

Queen Victoria eBook

Queen Victoria by Lytton Strachey

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

Queen Victoria eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	5
Page 1.....	6
Page 2.....	8
Page 3.....	10
Page 4.....	12
Page 5.....	14
Page 6.....	16
Page 7.....	18
Page 8.....	20
Page 9.....	22
Page 10.....	23
Page 11.....	24
Page 12.....	26
Page 13.....	27
Page 14.....	29
Page 15.....	30
Page 16.....	32
Page 17.....	33
Page 18.....	35
Page 19.....	37
Page 20.....	39
Page 21.....	40
Page 22.....	42

Page 23.....	44
Page 24.....	46
Page 25.....	48
Page 26.....	50
Page 27.....	52
Page 28.....	54
Page 29.....	56
Page 30.....	58
Page 31.....	60
Page 32.....	61
Page 33.....	63
Page 34.....	65
Page 35.....	67
Page 36.....	69
Page 37.....	71
Page 38.....	73
Page 39.....	75
Page 40.....	77
Page 41.....	78
Page 42.....	79
Page 43.....	81
Page 44.....	83
Page 45.....	85
Page 46.....	87
Page 47.....	89
Page 48.....	90

Page 49.....	92
Page 50.....	94
Page 51.....	96
Page 52.....	97
Page 53.....	99
Page 54.....	101
Page 55.....	103
Page 56.....	104
Page 57.....	106
Page 58.....	108
Page 59.....	110
Page 60.....	111
Page 61.....	112
Page 62.....	114
Page 63.....	116
Page 64.....	118
Page 65.....	119
Page 66.....	120
Page 67.....	122
Page 68.....	124
Page 69.....	126

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Start of eBook	1
QUEEN VICTORIA	1
CHAPTER I: <i>A Look Back</i>	1
CHAPTER II: <i>Childhood Days</i>	3
CHAPTER III: <i>Early Years</i>	6
CHAPTER IV: <i>Husband and Wife</i>	10
CHAPTER V: <i>Family Life</i>	13
CHAPTER VI: <i>Strife</i>	18
CHAPTER VII: <i>The Children of England</i>	25
CHAPTER VIII: <i>Ministering Women</i>	30
CHAPTER IX: <i>Balmoral</i>	35
CHAPTER X: <i>The Great Exhibition</i>	38
CHAPTER XI: <i>Albert the Good</i>	43
CHAPTER XII: <i>Friends and Advisers</i>	47
CHAPTER XIII: <i>Queen and Empire</i>	52
THE BRITISH EMPIRE	57
CANADA	57
AUSTRALIA	57
SOUTH AFRICA	57
INDIA	57
CHAPTER XIV: <i>Stress and Strain</i>	57
CHAPTER XV: <i>Victoria the Great</i>	62



Page 1

QUEEN VICTORIA

BY E. Gordon Browne, M.A.

WITH TWELVE FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS

London

George G. HARRAP & company

2 & 3 Portsmouth Street Kingsway W.C.

MCMXV

Turnbull & Spears, Printers, Edinburgh, Great Britain

Contents

Chapter

- I. A look back
- II. Childhood days
- III. Early years
- IV. Husband and wife
- V. Family life
- VI. Strife
- VII. The children of England
- VIII. Ministering women
- IX. Balmoral
- X. The great exhibition
- XI. Albert the good
- XII. Friends and advisers
- XIII. Queen and empire
- XIV. Stress and strain
- XV. Victoria the great

Illustrations

Queen Victoria

the queen's first Council at Kensington palace

Kensington palace

the Duke and duchess of Kent

the announcement of the queen's accession

Prince Albert

Buckingham palace

Florence Nightingale

queen Victoria in the Highlands

the Albert memorial

sir Robert Peel, Lord Melbourne, and Benjamin Disraeli
the secret of England's greatness
the Victoria and Albert museum

CHAPTER I: A Look Back

In the old legend of Rip Van Winkle with which the American writer Washington Irving has made us so familiar, the ne'er-do-weel Rip wanders off into the Kaatskill Mountains with his dog and gun in order to escape from his wife's scolding tongue. Here he meets the spectre crew of Captain Hudson, and, after partaking of their hospitality, falls into a deep sleep which lasts for twenty years. The latter part of the story describes the changes which he finds on his return to his native village: nearly all the old, familiar faces are gone; manners, dress, and speech are all changed. He feels like a stranger in a strange land.

Now, it is a good thing sometimes to take a look back, to try to count over the changes for good or for evil which have taken place in this country of ours; to try to understand clearly why the reign of a great Queen should have left its mark upon our history in such a way that men speak of the Victorian Age as one of the greatest ages that have ever been.

Page 2

If an Elizabethan had been asked whether he considered the Queen of England a great woman or not, he would undoubtedly have answered “Yes,” and given very good reasons for his answer. It was not for nothing that the English almost worshipped their Queen in “those spacious times of great Elizabeth.” Edmund Spenser, one of the world’s great poets, hymned her as “fayre Elisa” and “the flowre of Virgins”:

Helpe me to blaze
Her worthy praise;
Which, in her sexe doth all excell!

Throughout her long reign, courtiers, statesmen, soldiers, and people all united in serving her gladly and to the best of their powers.

Yet she could at times prove herself to be hard, cruel, and vindictive; she was mean, even miserly, when money was wanted for men or ships; she was excessively vain, loved dress and finery, and was often proud almost beyond bearing.

Notwithstanding all her faults, she was the best beloved of all English monarchs because of her never-failing courage and strength of mind, and she made the Crown respected, feared, and loved as no other ruler had done before her, and none other, save Queen Victoria, has reigned as she did in her people’s hearts.

She lived for her country, and her country’s love and admiration were her reward. During her reign the seas were swept clear of foreign foes, and her country took its place in the front rank of Great Powers. Hers was the Golden Age of Literature, of Adventure and Learning, an age of great men and women, a New England.

If an Elizabethan Rip Van Winkle had fallen asleep and awakened again at the opening of Victoria’s reign, more than 200 years later, what would he have found? England still a mighty Power, it is true, scarcely yet recovered from the long war against Napoleon, with Nelson and Wellington enthroned as the national heroes. But the times were bad in many ways, for it was “a time of ugliness: ugly religion, ugly law, ugly relations between rich and poor, ugly clothes, ugly furniture.”

The England of that day, it must be remembered, was the England described so faithfully in Charles Dickens’ early works. It was far from being the England we know now. In 1836 appeared the first number of Mr Pickwick’s travels. *The Pickwick Papers* is not a great work of humour merely, for in its pages we see England and the early Victorians—a strange country to us—in which they lived.

It is an England of old inns and stagecoaches, where “manners and roads were very rough”; where men were still cast into prison for debt and lived and died there; where the execution of a criminal still took place in public; where little children of tender years were condemned to work in the depths of coal-pits, and amid the clang and roar of

machinery. It was a hard, cruel age. No longer did the people look up to and reverence their monarch as their leader. England had yet to pass through a long and bitter period of 'strife and stress,' of war between rich and poor, of many and bewildering changes. The introduction of coal, steam, and mechanism was rapidly changing the character of the whole country. The revenue had grown from about 19,000,000 pounds in 1792 to 105,000,000 pounds in 1815, and there seemed to be no limit to the national wealth and resources.

Page 3

But these very changes which enriched some few were the cause of misery and poverty to struggling thousands. Machinery had ruined the spinning-wheel industry and reduced the price of cloth; the price of corn had risen, and, after the close of the great war, other nations were free once again to compete against our country in the markets where we so long had possessed the monopoly of trade.

[Illustration: The Queen's first Council at Kensington Palace Photo W.A. Mansell & Co.]

The period which followed the year 1815 was one of incessant struggle for reform, and chiefly the reform of a Parliament which no longer represented the people's wishes. Considerably more than half the members were not elected at all, but were recommended by patrons.

The average price of a seat in Parliament was 5000 pounds for a so-called 'rotten borough.' Scotland returned forty-five members and Cornwall forty-four members to Parliament! The reformers also demanded the abolition of the 'taxes on knowledge,' by which was meant the stamp duty of fourpence on every copy of a newspaper, a duty of threepence on every pound of paper, and a heavy tax upon advertisements. The new Poor Laws aroused bitter discontent. Instead of receiving payment of money for relief of poverty, as had formerly been the case, the poor and needy were now sent to the 'Union' workhouse.

A series of bad harvests was the cause of great migrations to the factory towns, and the already large ranks of the unemployed grew greater day by day. The poverty and wretchedness of the working class is painted vividly for us by Carlyle when he speaks of "half a million handloom weavers, working 15 hours a day, in perpetual inability to procure thereby enough of the coarsest food; Scotch farm-labourers, who 'in districts the half of whose husbandry is that of cows, taste no milk, can procure no milk' . . . the working-classes can no longer go on without government, without being *actually* guided and governed."

Such was Victoria's England when she ascended the throne, a young girl, nineteen years of age.

CHAPTER II: Childhood Days

On the western side of Kensington Gardens stands the old Palace, built originally in the solid Dutch style for King William and Mary. The great architect, Sir Christopher Wren, made notable additions to it, and it was still further extended in 1721 for George the First.

Within its walls passed away both William and his Queen, Queen Anne and her husband, and George the Second. After this time it ceased to be a royal residence.

The charm of Kensington Gardens, with its beautiful walks and secluded sylvan nooks—the happy hunting-ground of London children and the home of 'Peter Pan'—has inspired many writers to sing its praises:

In this lone, open glade I lie,
Screen'd by deep boughs on either hand;
And at its end, to stay the eye,
Those black-crown'd, red-boled pine trees stand!

Page 4

Birds here make song, each bird has his,
Across the girding city's hum.
How green under the boughs it is!
How thick the tremulous sheep cries come! Here at my feet what wonders pass,
What endless, active life is here!
What blowing daisies, fragrant grass!
An air-stirred forest, fresh and clear.

Matthew Arnold

Beaconsfield spoke of its "sublime sylvan solitude superior to the cedars of Lebanon, and inferior only in extent to the chestnut forests of Anatolia."

Kensington Palace was the birthplace of Queen Victoria, and in the garden walks she used to play, little knowing that she would one day be Queen of England. Her doll's house and toys are still preserved in the rooms which she inhabited as a little girl.

[Illustration: *Kensington palace*]

Four years had passed since the battle of Waterloo when the Princess Victoria was born, and England was settling down to a time of peace after long years of warfare.

In 1830 George the Fourth died, and was succeeded by his brother, the Duke of Clarence, as William the Fourth, the 'sailor king.' Though not in any respect a great monarch, he proved himself to be a good king and one who was always wishful to do the best that lay in his power for the country's good.

He was exceedingly hospitable, and gave dinners to thousands of his friends and acquaintances during the year, particularly inviting all his old messmates of the Navy. He had two daughters by his marriage, and as these both died young it was evident that the Princess Victoria might some day succeed to the throne.

