miles from Hanover, where she might indulge to the full the taste for gardening which was one of her Stuart characteristics. Toland, who visited her in 1702, wrote thus of the impression made on him:—"The Electress is three and seventy years of age, which she bears so wonderfully well, that had I not many vouchers, I should scarce venture to relate it. She has ever enjoyed extraordinary health, which keeps her still very vigorous, of a cheerful countenance, and a merry Disposition. She steps as firm and erect as any young Lady, has not one wrinkle in her Face, which is still very agreeable, nor one Tooth out of her Head, and reads without Spectacles, as I often saw her do Letters of a small Character in the dusk of the Evening. She's as great a worker as our late Queen [Mary], and you cannot turn yourself in the Palace without meeting some Monuments of her Industry, all the Chairs of the Presence Chamber being wrought with her own Hands.... She's the greatest and most constant Walker I ever knew,

never missing a Day, if it proves fair, for one or two hours, and often more in the fine Garden of Hernhausen. . . . She speaks five Languages so well that by her Accent it might well be a Dispute which of 'em was her first. They are Low-Dutch, German, French, Italian, and English, which last she speaks as truly and easily as any Native. But indeed the Electress is so intirely English in her person, in her Behaviour, in her Humor, and all her Inclinations, that naturally she could not miss of any thing which peculiarly belongs to our Iland." ¹

The years spent at the Herrenhausen, in comparative seclusion, have given us the correspondence of Sophia and Leibniz, which is so valuable for the biographers of both. It continued up to the death of Sophia in 1714, and, in spite of the engrossing interests of her closing years, it never became wholly political; but it is during this period, while the question of the Succession was no longer of pressing importance, that her letters are almost entirely devoted to religious and philosophical questions. Projects for religious re-union, in the discussion of which Leibniz had been engaged for over twenty years, had long interested Sophia. She had discussed with her brother, the Elector, a re-union of Lutherans and Calvinists, ² and had dismissed as chimerical Spinola's scheme for a reconciliation on a wider basis. ³ At the time when Leibniz became more immediately attached to her person, the religious world was debating Spinola's scheme in connexion with Bossuet's "*Exposition de la foi de l'église catholique.*" Sophia's sister, the Abbess of Maubuisson, knew Bossuet well, and a long correspondence ensued between Leibniz, Bossuet, and Madame

¹ Accounts of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover, pp. 66—68.

² Bodemann, i., p. 321.

³ Ibid., p. 347. A project of this nature was actually formulated in connexion with the marriage of Sophia's daughter to the Elector of Brandenburg.

de Brisson. It is possible that the controversy was not without political importance; if Sophia could be induced to follow the example of so many of her nearest relatives, and enter the Roman obedience, a Stuart Restoration would be much more easily brought about. Sophia, of course, was never in any danger. Her interest in the subject was the result, not of any deep religious feeling, but of an intellectual curiosity which was one of the bonds that connected her with Liebniz. Her whole attitude to religion was tolerant and liberal; it is easy to be tolerant when one does not care very much. Her references to religious questions are never *au grand sérieux*, and not infrequently frivolous; it is quite clear that religion was not one of the master passions of her life. She preserved so much of early training as to speak of the Roman Church as the "scarlet woman," although she envied Roman Catholics the privilege of praying for the dead. One of her biographers has misinterpreted a phrase she uses, and has inferred that she did not believe in the immortality of the soul. In point of fact, she possessed a commonplace orthodoxy, and placed her philosophical faith in the argument from Design.¹ It was the orthodoxy of a sane and healthy temperament and of an amicable and kindly disposition. As she was accustomed to say bitter things without any real malice, so she spoke lightly of matters of religion without any real irreverence, and, in both cases, there was a calm confidence in a goodness of heart of which she was herself conscious and by which she believed the world to be governed. "How can we call God good," she asks, "if He has made us to damn us eternally? Dieu mercy, je me fie à la bonté de Dieu; il ne m'est jamais venu dans l'esprit qu'il m'a créée pour me faire du mal... pour moy,

¹ Kemble, *State Papers and Correspondance*, p. 469.