Her father, the Duke of Kent, married the Dowager Princess of Leiningen, who was the sister of Prince Leopold, afterward King of the Belgians. As a young man the Duke had seen much service, for when he was only seventeen years of age he entered the Hanoverian army, where the discipline was severe and rigid. He afterward served in the West Indies and Canada, and on his return to England he was made a peer with the title of Duke of Kent. He was afterward General and Commander-in-Chief in Canada and Governor of Gibraltar.

At the latter place his love of order and discipline naturally made him unpopular, and, owing to strong feeling on the part of the troops, it was considered wise to recall the Duke in 1803.

In 1816 he settled in Brussels, and soon afterward met his future wife in Germany. Princess Victoire Marie Louise was the youngest daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and widow of Prince Charles of Leiningen, who on his death had left her as the regent of his principality.

They were married at Coburg in May 1818. Some months afterward they came over to England, and on May 24, 1819, their daughter Alexandrina Victoria was born.

[Illustration: The Duke of Kent Sir Wm. Beechey Photo W.A. Mansell & Co.]

Page 5

[Illustration: The Duchess of Kent and Princess Victoria Sir Wm. Beechey Photo W.A. Mansell & Co.]

The Duke still kept up his simple, soldierly habits, for throughout his life he had always believed in regularly ordering one's day. He rose betimes and took a cup of coffee at six o'clock. Each servant of the household was allotted his or her regular duties, and was obliged at least once a day to appear before the Duke. There was a separate bell for each servant, and punctuality in attendance was insisted upon.

The christening was attended by members of the Royal Family, and a dinner was held to celebrate the happy event. The Duke and Duchess removed soon afterward to Devonshire, and they were both much pleased with the beautiful surroundings of their new home. The Duke wrote at this time of his daughter: "My little girl thrives under the influence of a Devonshire climate, and is, I am delighted to say, strong and healthy; too healthy, I fear, in the opinion of some members of my family, by whom she is regarded as an intruder. How largely she contributes to my happiness at this moment it is needless for me to say to you."

The Duke had been determined from the first that his child should be born in England, for he wished her to be English both in upbringing and in feeling. His wife, who is described by those who knew her as being a singularly attractive woman, full of deep feeling and sympathy, fully shared his views on this point.

In January 1820, when only fifty-three years of age, the Duke died quite suddenly from inflammation of the lungs, following upon a neglected cold. He was a man of deep religious feeling, and once in talking to a friend about his little daughter's future career he said earnestly: "Don't pray simply that hers may be a brilliant career, and exempt from those trials and struggles which have pursued her father, but pray that God's blessing may rest on her, that it may overshadow her, and that in all her coming years she may be guided and guarded by God."

The widowed mother now returned to London, where the Duchess of Clarence, afterward Queen Adelaide, interested herself greatly in little Victoria. The Duchess now devoted herself entirely to the care of her child, and never did any little girl have a more loving and devoted mother.

As much time as possible was spent in the open air, and Victoria went for rides about Kensington on a donkey, which was led by an old soldier, a great friend and favourite. She always had her breakfast and supper with her mother, and at nine o'clock retired to her bed, which was placed close to her mother's. Until the time of her accession she led as simple and regular a life as thousands of other little girls.

Many stories are told of her early years to illustrate the thoroughness of her home training. Even as a small child she was absolutely truthful, and her chief fault—that of

wilfulness—was due to some extent to her high spirits and abundant energy. She was especially fond of dolls, and possessed a very large number, most of which were dressed as historical personages. She had practically no playmates of her own age, and in later life she often spoke of these early years as being rather dull.

Page 6

A description of her at this period runs: "She was a beautiful child, with the cherubic form of features, clustered round by glossy, fair ringlets. Her complexion was remarkably transparent, with a soft and often heightening tinge of the sweet blush rose upon her cheeks that imparted a peculiar brilliancy to her clear blue eyes. Whenever she met any strangers in her usual paths she always seemed by the quickness of her glance to inquire who and what they were."

There was, as was natural, much correspondence between England and Saxe-Coburg, the home of the Duchess, for the second son of the Duke of Coburg, Charles Albert Augustus Emmanuel, was already spoken of as being destined to be Victoria's husband in the future.

Prince Albert had been born at Rosenau on August 19, 1819, and was thus slightly younger than his cousin. He is spoken of as being a very handsome boy, "like a little angel with his fair curls," and was for a time much spoilt until his father interfered and superintended the children's education himself.

Ernest, the elder son, gives us a charming picture of his father:

"We children beheld in him, and justly, our ideal of courtesy, and although he never said a harsh word to us, we bore towards him, through all our love and confidence, a reverence bordering on fear. He never lectured, seldom blamed; praised unwillingly; and yet the effect of his individuality was so powerful that we accomplished more than if we had been praised or blamed. When he was once asked by a relative whether we were industrious and well behaved, he answered: 'My children cannot be naughty, and as they know well that they must learn in order to be worthy men, so I do not trouble myself about it.'"

The Duke liked both his sons to listen to the conversation of their elders and to take an interest in art and literature. Outdoor exercise, riding, fishing, hunting, and driving formed part of their education; they were taught from the first to endure cold and discomfort without complaint or murmur. The religious teaching they received had a deep and lasting influence upon the two boys, both at that time and in later years. But they had a thoroughly happy boyhood and did not suffer from a lack of companions. After their confirmation their father took them on a visit to several Courts in Germany, and also to Vienna—a journey which was intended to open their minds to the great world of which they had learnt so much and seen so little; and it was about this time that King Leopold, the brother of the Duke of Coburg, thought it wise to make a careful inquiry into the life and character of the young Prince.

CHAPTER III: Early Years

God save thee, weeping Queen!
Thou shalt be well beloved!
The tyrant's sceptre cannot move,
As those pure tears have moved!

E.B. Browning

Page 7

When she was five years old the Princess Victoria began to have lessons, chiefly with a governess, Miss von Lehzen—"my dearly beloved angelic Lehzen," as she called her. These two remained devotedly attached to one another until the latter's death in 1870. The young Princess was especially fond of music and drawing, and it was clear that if she had been able to devote more time to study she would in later years have excelled in both subjects.

Her education was such as to fit her for her future position of Queen of England. The Princess did not, however, know that she was likely at any future time to be Queen. She read much, chiefly books dealing with history, and these were often chosen for her by her uncle, the King of the Belgians.

The family life was regular and simple. Lessons, a walk or drive, very few and simple pleasures made up her day. Breakfast was at half-past eight, luncheon at half-past one, and dinner at seven. Tea was allowed only in later years as a great treat.

The Queen herself said: "I was brought up very simply—never had a room to myself till I was nearly grown up—always slept in my mother's room till I came to the throne."

Sir Walter Scott wrote of her at this period of her life: "This little lady is educated with much care, and watched so closely that no busy maid has a moment to whisper, 'You are heir of England.' I suspect if we could dissect the little heart, we should find some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter."

In 1830 her uncle, George the Fourth, died, and his brother, William the Fourth, came to the throne. The young Princess was now the next in succession. Her governess thought that her pupil should be told of this fact, and as the Duchess of Kent agreed, the table of genealogy was placed inside Victoria's history book, where by and by she found it.

The story goes that she then said, "I see, I am nearer the throne than I thought," and giving her hand to her governess added: "I will be good. I understand now, why you urged me so much to learn, even Latin. My cousins Augusta and Mary never did, but you told me that Latin was the foundation of English grammar, and of all the elegant expressions, and I learned it as you wished. But I understand it all better now." In later years the Queen recollected crying very much when she heard of it, but could not recall exactly what had happened.

It is interesting to note what those who knew little Victoria at this time say about her. She was, we are told, exceedingly affectionate, very full of high spirits, fond of life in the open air, and already possessed a strong sense of duty and religion.

She had been taught by her devoted uncle Leopold, with whom she corresponded regularly, how necessary it was for her to understand thoroughly the duties which fall to

the share of a ruler. During the years which followed she went more into society and paid visits to the most interesting places in the kingdom. Everywhere she went she was received with the greatest enthusiasm.

Page 8

In 1830 the Duke of Coburg, with his two sons, Ernest and Albert, arrived at Kensington Palace on a visit, and thus the Princess met for the first time her future husband. Her uncle Leopold had long desired to carry out the cherished wish of his mother, the Dowager Duchess of Coburg, that the two cousins should be united in marriage. During William the Fourth's lifetime all mention of such a marriage had to be kept secret, as the King much disliked the Coburg family, and had more than once been very rude to the Duchess of Kent.

Victoria wrote to her uncle saying how much she liked Albert in every way, and that he possessed every quality that could be desired to render her perfectly happy. She was very anxious that her uncle should take her cousin under his special protection.

On May 24, 1837, Victoria attained her majority. She received numbers of magnificent presents, congratulations from public bodies, and in the evening a State Ball was given at St James's Palace.

On Tuesday, June 20 of that year, at twelve minutes past two, King William the Fourth died. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain set out at once for Kensington to convey the sad news. They arrived at five in the morning, and were told that the Princess was asleep. They replied that they were on important business of State to the Queen, and even her sleep must give way to that. Our illustration depicts the scene which then ensued.

[Illustration: The Announcement of the Queen's Accession by the
Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chancellor
H.T. Wells, R.A.
Photo W.A. Mansell & Co.]

Even during the first days of her reign, the Queen's dignity, calm, and knowledge of State affairs astonished her ministers, and were complete proof of the careful training she had received during her girlhood days. Greville, Clerk to the Council, wrote: "She presided with as much ease as if she had been doing nothing else all her life. . . . The gracefulness of her manner and the good expression of her countenance give her on the whole a very agreeable appearance, and with her youth inspire an excessive interest in all who approach her, and which I can't help feeling myself."

In July the Queen and her mother left their home to take up their residence in Buckingham Palace, formerly known as the Queen's House. The present palace occupies the site of Buckingham House, which was erected by John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, in 1703. It was bought by George the Third for his wife in 1761, remodelled by George the Fourth, and completed by William the Fourth, who, however, had never lived there.

Four days later the Queen went in State to dissolve Parliament, and soon afterward removed to Windsor Castle, where she was joined for a time by her uncle and his wife.

Prince Albert wrote her a warm letter of congratulation. "You are now," he said, "Queen of the mightiest land in Europe. In your hands lie the happiness of millions. May Heaven assist and strengthen you with its strength in that high but difficult task! I hope that your reign may be long, happy, and glorious, and that your efforts may be rewarded by the thankfulness and love of your subjects."

Page 9

On Thursday, June 28, 1838, the coronation ceremony took place in Westminster Abbey. Afterward the Queen made a royal progress and was greeted by immense crowds of her people with the utmost loyalty and enthusiasm. In her journal she described it as the proudest day of her life. Mrs Jamieson, an onlooker, wrote of her as follows:

“When she returned, looking pale and tremulous, crowned and holding her sceptre in a manner and attitude which said, ‘I have it, and none shall wrest it from me,’ even Carlyle, who was standing near me, uttered with emotion, ‘A blessing on her head!’”

As a small instance of the Queen’s consideration for others, one of her first thoughts after the ceremony was for the school-children. She wrote to her minister, Lord Melbourne, asking if it was not usual to give a week’s additional holiday to the schools on such an occasion as this.

Lord Melbourne was from the moment of her accession the Queen’s chief adviser, and from the many letters which passed between them it is extremely interesting to see with what affection the young and inexperienced girl regarded him. “He is not only a clever statesman and an honest man,” she wrote to her uncle, Leopold, “but a good and a kind-hearted man, whose aim is to do his duty for his country and not for a *party*.”

Lord Melbourne was almost a second father to her, and there is no doubt that it was largely due to his excellent and homely advice that the Queen was able during the early years of her reign to develop in such an astonishing manner and yet at the same time to retain such a sweet and womanly character. Of her regularity of life and careful attention to detail we learn from Greville’s diary. She rose soon after eight o’clock, and after breakfast was occupied with business the whole morning. During this time Lord Melbourne visited her regularly. At two o’clock she rode out, attended by her suite, and amused herself afterward for the rest of the afternoon with music, singing, or romps with children. Dinner was served at eight o’clock to the whole household, and the Queen usually retired soon after eleven. “She orders and regulates every detail herself; she knows where everybody is lodged in the Castle, settles about the riding or driving, and enters into every particular with minute attention.” She never signed a single document of any importance until she had thoroughly mastered its contents.

In October, 1839, her cousins Ernest and Albert paid her a visit, bringing with them a letter from their uncle Leopold, in which he recommended them to her care. They were at once upon intimate terms, and the Queen confided to her uncle that “Albert was very fascinating.” Four days after their arrival she informed Lord Melbourne that she had made up her mind as to the question of marriage. He received the news in a very kindly manner and said: “I think it will be very well received, for I hear that there is an anxiety now that it should be, and I am very glad of it. You will be much more comfortable, for a woman cannot stand alone for any time, in whatever position she may be.”

Page 10

The Queen described her betrothal as follows: "At half-past twelve I sent for Albert. He came to the closet, where I was alone, and after a few minutes I said to him that I thought he would be aware why I wished him to come, and that it would make me happy if he would consent to what I wished, namely, to marry me. There was no hesitation on his part, but the offer was received with the greatest demonstrations of kindness and affection. . . . I told him I was quite unworthy of him. . . . He said he would be very happy to spend his life with me."

She wrote to her uncle: "I *love* him *more* than I can say, and I shall do everything in my power to render the sacrifice he has made (for a sacrifice in my opinion it is) as small as I can."

In the following November the news was made public, but it was not received with any great enthusiasm, as a German alliance was unpopular. There were other suitors for the Queen's hand, and the majority would have preferred one of her English cousins to have been chosen.

On February 10, 1840, the marriage was solemnized at the Chapel Royal, St James's. The Queen was described by those who saw her as looking extremely happy, and to her uncle she wrote of her delight at seeing the huge crowds which lined the streets to see the procession pass. "God grant that I may be the happy person, the *most* happy person, to make this dearest, blessed being happy and contented! What is in my power to make him happy, I will do."

CHAPTER IV: Husband and Wife

After four short days the Queen and her husband returned to London, and from this time onward the Prince acted as his wife's secretary, attending to every little detail of the mass of correspondence and State documents which grew larger with every succeeding year.

All the letters received by the Queen during the course of a long and busy life-time were carefully preserved, and at her death they amounted to no fewer than five or six hundred large bound volumes. They include letters from crowned heads of Europe, from her ministers of State, from her children, and from her friends and relations.

All these the Queen read and answered. She was thus at all times fully aware of everything that was happening both at home and abroad, and in her great Empire, an Empire which was destined to grow greater and greater in power and extent during her reign. Day by day, year in, year out, without a single break, this immense correspondence arrived. Ministers resigned and ministers were appointed, but there was neither halt nor rest. Truly 'the burden of Empire' is heavy for those who bear it.

Page 11

The young Prince determined from the first to master both national and European politics, for it must always be remembered that as he was a foreigner everything in this country was for some time strange to him. In addition to being his wife's right hand he took a leading part in all movements which might help to improve the education and conditions of life of the people. His fine training and sympathetic nature enabled him, little by little, to be the means of helping on important reforms. In addition to this, both he and his wife found time to work at drawing and music, which they studied together under the best masters. Throughout the Queen's correspondence one reads of his devotion to her both as husband and helpmate.

The times were hard; discontent with poverty and bad trade kept the nation ill at ease, and, as is always the case, there were many who did their best to stir up riot. As a consequence, possibly, of this unrest, attempts were made on the Queen's life, once in 1840 and twice in 1841.

The relief and joy felt by the whole nation at their young Queen's lucky escapes from death by an assassin's hand are expressed in the following lines by an anonymous author:—

God saved the Queen—all thoughts apart
This crowning joy fills every mind!
She sits within the nation's heart,
An angel shrined.

The assassin's hand the steel enclosed,
He poised his ruthless hand on high—
But God in mercy interposed
His shadow for her panoply.

Then let ten thousand lyres be swept,
Let paeans ring o'er sea and land—
The Almighty hath our Sovereign kept
Within the hollow of His hand!

In July 1840, it was considered necessary to appoint a Regent in case of the Queen's death. A Bill for this purpose was brought in and passed, naming the Prince as Regent. This pleased the Queen, for it was a clear proof of the golden opinions the Prince had won everywhere since his marriage, and it was passed, as she herself said, entirely on account of his noble character. At an earlier period it is certain, as Lord Melbourne assured her, that Parliament would not have passed such a Bill.

The Queen was soon to lose her chief adviser and friend, for in June 1841 Parliament dissolved and the Whigs were not returned to power. Lord Melbourne could, however, resign with an easy mind, for he himself recognized how valuable a counsellor the

Queen now possessed in her husband. After handing his resignation to the Queen, he wrote to her: "Lord Melbourne has formed the highest opinion of His Royal Highness's judgment, temper, and discretion, and he cannot but feel a great consolation and security in the reflection that he leaves Your Majesty in a situation in which Your Majesty has the inestimable advantage of such advice and assistance." The Queen was exceedingly proud of these words of praise, coming as they did unasked from a minister of such long experience.

Page 12

It was in the same year that the Prince was appointed Head of the Royal Commission which had been formed to encourage the study of the Fine Arts throughout the kingdom. This was work of a kind which he especially loved, and he was now in a position to influence the movement which led to the Great Exhibition of 1851.

[Illustration: Prince Albert F.X. Winterhalter Photo Emery Walker Ltd.]

But all was not plain sailing for the Prince, who was still regarded, if not with dislike, at any rate with some mistrust, as being a foreigner. For a long time yet he felt himself a stranger, the Queen's husband and nothing more. Still, "all cometh to him who knoweth how to wait," and he set himself bravely to his uphill task. To use his own words, "I endeavour to be as much use to Victoria as I can,"—this was the keynote of his whole life.

The Prince took sides with neither of the political parties, and first of all by careful economy he lessened the enormous household expenses and proved that it was possible for royalty to live without always being in debt. He established model farms at Osborne and Windsor, introduced different and better breeds of cattle, and even made a profit on the undertaking. He persuaded his wife to give up the late hours which were still usual, and gradually, by kindness and sympathy, won the household staff over to his way of thinking.

The Prince's life was an extremely full one. Soon after six o'clock was his time for rising. Until nine he read and answered letters. He then looked through all the principal newspapers and gave the Queen a summary of the most important news. He found time also to work and play with his children during his short intervals of leisure. Consultations with ministers, reading and writing dispatches followed, and then a short time was devoted to open-air exercise. After lunch he often accompanied the Queen on a drive. More reading and writing took up his time until dinner, after which there was either a social evening or a visit to a theatre. He was "complete master in his house, and the active centre of an Empire whose power extends to every quarter of the globe. . . No British Cabinet minister has ever worked so hard during the session of Parliament, and that is saying a good deal, as the Prince Consort did for 21 years. . . . The Prince had no holidays at all, he was always in harness." [1]

[Footnote 1: Miss C.M. Yonge, *Life of H.R.H. the Prince Consort.*]

Louis Philippe, the first French king who had ever visited this country, except King John, wrote of him: "Oh, he will do wonders; he is so wise; he is not in a hurry; he gains so much by being known. He will always give you good advice. Do not think I say so in flattery. No! No! It is from my heart. He will be like his uncle, equally wise and good. . . . He will be of the greatest use to you, and will keep well at your side if a time of vicissitude should come, such as I hope may never be—but, after all, no one can tell."

Page 13

CHAPTER V: Family Life

“Upon the good education of princes, and especially of those who are destined to govern, the welfare of the world in these days very greatly depends.”

The love of children was always a strong connecting link between the Queen and her people. No trouble was ever spared by her to obtain the best possible advice on the training of her own family. The nursery was as well governed as her kingdom.

Acting upon the advice of Baron Stockmar, the Queen determined to have some one at the head on whom she could thoroughly rely, as her many occupations prevented her from devoting so much time to these duties as she could have wished. Lady Lyttelton, who had been a lady-in-waiting, was appointed governess to the Royal Family in 1842, and for eight years she held this post, winning the affection and respect of her young pupils and the gratitude of the Queen and her husband.

From time to time the Queen wrote her views upon the subject. “The greatest maxim of all is,” she declared, “that the children should be brought up as simply, and in as domestic a way as possible; that (not interfering with their lessons) they should be as much as possible with their parents, and learn to place their greatest confidence in them in all things.”

Training in religion, to be of real and lasting value, must be given by the mother herself, and in 1844 the Queen noted with regret that it was not always possible for her to be with the Princess Royal when the child was saying her prayers.

“I am *quite* clear,” she said, “that she ought to be taught to have great reverence for God and for religion, but that she should have the feeling of devotion and love which our Heavenly Father encourages His earthly children to have for Him, and not one of fear and trembling; and that the thoughts of death and an after-life should not be represented in an alarming and forbidding view, and that she should be made to know as yet no difference of creeds, and not think that she can only pray on her knees, or that those who do not kneel are less fervent and devout in their prayers.”

On November 21, 1840, the Queen’s first child, Victoria Adelaide Mary Louisa, the Princess Royal, was born. The Prince’s care of his wife “was like that of a mother, nor could there be a kinder, wiser, or more judicious nurse.” Only for a moment was he disappointed that his first child was a daughter and not a son.

The children were all brought up strictly and were never allowed to appear at Court until a comparatively late age. They were all taught to use their hands as well as their heads, and at Osborne, in the Swiss cottage, the boys worked at carpentering and gardening, while the girls were employed in learning cooking and housekeeping. Christmas was always celebrated in splendid fashion by the family, and the royal

children were always encouraged to give as presents something which they had made with their own hands. Lessons in riding, driving, and swimming also formed part of their training, for the Queen was wise enough to realize that open-air exercise was very necessary for the health of her children.