j'ay une entière confiance en luy." ¹ To a broad view of this nature, any purely ecclesiastical controversy was naturally repugnant. "It is not the name of Catholic or of Reformed that will save us, but to manifest our faith by our good works." ² If she disliked Roman Catholicism at all, it was because its exclusiveness seemed to her un-christian. ³ So far as this attitude was consistent with Calvinism, she remained true to the faith of the Heidleberg Catechism in which she had been educated, but she could, logically, have no objection to becoming a Protestant of the Church of England, between which and Calvinism she saw but little difference. ⁴ Unlike her grandfather and her uncle, she had thus some sympathy with the Scottish Church, and disliked Queen Anne's attempts to persecute Presbyterian Dissenters in England and to favour Episcopalian Dissenters in Scotland. ⁵

Similarly, the Electress's constant references to philosophical questions do not impress one with any belief in her powers as a metaphysician. She had never taken her Descartes too seriously, and used to recommend his writings to her brother as an excellent cure for insomnia. ⁶ She liked to have Leibniz explain his views to her, but he did not find her a specially acute disciple. The very width of her interest constitutes a strong presumption against its depth: philosophy, mathematics, physics come all alike to her. She kept them, moreover, in their due place; when distinguished strangers visited her, she was annoyed if they did not talk of something more exciting. No less a person than Peter the Great offended in this way. Her

¹ *Correspondance*, ii., p. 96.

² *Ibid.*, p. 97.

³ Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii., p. 500.

⁴ *Correspondance*, i., 75; Klopp, *Fall d. Hauses Stuart*, x., 240.

⁵ *Ibid.*, ii., 403.

⁶ Bodemann, i., 352.

interest in literature was probably more genuine. She read romances in her later years—Don Quixote and Don Guzman d'Alfarache, (doubtless, in the original). Her English correspondents kept her informed of Mr. Pope's latest poem, Mr. Addison's last essay, and Temple's *History*, as well as of the writings of Mr. Locke. Mr. Addison ("le bel esprit") visited Hanover and earned the reputation of being a very good, and what is more extraordinary, a very modest poet.¹ The noise created by the publication of Ayliffe's "History of the University of Oxford" reached the Herrenhausen and its mistress. Leibniz, in an interesting passage, summed up the literary tastes of the Electress and her daughter as something at once "spirituel et re-jouissant." They love pretty satires, quaint and amusing tales, and religious treatises not too bigoted.²

The Duke of Gloucester died in August 1700. The other obstacle in Sophia's path had been removed four years earlier, when the House of Savoy forfeited whatever chance they had, by detaching themselves from the Grand Alliance. In the end of 1698, when King William was drinking Duke George William's champagne at Celle, the Duchess of Celle (Eléonore d'Olbreuse) had suggested to him that the little Duke of Gloucester might be married to her own and Sophia's grand-daughter, the younger Sophia Dorothea. The child's father was now the Elector George Lewis, for Sophia's husband, Ernest Augustus, had died in the course of the year 1698. This suggested consolidation of the family claims led to the re-opening of the Succession question, which Leibniz had for some years desired, and William III. again began to consider the feasibility of a formal recognition of Sophia's claims. The death of the little Duke raised the problem to a position

¹ *Correspondance*, iii., pp. 6, 11.

² *Ibid.*, ii., 87.

of primary importance. The boy died on the 7th August. On the 18th, the Electress-Dowager wrote to Leibniz announcing the journey of the Duke of Celle to the Loo, to console King William on the death of the Duke of Gloucester, "who has decamped three days after celebrating the anniversary of his birth. . . . If I were younger, I might flatter myself with the hope of a crown, but at present, if I had the choice, I should prefer to add to my years rather than to my dignity."¹ A few weeks later, she wrote in a similar strain: "If I were thirty years younger, I should think sufficiently well of my blood and of my religion to believe that they considered me in England. But as there is little appearance that I shall survive two persons much younger than I (though much more delicate), there is reason to fear that, after my death, they will regard my sons as strangers. My eldest son has been much more accustomed to play the sovereign than the poor Prince of Wales who is too young to profit by the example of the King of France, and who will apparently be so anxious to secure what the King his father as foolishly lost, that they can do with him what they will."² This letter has been supposed to bear marks of Jacobite sympathies: but it was written on the way to the Loo to meet King William, and it closes with the admission: "Je ne suis pas si philosophe ou si étourdie comme vous pouvez croire que je n'aime entendre parler d'une couronne." The sentence seems to us to express precisely the attitude of the Electress, all through the years which had elapsed since the Revolution.