Page 14

In 1846 the question arose as to who should educate the Prince of Wales (born 1841). A pamphlet on the subject had been published and created general interest. Baron Stockmar was again consulted, and gave it as his opinion that the Prince's education should be one "which will prepare him for approaching events"—that is, he was to be so educated that he would be in touch with the movements of the age and able to respond sympathetically to the wishes of the nation. The rapid growth of democracy throughout Europe made it absolutely necessary that his education should be of a different kind. The task of governing well was becoming more and more difficult, and reigning monarchs were criticized in an open fashion, such as had not hitherto been possible. After much thought the post was given to Mr Henry Birch (formerly a master at Eton College, and at that time rector of Prestwich, near Manchester), who had made a very favourable impression upon the Queen and her husband.

Plain people as well as princes must be educated, and this fact was never lost sight of by the Queen and her husband. In 1857 the Prince called attention to the fact that there were at that time no fewer than 600,000 children between the ages of three and fifteen absent from school but known to be employed in some way; he pointed out also—and this seems in these days difficult to believe—that no less than *two million* children were not attending school, and were, so far as could be ascertained, not employed in any way at all.

[Illustration: BUCKINGHAM PALACE]

The most interesting visitors whom the Queen entertained during her early married life were the Emperor Nicholas of Russia and Louis Napoleon of France. The Emperor Nicholas came to England, as he told the Queen, to see things with his own eyes, and to win, if he could, the confidence of English statesmen. "I esteem England highly; but as to what the French say of me, I care not."

He was, however, undoubtedly jealous of this country's growing friendship with her old enemy, France, but any attempt to weaken this met with no encouragement.

The Queen, in writing to her uncle Leopold, said, "He gives Albert and myself the impression of a man who is *not* happy, and on whom the burden of his immense power and position weighs heavily and painfully. He seldom smiles, and when he does, the expression is *not* a happy one. He is very easy to get on with." In a further letter she continued, "By living in the same house together quietly and unrestrainedly (and this Albert, and with great truth, says is the great advantage of these visits, that I not only see these great people, but *know* them), I got to know the Emperor and he to know me. . . . He is sincere, I am certain, *sincere* even in his most despotic acts—from a sense that that *is* the *only* way to govern. . . . He *feels* kindness deeply—and his love for his wife

Page 15

and children, and for all children, is *very* great. He has a strong feeling for domestic life, saying to me, when our children were in the room: 'These are the sweet moments of our life.' One can see by the way he takes them up and plays with them that he is very fond of children." And again she wrote: "He also spoke of princes being nowadays obliged to strive to make themselves worthy of their position, so as to reconcile people to the fact of their being princes."

The effect of this visit was to make France somewhat suspicious, and the Queen expressed her wish that it might not prevent the visit which had been promised by King Louis Philippe.

There was at one time actually danger of war over trouble in the East, but King Leopold, whose kingdom was in the happy position of having its independence guaranteed by the Powers,[2] was able to bring his influence to bear, and the critical period passed over, to the great relief of the Queen.

[Footnote 2: This, however, did not protect Belgium in 1914, when Germany did not hesitate to attack her.]

In 1844 King Louis Philippe paid his promised visit, of which the Queen said, "He is the first King of France who comes on a visit to the Sovereign of this country. A very eventful epoch, indeed, and one which will surely bring good fruits."

The King was immensely pleased with everything he saw, and with the friendly reception he received. He assured the Queen that France did not wish to go to war with England, and he told her how pleased he was that all their difficulties were now smoothed over.

During his stay he was invested with the Order of the Garter—an Order, it is interesting to recollect, which had been created by Edward the Third after the Battle of Cressy, and whose earliest knights were the Black Prince and his companions.

The Corporation of London went to Windsor in civic state to present the King with an address of congratulation. He declared in his answer that "France has nothing to ask of England, and England has nothing to ask of France, but cordial union."

But in 1848 the Orleans dynasty was overthrown, France proclaimed a republic, and King Louis Philippe, his wife and family were forced to flee to England. Here in 1850, broken in health, the King died.

In 1852 Louis Napoleon, who had been elected President for life, created himself Emperor, and in 1855, after the conclusion of the Crimean War and the death of the Emperor Nicholas, he visited England.

A State Ball was held of which the Queen wrote: "How strange to think that I, the granddaughter of George III, should dance with the Emperor Napoleon, nephew of England's great enemy, now my nearest and most intimate ally, in the Waterloo room, and this ally only six years ago living in this country an exile, poor and unthought of! . . . I am glad to have known this extraordinary man, whom it is certainly impossible not to like when you live with him, and not even to a considerable extent to admire. I believe him to be capable of kindness, affection, friendship, and gratitude. I feel confidence in him as regards the future; I think he is frank, means well towards us, and, as Stockmar says, 'that we have insured his sincerity and good faith towards us for the rest of his life.'"

Page 16

The Queen and her husband paid frequent visits, and made many tours during their early married life. It was a great source of pleasure to both of them to feel that everywhere they went they were received with the greatest delight and enthusiasm.

In 1847 they visited Cambridge University, of which Prince Albert was now Chancellor. "Every station and bridge, and resting-place, and spot of shade was peopled with eager faces watching for the Queen, and decorated with flowers; but the largest, and the brightest, and the gayest, and the most excited assemblage was at Cambridge station itself. . . . I think I never saw so many children before in one morning, and I felt so much moved at the spectacle of such a mass of life collected together and animated by one feeling, and that a joyous one, that I was at a loss to conceive how any woman's sides can bear the beating of so strong a throb as must attend the consciousness of being the object of all that excitement, the centre of attraction to all those eyes. But the Queen has royal strength of nerve."[3]

[Footnote 3: The Duke of Argyll, *Queen Victoria*.]

In 1849 they paid their first visit to Ireland, and received a royal welcome on landing in Cork. The Queen noticed particularly that "the beauty of the women is very remarkable, and struck us much; such beautiful dark eyes and hair, and such fine teeth; almost every third woman was pretty, and some remarkably so."

The royal children were the objects of great admiration. "Oh! Queen, dear!" screamed a stout old lady, "make one of them Prince Patrick, and all Ireland will die for you."

In Dublin, the capital of a country which had very recently been in revolt, the loyal welcome was, if possible, even more striking.

The Queen writes: "It was a wonderful and striking spectacle, such masses of human beings, so enthusiastic, so excited, yet such perfect order maintained; then the numbers of troops, the different bands stationed at certain distances, the waving of hats and handkerchiefs, the bursts of welcome which rent the air—all made a never-to-be-forgotten scene."

Lord Clarendon, writing of the results of the Irish tour, said, "The people are not only enchanted with the Queen and the gracious kindness of her manner and the confidence she has shown in them, but they are pleased with themselves for their own good feelings and behaviour, which they consider have removed the barrier that hitherto existed between the Sovereign and themselves, and that they now occupy a higher position in the eyes of the world."

In 1850 they visited for the first time the Palace of Holyrood. This was a memorable occasion, for since Mary, Queen of Scots, had been imprisoned there, no queen had ever stayed within its walls.

Page 17

The Queen took the liveliest interest in the many objects of historical interest which were shown to her. "We saw the rooms where Queen Mary lived, her bed, the dressing-room into which the murderers entered who killed Rizzio, and the spot where he fell, where, as the old housekeeper said to me, 'If the lady would stand on that side,' I would see that the boards were discoloured by the blood. Every step is full of historical recollections, and our living here is quite an epoch in the annals of this old pile, which has seen so many deeds, more bad, I fear, than good."

Both the Queen and her husband had an especial love for animals, and the Queen's suite, when she travelled, always included a number of dogs. Her favourites were Skye terriers and the so-called 'turnspits' which were introduced into this country by Prince Albert. One of the Queen's great delights at Windsor was to walk round the farms and inspect the cattle, which are still, owing largely to the careful methods of feeding and tending instituted by the Prince, among the finest in the world. Kindness to animals was a lesson she taught to all her children, and pictures and statuettes of all her old favourites were to be found in her homes.

THE ROYAL FAMILY

QUEEN VICTORIA *m.* PRINCE ALBERT of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha

1840

|
|

|||||
|||||

Victoria, Princess | Princess Alice | | | | Princess Beatrice
Royal (Empress | (Grand Duchess | | | | (Princess Henry of
Frederick of | of Hesse) | | | | Battenberg)
Germany) born 1840 | born 1843 | | | | born 1857

|||||

----- | | | -----

|||||

| ----- | | |

| | | | Prince Leopold

| | ----- | | (Duke of Albany)

| Prince Alfred, Duke | | | born 1853

| of Edinburgh (Duke | | |

| of Saxe-Coburg and Princess Helena | -----

| Gotha) born 1844 (Princess Christian | |

| of Schleswig- | |

| Holstein) born 1846 | Prince Arthur

| | (Duke of Connaught)



| | born 1850

| |

| Princess Louise

----- (Duchess of Argyll)

| born 1848

|

Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, *m.* Princess

Page 18

Alexandra of Denmark
born 1841 1863
(King Edward VII) |

|

|||||
|||||

Albert Victor George Frederick, ||| Prince Alexander
(Duke of Clarence) Prince of Wales, ||| born 1870
born 1864 born 1865 |||

(King George V), |||
m., 1893, Princess |||
Victoria Mary of Teck |||

Princess Louise Princess Victoria Princess Maud
(Duchess of Fife) born 1868 (Queen of Norway)
born 1867 born 1869

CHAPTER VI: Strife

"Two men I honour, and no third. First, the toilworn Craftsman that with earth-made Implement laboriously conquers the Earth, and makes her man's. . . . A second man I honour, and still more highly: Him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread, but the Bread of Life. . . . Unspeakably touching is it, however, when I find both dignities united; and he that must toil outwardly for the lowest of man's wants, is also toiling inwardly for the highest." [4]

[Footnote 4: Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*.]

To understand the many and bewildering changes which followed one another in rapid succession during the early years of Victoria's reign it is necessary to read the literature, more especially the works of those writers who took a deep and lasting interest in the lives and work of the people.

Democracy, the people, or the toiling class, was engaged in a fierce battle with those forces which it held to be its natural enemies. It was a battle of the Rich against the Poor, of the masters against the men, of Right against Might. England was a sick

nation, at war with itself, and Chartism and the Chartists were some of the signs of the disease. The early Victorian age is the age of Thomas Carlyle, the stern, grim prophet, who, undaunted by poverty and ill-health, painted England in dark colours as a country hastening to its ruin.

His message was old and yet new—for men had forgotten it, as they always have from age to age. This was an age of competition, of 'supply and demand'; brotherly love had been forgotten and 'cash payment' had taken its place. Carlyle denounced this system as "the shabbiest gospel that had been taught among men." He urged upon Government the fact that it was their *duty* to educate and to uplift the masses, and upon the masters that they should look upon their workers as something more than money-making machines. The old system of Guilds, in which the apprentice was under the master's direct care, had gone and nothing had been put in its place.

Page 19

The value of Carlyle's teaching lies in the fact that he insisted upon the sanctity of work. "All true work is religion," he said, and the essence of every true religion is to be found in the words, "Know thy work and do it."

The best test of the worth of every nation is to be found in their standard of life and work and their rejection of a life of idleness. "To make some nook of God's Creation a little fruitfuller, better, more worthy of God; to make some human hearts, a little wiser, manfuler, happier—more blessed, less accursed! It is work for a God. . . . Unstained by wasteful deformities, by wasted tears or heart's-blood of men, or any defacement of the Pit, noble, fruitful Labour, growing ever nobler, will come forth—the grand sole Miracle of Man, whereby Man has risen from the low places of this Earth, very literally, into divine Heavens. Ploughers, Spinners, Builders, Prophets, Poets, Kings: . . . all martyrs, and noble men, and gods are of one grand Host; immeasurable; marching ever forward since the beginnings of the World." [5]

[Footnote 5: Carlyle, *Past and Present*.]

Carlyle was, above all things, sincere; he looked into the heart of things, and hated half-beliefs. Men, he said, were accustoming themselves to say what they did not believe in their heart of hearts. The standard of English work had become lower; it was 'cheap and nasty,' and this in itself was a moral evil. Good must in time prevail over Evil; the Christian religion was the strongest thing in the world, and for this reason had conquered. He believed in wise compassion—that is to say, he kept his sympathy for those who truly deserved it, for the mass of struggling workers with few or none to voice their bitter wrongs.

His teachings are a moral tonic for the age, and though for a long time they were unpopular and distasteful to the majority, yet he lived to see much accomplished for which he had so earnestly striven.

Literature was beginning to take a new form. The novel of 'polite' society was giving place to the novel which pictured life in cruder and harsher colours. The life of the toiling North, of the cotton spinners and weavers was as yet unknown to most people.

In 1848 appeared *Mary Barton*, a book dealing with the problems of working life in Manchester. Mrs Gaskell, its author, who is best known to most readers by her masterpiece *Cranford*, achieved an instant success and became acquainted with many literary celebrities, including Ruskin, Dickens, and Charlotte Bronte, whose Life she wrote.

Mary Barton was written from the point of view of labour, and *North and South*, which followed some years later, from that of capital. Her books are exact pictures of what she saw around her during her life in Manchester, and many incidents from her own life appear in their pages.

North and South shows us the struggle not only between master and men, as representing capital and labour, but also between ancient and modern civilizations. The South is agricultural, easy-going, idyllic; the North is stern, rude, and full of a consuming energy and passion for work. These are the two Englands of Mrs Gaskell's time.

Page 20

The ways of the manufacturing districts, which seem unpleasing to those who do not really know them, are described with a faithful yet kindly pen, and we see that each life has its trials and its temptations.

In the South all is not sunshine, and the life of the labourer can be very hard—"a young person can stand it; but an old man gets racked with rheumatism, and bent and withered before his time; yet he must work on the same, or else go to the workhouse."

In the North men are often at enmity with their masters, and fight them by means of the strike. "State o' trade! That's just a piece of masters' humbug. It's rate o' wages I was talking of. Th' masters keep th' state o' trade in their own hands, and just walk it forward like a black bug-a-boo, to frighten naughty children with into being good. I'll tell yo' it's their part—their cue, as some folks call it—to beat us down, to swell their fortunes; and it's ours to stand up and fight hard—not for ourselves alone, but for them round about us—for justice and fair play. We help to make their profits, and we ought to help spend 'em. It's not that we want their brass so much this time, as we've done many a time afore. We'n gotten money laid by; and we're resolved to stand and fall together; not a man on us will go in for less wage than th' Union says is our due. So I say, 'Hooray for the strike.'"

The story appeared in *Household Words*, a new magazine of which Charles Dickens was the editor. He expressed especial admiration for the fairness with which Mrs Gaskell had spoken of both sides. Nicholas Higgins, whose words are quoted above, is a type of the best Lancashire workman, who holds out for the good of the cause, even though it might mean ruin and poverty to himself—"That's what folk call fine and honourable in a soldier, and why not in a poor weaver-chap?"

Dickens himself wrote *Hard Times*, dealing with the same subject. This appeared about the same time, and the two books should be read and compared, for, although *Hard Times* is not equal in any way to *North and South*, it is interesting. As Ruskin said of Dickens' stories, "Allowing for the manner of telling them, the things he tells us are always true. . . . He is entirely right in his main drift and purpose in every book he has written; and all of them, but especially *Hard Times*, should be studied with close and earnest care by persons interested in social questions."

During all these years the 'Chartists' had been vainly struggling to force Parliament to proceed with reform of their grievances. In 1848 a monster Petition was to be presented to both Houses by their leaders, but London was garrisoned by troops under the Duke of Wellington on the fateful day, and the Chartist army broke up, never to be reunited. Quarrels among themselves proved, in the end, fatal to their cause.

A new party, the Christian Socialists, took their place; force gave way to union and co-operation. A new champion, Charles Kingsley, or 'Parson Lot,' stood forth as the Chartist leader.

Page 21

The hard winter and general distress of the year 1848 nearly provoked another rising, and in his novel entitled *Yeast* Kingsley pictures the 'condition of England' question as it appeared to one who knew it from the seamy side. Especially did he blame the Church, which, he said, offered a religion for "Jacob, the smooth man," and was not suited for "poor Esau." This was indeed most true as regards the agricultural classes, where the want was felt of a real religion which should gain a hold upon a population which year by year was fast drifting loose from all ties of morality and Christianity.

The peasantry, once the mainstay of England and now trodden down and neglected, cannot rise alone and without help from those above them. "What right have we to keep them down? . . . What right have we to say that they shall know no higher recreation than the hogs, because, forsooth, if we raised them they might refuse to work—for us? Are we to fix how far their minds may be developed? Has not God fixed it for us, when He gave them the same passions, talents, tastes, as our own?"

The farm labourer, unlike his brothers in the North, had no spirit left to strike. His sole enjoyment—such as it was—consisted in recalling "the glorious times before the war . . . when there was more food than there were mouths, and more work than were hands.'

"'I say, vather,' drawled out some one, 'they say there's a sight more money in England now than there was afore the war-time.'

"'Ees, booy,' said the old man, 'but *it's got into too few hands.*'"

The system of 'sweating' among the London tailors had grown to such an extent that Kingsley was determined, if possible, to put an end to it, and with this purpose in view he wrote *Cheap Clothes and Nasty*.

The Government itself, he declares, does nothing to prevent sweating; the workmen declare that "Government contract work is the worst of all, and the starved-out and sweated-out tailor's last resource . . . there are more clergymen among the customers than any other class; and often we have to work at home upon the Sunday at their clothes in order to get a living."

He followed this up with *Alton Locke*, dealing especially with the life and conditions of work of the journeymen tailors, and the Chartist riots. Both sides receive some hard knocks, for Kingsley was a born fighter, and his courage and fearlessness won him many friends, even among the most violent of the Chartists.

The character of Alton Locke was probably drawn from life, and was intended to be William Lovett, at one time a leader in the Chartist ranks. After a long fight with poverty, when he frequently went without a meal in order to save the money necessary for his education, he rose to a position of some influence. He was one of the first to propose

that museums and public galleries should be opened on Sundays, for he declared that most of the intemperance and vice was owing to the want of wholesome and rational recreation. He insisted that it was necessary to create a moral, sober, and thinking working-class in order to enable them to carry through the reforms for which they were struggling. Disgust with the violent methods of many of his associates caused him at last to withdraw from their ranks.

Page 22

Kingsley looked up to Carlyle as his master, to whom he owed more than to any other man. "Of the general effect," he said, "which his works had upon me, I shall say nothing: it was the same as they have had, thank God, on thousands of my class and every other."

When, finally, violent methods proved of no avail and the Chartist party dissolved, the democratic movement took a fresh lease of life. As Carlyle had already pointed out, the question of the people was a 'knife and fork' question—that is to say, so long as taxes were levied upon the necessities of life, the poorer classes, who could least of all afford to pay, would become poorer.

Sir Robert Peel was the first to remove this injustice, by substituting a tax upon income for the hundred and one taxes which had pressed so heavily upon the poor. Manufacturers were now able to buy their raw materials at a lower price, and need no longer pay such low wages to keep up their profits.

In 1845 Peel went a step farther, and in order to relieve the famine in Ireland, he removed the duty on corn. Thus, since corn could now be imported free, bread became cheaper.

The Corn Law Repealers had fought for years to bring this about. Their leader and poet, Ebenezer Elliott, declared that "what they wanted was bread in exchange for their cottons, woollens, and hardware, and no other thing can supply the want of that one thing, any more than water could supply the want of air in the Black Hole of Calcutta." Bad government

Is the deadly will that takes
What Labour ought to keep,
It is the deadly power that makes
Bread dear and Labour cheap.

It was not until there had been many riots and much bloodshed that the Irish Famine forced Peel at last to give way.

A third party of reformers were working for the same end. This was the 'Young England' party, whose leader was Disraeli, a rising young politician. By birth a Jew, he had joined the English Church and the ranks of the Tory party. His early works are chiefly sketches of social and political life and are not concerned with the 'question of the People.' He took as his motto the words Shakespeare puts into Ancient Pistol's mouth,

Why, then the world's mine oyster,
Which I with sword will open,

thus showing at an early age that he had a firm belief in his own powers. From the beginning of his career he never hesitated in championing the cause of the People, and declared that “he was not afraid or ashamed to say that he wished more sympathy had been shown on both sides towards the Chartists.”

The people had begun to look upon the upper classes as their oppressors, who were living in comfort upon the profits wrung from their poorer brethren.

Thomas Cooper in his Autobiography describes the reckless and irreligious spirit which continued poverty was creating among the half-starved weavers:

Page 23

“Let us be patient a little longer, lads, surely God Almighty will help us.’ ‘Talk no more about thy Goddle Mighty,’ was the sneering reply; ‘there isn’t one. If there was one, He wouldn’t let us suffer as we do.’”

The Chartists were opposed to the Anti-Corn Law party, for they thought that the cry of ‘cheap bread’ meant simply ‘low wages,’ and was a trap set to catch them unawares.

The Young England party believed in themselves as the leaders of a movement which should save England through its youth. They were, however, known in Parliament in their early days as “young gentlemen who wore white waistcoats and wrote spoony poetry.”