The Conference at the Loo was followed by the passing of the Act of Settlement, which received the royal assent in the summer of 1701. Toland, who accompanied the

¹ *Correspondance*, ii., p. 206.

² *Correspondance*, ii., pp. 314—5.

mission which formally conveyed the news to the Electress, has given us a description of the manner in which she received it:—"I was the first who had the Honor of kneeling and kissing her hand on account of the Act of Succession; and she said, among other discourse, that she was afraid the Nation had already repented their choice of an old Woman, but that she hop'd none of her posterity wou'd give them any Reason to grow weary of their Dominion. I answer'd that the English had too well consider'd what they did to change their minds so soon, and that they still remember'd they were never so happy as when they were last under a Woman's Government."¹

The Act of Settlement gave Sophia an assured position, and there could be no longer any question of delicacy, once she had accepted the offer now made. King William proposed to invite Sophia to England, but his death on March 8th, 1702, put an end to the project. Queen Anne would have but one Court in England. It was, perhaps, a result of the coldness of the new sovereign, and, perhaps, also an effect of the sound constitutional sermons which the Whigs inflicted upon the heiress by Parliamentary right, that Sophia, in the autumn of 1702 administered a reproof to her supporters, who, like Pope Alexander VII. and Queen Christina, failed to appreciate the importance of the House of Brunswick. "You have good reason," she wrote to Leibniz, "to say that the English are much mistaken if they believe that I am totally engrossed with the affairs of England."² At the same time she took a keen interest in the next move in the Succession controversy—the Scottish Union question. On both sides this was regarded as a critical point. Not only were there in Scotland two parties strongly opposed to the Union—the avowed Jacobites and

¹ Courts of Russia and Hanover, p. 69.

² *Correspondance*, iii., p. 369.

the Patriot or Country party, who disliked English influence in Scotland—but there was no important section of the community who regarded the Union as in itself a boon. It might be purchased with freedom of trade and guarantees of various sorts; in itself the whole nation was opposed to it. If Scotland remained a separate Kingdom at the death of Queen Anne, a combination of Cavaliers and Patriots might not improbably bring about a Stuart Restoration in Scotland, which would prove of almost incalculable value to the English Jacobites. It was fully recognized that the scene of the struggle was in Parliament Square and not at Westminster. As early as April 1702, Sophia's Scottish agents were instructed to lay stress on the fact that the Queen, her mother, had been born in Scotland and that the Electress regarded herself as a Scots-woman.¹ The Scottish Act of Security of 1703, while it proved the occasion for the actual Union, seemed at first to place serious obstacles in the way, and this misfortune was followed by an *imbroglio* with Queen Anne, brought about by an unfortunate letter, written by Leibniz, urging the House of Commons to invite the Electress to England. The proposal which, in the strange condition of English politics, was supported by the Tories and opposed by the Whigs, was easily defeated, but it led to the naturalization of the Electress and her family, and to the conferment of the title of Duke of Cambridge upon the Electoral Prince. On the other hand, the ill-will of Queen Anne became more avowed, and it clearly annoyed Sophia, who began to show signs of irritability. Leibniz, who appreciated the importance of the struggle (and tried to remove Scottish objections to the small number of representatives of Scotland under the proposed Union, by urging that less Scottish

¹ *Correspondance*, ii., p. 346.

silver would be spent in London), received a distinct rebuke for writing to Sophia about the Union and the Succession. The Electress did not speak of the affairs of England and Scotland: she protested that they did not in the least interest her. The amusements of Leibniz at Berlin were much more important.¹ This has been taken somewhat seriously, and it is possible that after the death of her daughter, the Queen of Prussia, the old Electress became slightly less interested in the affairs of this world. But the protest to Leibniz was merely the product of momentary annoyance. A series of unpublished letters, preserved in the Staats-archiv at Hanover, which the present writer had the privilege of examining in 1898, shows how keenly the Electress watched the progress of the question. The Act of Union which secured the Hanoverian Succession in Scotland was only less critical, for her purpose, than the War of the Spanish Succession, which had by this time (1707) definitely decided that the French would never be able to force the Stuarts on an unwilling people.