‘Young England’ wished for a return of the feudal relations between the nobility and their vassals; the nobles and the Church, as in olden days, were to stretch out a helping hand to the poor, to feed the hungry, and succour the distressed. National customs were to be revived, commerce and art were to be fostered by wealthy patrons. The Crown was once more to be in touch with the people. “If Royalty did but condescend to lower itself to a familiarity with the people, it is curious that they will raise, exalt, and adore it, sometimes even invest it with divine and mysterious attributes. If, on the contrary, it shuts itself up in an august seclusion, it will be mocked and caricatured . . . if the great only knew what stress the poor lay by the few forms that remain, to join them they would make many sacrifices for their maintenance and preservation.”[6]

[Footnote 6: George Smythe, Viscount Strangford, *Historic Fancies*.]

It was to lay the views of his party and himself before the public that Disraeli published the three novels, *Coningsby*, *Sybil*, and *Tancred*. *Coningsby* deals with the political parties of that time, and is full of thinly-disguised portraits of people then living; *Sybil*, from which a quotation is given elsewhere, is a study of life among the working-classes; *Tancred* discusses what part the Church should take in the government of the people.

Though the life of the ‘Young England’ party was short, it succeeded by means of agitation in and out of Parliament in calling public attention to the harshness of the New Poor Law and the need for social reform.

Carlyle was again the writer who influenced the young Disraeli, for the latter saw that to accomplish anything of real value he must form his own party and break loose from the worn-out beliefs and prejudices of both political parties. Though in later days he will be remembered as a statesman rather than as a novelist, it is necessary to study those three books in order to understand what England and the English were in Victoria’s early years.

Each of these Reform parties had rendered signal service in their own fashion: Church, Government, and People were no longer disunited, distinctions of class had been

broken down, and with their disappearance Chartism came to an end. The failure of the “physical force” Chartists in 1848 had served to enforce the lesson taught by Carlyle and Kingsley, that the way to gain reform was not through deeds of violence and bloodshed. Each man must learn to fit himself for his part in the great movement toward Reform. Intelligence, not force, must be their weapon.

Page 24

After years of bitter strife between the Two Nations, England at last enjoyed peace within her own borders—that peace which a patriot poet, Ernest Jones, during a time of bitter trial had so earnestly prayed for:

God of battles, give us peace!
Rich with honour's proud increase;
Peace that frees the fettered brave;
Peace that scorns to make a slave;
Peace that spurns a tyrant's hand;
Peace that lifts each fallen land;
Peace of peoples, not of kings;
Peace that conquering freedom brings;
Peace that bids oppression cease;
God of battles, give us peace!

Appendix to Chapter VI

1838. The Chartist Movement. The Chartists demanded (1) Annual Parliaments; (2) Manhood Suffrage; (3) Vote by ballot; (4) Equal electoral districts; (5) Abolition of the property qualification for members of Parliament; (6) Payment for members of Parliament. The Reform Act of 1832 had brought the middle classes into power, and the working classes were now striving to better their own condition.

The Anti-Corn Law League, formed in this year, was largely a middle-class agitation supported by merchants and manufacturers. The great northern towns had been enfranchised by the Reform Bill, and sent as leaders of the movement Richard Cobden and John Bright. Both parties in Parliament were opposed to a total abolition of the Corn Laws.

1842. A motion for Free Trade defeated in Parliament by a large majority.

1843. Agitation in Ireland for the Repeal of the Union. Daniel O'Connell, the leader, arrested. He was found guilty of conspiracy, but his sentence was afterward revoked by the House of Lords.

1845. Failure of the potato crop in Ireland.

1846. Repeal of the Corn Laws, in order to open the ports free to food stuffs. Free Trade established and the prices of food begin to fall.

1848. The year of Revolution. France proclaims a Republic with Prince Louis Napoleon, nephew of Napoleon I, as its President. Risings in Austria and Italy.

Renewal of the Chartist agitation. The meeting in London to present a Petition to Parliament proves a failure.

1853-56. Years of prosperity owing to Free Trade and growth of intelligence among the working classes prove the chief causes of the death of Chartism. The workers now begin to aim at reforms through their Trades Unions. The Co-operative Movement set on foot in Rochdale in 1844 leads to the formation of many other branches.

Between the years 1851 and 1865 national imports nearly treble, and exports more than double, themselves.

THOMAS CARLYLE (1795-1881). His writings more than those of any other man give us a key to the meaning of the early Victorian Age. 1839. *Chartism*. 1841. *Heroes and Hero Worship*. 1843. *Past and Present*. 1850. *Latter-Day Pamphlets*.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812-70). 1836. *Pickwick Papers*. 1838. *Oliver Twist* (the evils of the Workhouse). 1850. *David Copperfield* (contains sketches of Dickens' early life). 1853. *Hard Times*. 1857. *Little Dorrit* (the Marshalsea prison for debtors).

Page 25

DISRAELI, LORD BEACONSFIELD (1804-81). 1844. *Coningsby* (political life and the 'Young England' policy). 1845. *Sybil* (the claims of the people). 1847. *Tancred* (the Church and the State).

EBENEZER ELLIOTT (1781-1849). 1828. *Corn Law Rhymes* (the poet of the workers and of sorrow).

ELIZABETH CLEGHORN GASKELL (1810-65). 1848. *Mary Barton* (Industrial Lancashire during the crisis of 1842). 1855. *North and South* (the struggle between Master and Man).

CHARLES KINGSLEY[7] (1819-75). 1848. *Yeast* (the hard lives of the agricultural labourers). 1850. *Alton Locke* (life and labour of the city poor).

[Footnote 7: The Prince Consort was a great admirer of the works of Charles Kingsley, which, he said, in speaking of *Two Years Ago*, showed "profound knowledge of human nature, and insight into the relations between man, his actions, his destiny, and God." The Queen was also one of his admirers, and in 1859 she appointed him one of her chaplains. Later on he delivered a series of lectures on history to the Prince of Wales.]

CHARLES READE (1814-84). 1856. *It is Never too Late to Mend* (life in an English prison). 1863. *Hard Cash* (an exposure of bad administration of lunatic asylums).

JOHN RUSKIN (1819-1900). 1859. *The Two Paths*. 1862. *Unto this Last*. 1871. *Fors Clavigera*. (In the last-named book Ruskin describes the scheme of his St George's Guild, an attempt to restore happiness to England by allying art and science with commercial industry.)

CHAPTER VII: The Children of England

"From the folding of its robe, it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. . . . They were a boy and a girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. . . . 'They are Man's,' said the Spirit, looking down upon them. 'And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased.'"[8]

[Footnote 8: Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*.]

In surveying the long reign of Queen Victoria nothing strikes one more than the gradual growth of interest in children, and the many changes in the nation's ideas of their upbringing and education. At the beginning of her reign the little children of the poor were for the most part slaves, and were often punished more cruelly by their taskmasters than the slaves one reads of in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

When Disraeli, afterward Lord Beaconsfield and Prime Minister, wrote *Sybil*, he drew, in that book, a terrible picture of the life of children in the manufacturing districts and in the country villages. The following extract speaks for itself:

Page 26

“There are many in this town who are ignorant of their very names; very few who can spell them. It is rare that you meet with a young person who knows his own age; rarer to find the boy who has seen a book, or the girl who has seen a flower. Ask them the name of their sovereign and they will laugh; who rules them on earth or who can save them in heaven are alike mysteries to them.”

In such a town as Disraeli describes there were no schools of any kind, and the masters treated their apprentices “as the Mamelouks treated the Egyptians.” The author declares that “there is more serfdom now in England than at any time since the Conquest. . . . The people were better clothed, better fed, and better lodged just before the Wars of the Roses than they are at this moment. The average term of life among the working classes is seventeen.”

One of the first results of machinery taking the place of human labour was that an enormous number of women and young children of both sexes were employed in the factories in place of grown men, who were no longer needed. Especially in the spinning mills thousands of men were thrown out of work, and lower wages were paid to those who took their place. This led directly to the breaking up of the home and home-life. The wives were often obliged to spend twelve to thirteen hours a day in the mills; the very young children, left to themselves, grew up like wild weeds and were often put out to nurse at a shilling or eighteenpence a day.

One reads of tired children driven to their work with blows; of children who, “too tired to go home, hide away in the wool in the drying-room to sleep there, and could only be driven out of the factory with straps; how many hundreds came home so tired every night that they could eat no supper for sleepiness and want of appetite, that their parents found them kneeling by the bedside where they had fallen asleep during their prayers.”

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, one of the greatest poets of Victoria’s reign, pleads for mercy and human kindness in her “Cry of the Children.”

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
Ere the sorrow comes with years?
They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,
And *that* cannot stop their tears.
The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
The young birds are chirping in the nest,
The young fawns are playing with the shadows,
The young flowers are blowing toward the west—
But the young, young children, O my brothers,
They are weeping bitterly!
They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
In the country of the free.

“For oh,” say the children, “we are weary,
And we cannot run or leap;
If we cared for any meadows, it were merely
To drop down in them and sleep.
Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,
We fall upon our

Page 27

faces, trying to go;
And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping
The reddest flower would look as pale as snow;
For, all day, we drag our burden tiring
Through the coal-dark underground—
Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron
In the factories, round and round.”

In the country the state of affairs was no better. New systems of industrial production threw large numbers of farm hands out of work, the rate of wages fell, and machinery, steam, and the work of women and children took the place of the labourer.

The children found a champion in Lord Ashley, afterward Lord Shaftesbury, who succeeded in the face of much opposition in his efforts to pass laws which should do away with such shameful wrong and injustice.

The increased amount of coal used (15-1/2 million tons at the beginning of the century, 64-1/2 million tons in 1854) naturally led to the demand for more workers, and it was owing to this that the proposals of Lord Shaftesbury met with such opposition from the mine-owners, who feared that if child labour were made illegal they would not have sufficient ‘hands’ to work the mines and that they would have to pay higher wages.

The Act of 1842 forbade altogether the employment of women and girls in the mines, and allowed only boys of the age of ten or more to do such work. The Poor Law Guardians of the time used to send children into the mines at the age of seven as a means of finding employment for them. The hours of work were limited to ten daily and fifty-eight each week.

Little or no attempt was made in the Bill to give children the means of obtaining a good education, although considerably more than half the children in the country never went to school at all, and many large towns were without a proper school.

By a previous Factory Act of 1834 all children under fourteen years of age were compelled to attend school for two hours daily. The employer was allowed to deduct one penny a week from the child’s wages to pay the teacher. This proved absolutely useless, as the masters employed worn-out workers as teachers, and in consequence the children learnt nothing at all.

It was not until the year 1870 that a Bill was passed in Parliament to create an adequate number of public elementary schools for every district in the kingdom. To show the increase in the number of schools built, there were in the year 1854, 3825, and in the year 1885, 21,976.

But the children of England owe almost as much to Charles Dickens as they do to Lord Shaftesbury. He was almost the first, and certainly the greatest, writer who, with a heart overflowing with sympathy for little children, has left us in his books a gallery of portraits which no one can ever forget.

He himself, “a very small and not over-particularly-taken-care-of boy,” passed through a time of bitter poverty, and his stay at school, short as it was, was not a period of his life upon which he looked back with any pleasure.

Page 28

The material for his books was drawn from life—from his own and from the lives of those around him—and for this reason all that he wrote will always be of great value, as it gives us a good idea of the Early and Mid Victorian days.

His ambition was to strike a blow for the poor, “to leave one’s hand upon the time, lastingly upon the time, with one tender touch for the mass of toiling people.”

Who can ever forget in the *Christmas Carol* the crippled Tiny Tim, “who behaved as good as gold and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see.”

Other pictures of suffering childhood are ‘Little Nell’ and ‘The Marchioness’ in *The Old Curiosity Shop*, ‘Jo’ and ‘Charley’ in *Bleak House*, and ‘Smike,’ the victim of the inhuman schoolmaster ‘Squeers.’

The cruelty of the times is shown in the case of an unfortunate sempstress who tried to earn a living by making shirts for three-halfpence each. Once, when she had been robbed of her earnings, she tried to drown herself. The inhuman magistrate before whom she was brought told her that she had “no hope of mercy in this world.”

It was after hearing of this from Charles Dickens that Thomas Hood wrote the well-known “Song of the Shirt”:

Work—work—work!
From weary chime to chime,
Work—work—work
As prisoners work for crime!
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumbed,
As well as the weary hand.

The age might well take to heart the lesson taught by the great-souled writer—that the two chief enemies of the times were Ignorance and Want.

The lot of the unfortunate children in the Union Workhouses was no better. They were treated rather worse than animals, with no sympathy or kindness, owing to the ignorance of those who were set in authority over them. Any one who reads *Oliver Twist* may learn the nature of the life led by the ‘pauper’ children in those ‘good old days.’

“The members of this board were very sage, deep, philosophical men; and when they came to turn their attention to the workhouse, they found out at once, what ordinary folks would never have discovered—the poor people liked it! It was a regular place of public entertainment for the poorer classes; a tavern where there was nothing to pay; a public breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper all the year round; a brick and mortar elysium, where it was all play and no work. ‘Oho!’ said the board, looking very knowing, ‘we are the fellows to set this to rights; we’ll stop it all, in no time.’ So, they established the rule, that all poor people should have the alternative

Page 29

(for they would compel nobody, not they) of being starved by a gradual process in the house, or by a quick one out of it. With this view, they contracted with the waterworks to lay on an unlimited supply of water; and with a corn-factor to supply periodically small quantities of oatmeal; and issued three meals of thin gruel a day, with an onion twice a week, and half a roll on Sundays. . . . Relief was inseparable from the workhouse and the gruel; and that frightened people.”

A movement which helped, possibly far more than any other, to better the lot of the children of the Poor commenced with the foundation of the Ragged School Union, of which the Queen became the patroness.

Out of this sprang a small army of agencies for well-doing. Commencing only with evening schools, which soon proved insufficient, the founders established day schools, with classes for exercise and industrial training: children were sent to our colonies where they would have a better chance of making a fair start in life; training ships, cripples' homes, penny banks, holiday homes followed, and from these again the numerous Homes and Orphanages which entitle us to call the Victorian Age the Age of Kindness to Children.

Charles Dickens took the keenest interest in the work of the Ragged Schools. A letter from Lord Shaftesbury quoted in his Life gives a clear idea of the marvellous work they had accomplished up to the year 1871:

“After a period of 27 years, from a single school of five small infants, the work has grown into a cluster of some 300 schools, an aggregate of nearly 30,000 children, and a body of 3000 voluntary teachers, most of them the sons and daughters of toil. . . . Of more than 300,000 children, which, on the most moderate calculation, we have a right to conclude have passed through these schools since their commencement, I venture to affirm that more than 100,000 of both sexes have been placed out in various ways—in emigration, in the marine, in trades and in domestic service. For many consecutive years I have contributed prizes to thousands of the scholars; and let no one omit to call to mind what these children were, whence they came, and whither they were going without this merciful intervention. They would have been added to the perilous swarm of the wild, the lawless, the wretched, and the ignorant, instead of being, as by God's blessing they are, decent and comfortable, earning an honest livelihood, and adorning the community to which they belong.”

Dickens believed, first of all, in teaching children cleanliness and decency before attempting anything in the form of education. “Give him, and his,” he said, “a glimpse of heaven through a little of its light and air; give them water; help them to be clean; lighten the heavy atmosphere in which their spirits flag and which makes them the callous things they are . . . and then, but not before, they will be brought willingly to hear of Him

whose thoughts were so much with the wretched, and who had compassion for all human sorrow.”

Page 30

CHAPTER VIII: Ministering Women

Honour to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs;
And by their overflow
Raise us from what is low!
LONGFELLOW

No account of the reign of Queen Victoria would be complete without some reference to the achievements of women, more especially when their work has had for its chief end and aim the alleviation of suffering. Woman has taken a leading part in the campaign which has been and is now being ceaselessly carried on against the forces of sin, ignorance, and want.

In the early years of Victoria's reign the art of sick-nursing was scarcely known at all. The worst type of nurse is vividly pictured for us by Charles Dickens in *Martin Chuzzlewit*:

"She was a fat old woman, this Mrs Gamp, with a husky voice and a moist eye, which she had a remarkable power of turning up, and only showing the white of it. Having very little neck, it cost her some trouble to look over herself, if one may say so, at those to whom she talked. She wore a very rusty black gown, rather the worse for snuff, and a shawl and bonnet to correspond. In these dilapidated articles of dress she had, on principle, arrayed herself, time out of mind on such occasions as the present; . . . The face of Mrs Gamp—the nose in particular—was somewhat red and swollen, and it was difficult to enjoy her society without becoming conscious of a smell of spirits."

For a long time, though it had been recognized that the care of the sick was woman's work, no special training was required from those undertaking it. Florence Nightingale did away with all such wrong ideas. In a letter on the subject of training she wrote: "I would say also to all young ladies who are called to any particular vocation, qualify yourselves for it, as a man does for his work. Don't think you can undertake it otherwise. . . . If you are called to man's work, do not exact a woman's privileges—the privilege of inaccuracy, of weakness, ye muddle-heads. Submit yourselves to the rules of business, as men do, by which alone you can make God's business succeed; for He has never said that He will give His success and His blessing to inefficiency, to sketchy and unfinished work."

She prepared herself for her life's work by years of hard study and ten years' training, visiting all the best institutions in Germany, France, and Italy. She gave up a life of ease and comfort in order to develop her natural gift to the utmost.

Her opportunity was not long in coming. In 1854 the Crimean War broke out. Most of the generals in the English army were old men whose experience of actual warfare dated back to the early days of the century. Everything was hopelessly mismanaged from the beginning. In August the English and French allied forces moved against the fortress of Sebastopol, from which Russia was threatening an attack on Constantinople. Troops were landed in a hostile country without the means of moving them away again; there was little or no provision made to transport food, baggage, or medical stores.

Page 31

After the victory of Alma Lord Raglan marched on to Balaclava, and here the transport utterly broke down. The soldiers, in addition to undertaking hard fighting, were forced to turn themselves into pack-mules and tramp fourteen miles through the mud in the depth of winter in order to obtain food and warm blankets for their comrades and themselves. Their condition rapidly became terrible. Their clothing wore to rags, their boots—mostly of poor quality—gave out entirely. Their food—such as it was—consisted of biscuit, salt beef or pork, and rum.

No vegetables could be obtained, and for want of green food scurvy broke out among the troops. Stores were left decaying in the holds of transports, and the doctors were forced to see men dying before their eyes without the means of helping them. The loss of life from the actual fighting was considerable, but more particularly so from the insanitary condition of the camp and the wretched hospital arrangements.

The actual figures of our losses in the war speak for themselves. Out of a total loss of 20,656, only 2598 fell in battle; 18,058 died from other causes in hospital. Several regiments lost nearly all their men, and during the first seven months of the siege men died so fast that in a year and a half no army would have been left at all.

William Russell, the special correspondent of *The Times*, first brought this appalling state of affairs to the notice of the public, and the nation at last woke up. A universal outburst of indignation forced ministers to act, and to act quickly.

Stores were hurried to the front; fresh troops were sent out to relieve the almost exhausted remnants of the army, and on the 21st October Florence Nightingale, with a band of nurses, set sail; she arrived on the very eve of the Battle of Inkerman.

Within a few months of her arrival it is estimated that she had no fewer than ten thousand sick men in her charge, and the rows of beds in one hospital alone measured two and one-third miles in length.

Her influence over the rough soldiers was extraordinary; one of them said of her: “She would speak to one and another, and nod and smile to many more; but she could not do it to all, you know—we lay there in hundreds—but we could kiss her shadow as it fell, and lay our heads on the pillow again, content.”

Out of chaos she made order, and there were no more complaints of waste and inefficiency. She never quitted her post until the war was at an end, and on her return to England she received a national welcome. She was received by the Queen and presented with a jewel in commemoration of her work, and no less than fifty thousand pounds was subscribed by the nation, a sum which was presented by Miss Nightingale to the hospitals to defray the expenses of training nurses.

[Illustration: Florence Nightingale]

Page 32

Since this time no war between civilized peoples has taken place without trained nurses being found in the ranks of both armies, and at the Convention of Geneva, some years later, it was agreed that in time of war all ambulances, military hospitals, *etc.*, should be regarded as neutral, and that doctors and nurses should be considered as non-combatants. Nursing rapidly became a profession, and from the military it spread to the civil hospitals, which were used as training schools for all who took up the work.

Florence Nightingale's advice was sought by the Government and freely given upon every matter which affected the health of the people, and it is entirely owing to her influence and example that speedy reforms were carried out, especially in the army.

Her noble work was celebrated by Longfellow, in his poem "Santa Filomena," often better known as "The Lady with the Lamp":

Thus thought I, as by night I read
Of the great army of the dead,
The trenches cold and damp,
The starved and frozen camp,

The wounded from the battle-plain,
In dreary hospitals of pain,
The cheerless corridors,
The cold and stony floors.

Lo! in that house of misery
A lady with a lamp I see
Pass through the glimmering gloom,
And flit from room to room.

And slow, as in a dream of bliss,
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
Her shadow, as it falls
Upon the darkening walls.

The Queen followed the course of the war with painful interest. "This is a terrible season of mourning and sorrow," she wrote; "how many mothers, wives, sisters, and children are bereaved at this moment. Alas! It is that awful accompaniment of war, disease, which is so much more to be dreaded than the fighting itself." And again, after a visit to Chatham: "Four hundred and fifty of my dear, brave, noble heroes I saw, and, thank God, upon the whole, all in a very satisfactory state of recovery. Such patience and resignation, courage, and anxiety to return to their service. Such fine men!"