Seven years elapsed between the Union of the Kingdoms and the death of Queen Anne, and the Tory re-action of the end of the reign was a source of considerable anxiety to the friends of the Succession. The Whigs were determined to retain the new dynasty under their own exclusive patronage, and the Tories were divided between yearnings for the ancient House and a desire to stand well with Queen Anne's successor, whoever he might be. The situation was thus extremely complicated, and one cannot be surprised that a crisis did finally arise. The Electress was probably justified in regarding Anne as, in her later years, a Jacobite at heart, and her advisers were convinced of the necessity of obtaining for her, before the Queen's death, an establishment in

¹ *Correspondance*, iii., p. 358.

England and such an allowance from Parliament as had, during William's reign, been granted to the Princess Anne. The Peace of Utrecht was so far favourable that it had, for the first time, obtained a general European recognition of the principles of the Act of Settlement, but the desertion of the Allies by England, and the conclusion of peace with France had created a new menace to the House of Hanover. Queen Anne's health was such that the end could not be far off, and it must find the Hanoverian party prepared. It is significant that, in the summer of 1713, the Electoral Princess (Caroline of Anspach) had begun to learn English, although the Elector himself had resisted the persuasions of Leibniz to master the tongue of his future subjects. The question of an establishment for the Electoral Prince was being discussed, when the crisis was suddenly brought about by an unfortunate demand that the Prince should, as Duke of Cambridge, receive a writ of summons to the House of Lords. Whether the Electress herself was responsible for this step is uncertain; it is probable that her agents and the Whig politicians had considerably bettered her instructions.

Queen Anne was much irritated by this demand that the Electoral Prince should reside in England during her life-time, and, on the 19th May, 1714, she wrote her famous letter to the Electress:—"Madam, my sister and aunt, since the right of succession to my kingdom has been declared to belong to you and your family, there have always been evil intentioned persons who, from regard to their private interests, have entered into designs to establish in my dominions, during my lifetime, a prince of your blood. I had never imagined till now that this project would have progressed so far as to have had the slightest effect on your mind. But as I have lately understood, from public reports which have very speedily spread

abroad, that your Electoral Highness shares this view, it is important for the succession of your family that I should tell you that such conduct will certainly be productive of consequences prejudicial to the succession itself, which has no security except while the sovereign who actually wears the crown retains her rights. There are here (and it is this which is the cause of all the trouble) many seditious spirits, and I leave you to imagine what trouble they may be able to produce if they have any pretext for raising an insurrection. I am sure therefore that you will never consent to anything which can disturb my peace or that of my subjects.

“Let me know, with the same frankness that I have shown to you, what you think necessary to make the Succession doubly secure; I will concur with zeal, as long as it does not derogate from my dignity, which I am resolved to maintain.”¹

A still more strongly worded letter was addressed to the Electoral Prince. Both letters reached Hanover on Wednesday, June 6th, and their contents much disturbed the aged Electress. She was now eighty-four years of age, and Queen Anne was scarcely fifty. “I believe I am more ill than she is,” she had written two months earlier, “although, by the grace of God, I have only that sad complaint of being old, which is beyond remedy.”² The long day’s task seemed to have been accomplished, and the fruits of victory all but attained, when this letter placed everything once more in jeopardy. At least, so the Electress deemed, and she at once took steps to regain the ground that had been lost. The Countess of Bückeburg, who was with her during these last days, has described to us the effects of the letters upon the Electress.

¹ *Correspondance*, iii., pp. 454—5.

² *Ibid.*, iii., p. 433.

On the Wednesday afternoon she remarked, "Cette affaire me rendra assurance malade. J'y succomberay."¹ But she was not too much overcome to send copies of the letters to the Duke of Marlborough, and she was determined to show the world that if her children lost the three crowns, it was not through her fault. Next day, the letters were still the main theme of her conversation, and she complained of feeling ill. On Friday, she was better. "Not only did she dine in public, but when, in the evening, the time came for her to walk, she shewed a strong desire to do so, although the weather was somewhat cloudy and it threatened to rain. She declined the bearer and walked as usual, talking ever of the English affairs with the Electoral Princess. These unfortunate affairs had taken the firmest hold of her heart, and the Queen's Letter . . . had made the deepest impression on our good Electress." After some conversation on this topic, the Electress turned to the Countess, and walking between the Princess and her, began to talk of things in general. Suddenly she felt ill and decided to return to her room. Rain began to fall, and as she quickened her steps in order to find shelter, she said, "I am very ill; give me your hand." In a few minutes she had passed away.

The Countess of Bückeberg was doubtless right when she said that, in her opinion, Queen Anne's letter was "la malheureuse cause extérieure de la perte irréparable," but the tradition that the Electress died of grief on receiving the letter cannot be seriously accepted. The emotion it called forth afforded the occasion for a mortal seizure, but the Electress had long known of a tendency to apoplexy. When Philip of Orleans died in 1701, Leibniz had taken the opportunity of warning his mistress of the

¹ *Correspondance*, iii., pp. 457—462.

danger of an apoplectic seizure.¹ Since then, thirteen years had elapsed, and the end could not now have been long delayed.

The character of the Electress Sophia bears, on the whole, a considerable resemblance to that of her great-grandmother, Mary, Queen of Scots. There was one grand difference; Mary was a child of the Italian Renaissance, Sophia of the Heidleberg Catechism. A humanistic education was productive of a simplicity of moral outlook which was lacking in the training of Calvinism. Moral restraint may have been more irksome to Mary, but forgiveness was less natural to Sophia. This fundamental contrast in education and in conception of life may be traced throughout the career of both. The Heidleberg Catechism was admirably suited to direct Sophia's course through life; Mary was, after her departure from France, continuously out of touch with her surroundings. But nature had, in many respects, dowered them alike. Both were women of remarkable personal charm; both were possessed of a gracious tolerance which found alike in the world of thought and in the world of men a human interest which rendered both the majority of opinions and the majority of mankind at least tolerable. In both there was combined with robustness of body, a courageous manliness of disposition, a courage both moral and physical. To Sophia's fearlessness in moments of grave bodily danger, her niece, Elizabeth Charlotte, bears constant witness. Both were free from the taint of coarseness which marked so many of their contemporaries, but both had the power

¹ *Correspondance*, ii., pp. 360—1. There are slight sketches of Sophia in Mrs. Everett-Green's *Lives of the Princesses of England*, (Life of Elizabeth of Bohemia) and in Mrs. Tytler's *Six Royal Ladies of the House of Hanover*. In addition to works already quoted, the reader may consult the following: Noeldeke: *Kurfürstin Sophie von Hannover*; and Schaumann: *Sophie Dorothea und Kurfürstin Sophie von Hannover*.

of bitter speech and could aim straight and wound cruelly. In both, the tender emotions were strongly developed, and both inspired the warmest affection in others. Neither was a woman of great intellectual power; the commonplace maxims which are so numerous in Mary's letters, and the simple proverbs which the Duchess of Orleans never tires of quoting from her aunt, are not the marks of a Queen Elizabeth or an Empress Catherine. Sophia had probably the keener intellect, Mary the more cultivated appreciation of literary form and grace.

The political position of both alike was influenced by proximity to the throne of England, and each regarded the recognition of her position of heir-presumptive as the ultimate aim of her policy. Mary failed to rule; Sophia missed, by two months, the opportunity of ruling, but she had already given signs of an ability to deal with men which Mary never evinced. She had mastered the condition of English politics, and, had Anne died some years earlier, British history might have known another great Queen. The greatest tribute to her life is the fact that she earned from Leibniz this epitaph: "Ce n'est pas elle, c'est Hanover, c'est l'Angleterre, c'est le monde, c'est moy qui y aye perdu."

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