Many acts had been passed in previous reigns to improve the disgraceful state of the prisons in this country, but it was left to a band of workers, mostly Quakers, led by

Elizabeth Fry, to bring about any real improvement. Any one who wishes to read what dens of filth and hotbeds of infection prisons were at this time need only read the account of the Fleet prison in the *Pickwick Papers* and of the Marshalsea in *Little Dorrit*.

Reform proved at first to be a very slow and difficult matter. New laws passed in 1823 and 1824 insisted upon cleanliness and regular labour for all prisoners; chaplains and matrons for female prisoners were appointed. The public, however, got the idea—as in the case of workhouses—that things were being made too comfortable for the inmates, and the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline was bitterly attacked.

Page 33

Mrs Fry had started work in Newgate Prison, then justly considered to be the worst of all the bad prisons in the country. The condition of the women and children was too dreadful to describe, and she felt that the only way to introduce law and decency into this 'hell upon earth' was by influencing the children.

She founded a school in the prison, and it was not long before there was a marked improvement in the appearance and behaviour of both the children and the women.

The success of her work attracted public attention, and a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the condition of the London prisons. Mrs Fry was called upon to give evidence, and she recommended several improvements, *e.g.* that prisoners should be given some useful work to do, that rewards should be given for good behaviour, and that female warders should be appointed.

She visited other countries in order to study foreign prison systems, and her work in the prisons led her to consider what could be done to improve the condition of the unfortunate women who were transported as convicts. She succeeded in improving matters so much that female warders were provided on board ship, and proper accommodation and care on their arrival at their destination.

Even such a tender-hearted man and friend of the poor as Thomas Hood, author of "Song of the Shirt," misunderstood Mrs Fry's aims, for in a poem called "A Friendly Address to Mrs Fry," he wrote:

No—I will be your friend—and, like a friend,
Point out your very worst defect—Nay, never
Start at that word! But I *must* ask you why
You keep your school *in* Newgate, Mrs Fry?

Your classes may increase, but I must grieve
Over your pupils at their bread and waters!
Oh, though it cost you rent—(and rooms run high)—
Keep your school *out* of Newgate, Mrs Fry!

In the face of domestic sorrows and misfortunes, Mrs Fry persevered until the day of her death in 1845 in working for the good of others.

The work in this direction was continued by Mary Carpenter, whose father was the headmaster of a Bristol school. She began her life's work after a severe outbreak of cholera in Bristol in 1832. At this time there were practically no reformatory or industrial schools in the country, and Mary Carpenter set to work with some friends to found an institution near Bristol. She worked to save children—especially those whose lives were spent in the midst of sin and wickedness—from becoming criminals, and in order to

bring this about she aimed at making their surroundings as homelike and cheerful as possible.

She even helped to teach the children herself, as she found great difficulty in finding good assistants. She wished to convince the Government that her methods were right, and so persuade them to set up schools of a similar kind throughout the country.

Page 34

The great Lord Shaftesbury was her chief supporter, but it was not until the year 1854 that Mary Carpenter succeeded in her desire, when a Bill was passed establishing reformatory schools. From this time her influence rapidly increased, and it is mainly owing to her efforts that at the present day such precautions are taken to reform young criminals on the sound principle of "prevention is better than cure."

Mary Carpenter also visited India no fewer than four times in order to arouse public opinion there to the need for the better education of women, and at a later date she went to America, where she had many warm friends and admirers. She had, as was only natural, been keenly interested in the abolition of negro slavery.

One of the most distinguished women in literature during the Victorian Age was Harriet Martineau. At an early age it was evident that she was gifted beyond the ordinary, and at seven years old she had read Milton's "Paradise Lost" and learnt long portions of it by heart.

Her health was extremely poor; she suffered as a child from imaginary terrors which she describes in her Autobiography, and she gradually became deaf. She bore this affliction with the greatest courage and cheerfulness, but misfortunes followed one another in rapid succession. Her elder brother died of consumption, her father lost large sums of money in business, and the grief and anxiety so preyed upon his mind that he died, leaving his family very badly off.

This, and the loss later on of the little money they had left, only served to strengthen Miss Martineau's purpose. She studied and wrote until late in the night, and after her first success in literature, when she won all three prizes offered by the Unitarian body for an essay, she set to work on a series of stories which were to illustrate such subjects as the effect of machinery upon wages, free trade, *etc.*

After the manuscript had been refused by numerous publishers, she succeeded in getting it accepted, and the book proved an extraordinary success.

She moved to London, and her house soon became the centre where the best of literature and politics could always be discussed. She was consulted even by Cabinet Ministers, but in spite of all the praise and adulation she remained quite unspoiled.

The idea of women taking part in public movements was still not altogether pleasing to the majority of people, who were apt to look upon 'learned' women as 'Blue-stockings,' a name first used in England in the previous century in rather a contemptuous way.

Come, let us touch the string,
And try a song to sing,
Though this is somewhat difficult at starting, O!
And in our case more than ever,



When a desperate endeavour,
Is made to sing the praise of Harry Martineau!

Of bacon, eggs, and butter,
Rare philosophy she'll utter;
Not a thing about your house but she'll take part in, O!
As to mine, with all my soul,
She might take (and pay) the whole—
But that is all my eye and Harry Martineau!

Page 35

Her political economy
Is as true as Deuteronomy;
And the monster of Distress she sticks a dart in, O!
Yet still he stalks about,
And makes a mighty rout,
But that we hope's my eye and Harry Martineau!

In 1835 she visited the United States, and here she was able to study the question of slavery. She joined the body of the 'Abolitionists,' and as a result was attacked from all sides with the utmost fury, for the Northern States stood solid against abolition. But she remained unmoved in her opinion, and when in 1862 the great Civil War broke out, her writings were the means of educating public opinion. It was largely due to her that this country did not foolishly support the secession of the Southern States from the Union.

During a period of five years she was a complete invalid, and some of her best books, including her well-known stories for children, *Feats on the Fiord* and *The Crofton Boys*, were written in that time.

After her recovery her life was busier than ever. She wrote articles for the daily papers, but her chief pleasure lay in devising schemes for improving the lot of her poorer neighbours. She organized evening lectures for the people, and founded a Mechanics' Institute and a building society.

During her life-time she was the acknowledged leader on all moral questions, especially those which affected the lives of women.

"It has always been esteemed our special function as women," she said, "to mount guard over society and social life—the spring of national existence."

CHAPTER IX: Balmoral

It was in Balmoral Castle that the husband and wife most loved to be with their children. Here they could lead a simple life free from all restraints, "small house, small rooms, small establishment. . . . There are no soldiers, and the whole guard of the Sovereign consists of a single policeman, who walks about the grounds to keep off impertinent intruders and improper characters. . . . The Prince shoots every morning, returns to luncheon, and then they walk or drive. The Queen is running in and out of the house all day long, and often goes about alone, walks into the cottages, and chats with the old women."

The Queen loved her life here even more than the Prince, and every year she yearned for it more and more. "It is not alone the pure air, the quiet and beautiful scenery, which makes it so delightful," she wrote; "it is the atmosphere of loving affection, and the

hearty attachment of the people around Balmoral which warms the heart and does one good.”

It was during the year 1848 that the royal couple paid their first visit to Balmoral. The Queen had long wished to possess a home of her own in the Highlands where her husband could indulge in some outdoor sport, and where they both could enjoy a brief rest, from time to time, from the anxiety and care of State affairs.

Page 36

Their life there during the years 1848-61 is described by the Queen in her diary, *Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands*. It was first published after the Prince's death and was dedicated to him in the words: "To the dear memory of him who made the life of the writer bright and happy, these simple records are lovingly and gratefully inscribed."

The first impressions were very favourable: "It is a pretty little castle in the old Scottish style. There is a picturesque tower and garden in front, with a high wooded hill; at the back there is wood down to the Dee; and the hills rise all around."

Their household was, naturally, a small one, consisting of the Queen's Maid of Honour, the Prince's valet, a cook, a footman, and two maids. Among the outdoor attendants was John Brown, who in 1858 was attached to the Queen as one of her regular attendants everywhere in the Highlands, and remained in her service until his death. "He has all the independence and elevated feelings peculiar to the Highland race, and is singularly straightforward, simple-minded, kind-hearted and disinterested; always ready to oblige; and of a discretion rarely to be met with."

The old castle soon proved to be too small for the family, and in September 1853 the foundation-stone of a new house was laid. After the ceremony the workmen were entertained at dinner, which was followed by Highland games and dancing in the ballroom.

Two years later they entered the new castle, which the Queen described as "charming; the rooms delightful; the furniture, papers, everything perfection."

The Prince was untiring in planning improvements, and in 1856 the Queen wrote: "Every year my heart becomes more fixed in this dear Paradise, and so much more so now, that *all* has become my dearest Albert's *own* creation, own work, own building, own laying out as at Osborne; and his great taste, and the impress of his dear hand, have been stamped everywhere. He was very busy today, settling and arranging many things for next year."

Visits to the cottages of the old people on the estate and in the neighbourhood were a constant source of delight and pleasure to the Queen, and often when the Prince was away for the day shooting, she would pay a round of calls, taking with her little presents. The old ladies especially loved a talk with their Queen. "The affection of these good people, who are so hearty and so happy to see you, taking interest in everything, is very touching and gratifying," she remarked upon them. "We were always in the habit of conversing with the Highlanders—with whom one comes so much in contact in the Highlands. The Prince highly appreciated the good breeding, simplicity, and intelligence, which make it so pleasant, and even instructive to talk to them."

In September 1855, soon after moving into the new castle, the news arrived of the fall of Sebastopol, and this was taken as an omen of good luck. The Prince and his suite sallied forth, followed by all the population, to the cairn above Balmoral, and here, amid general cheering, a large bonfire was lit. The pipes played wildly, the people danced and shouted, guns and squibs were fired off, and it was not until close upon midnight that the festivities came to an end.

Page 37

During the same month the Princess Royal became engaged to Prince Frederick William of Prussia, who was then visiting Balmoral. Acting on the Queen's advice, Prince Frederick did not postpone his good fortune until a later date, as he had at first intended, but during a ride up Craig-na-Ban, he picked a piece of white heather (the emblem of 'good luck') and offered it to the young Princess, and this gave him an opportunity of declaring his love.

These extracts, printed from the Queen's Journals, were intended at first for presentation only to members of the Royal Family and Her Majesty's intimate friends, especially to those who had accompanied her during her tours. It was, however, suggested to the Queen that her people would take even as keen an interest in these simple records of family life, especially as they had already shown sincere and ready sympathy with her personal joys and sorrows.

"The book," its editor says, "is mainly confined to the natural expressions of a mind rejoicing in the beauties of nature, and throwing itself, with a delight rendered keener by the rarity of its opportunities, into the enjoyment of a life removed, for the moment, from the pressure of public cares."

It is of particular interest because here the Queen records from day to day her thoughts and her impressions in the simplest language; here she can be seen less as a queen than as a wife and mother. Her interest in her whole household and in all those immediately around her is evident on almost every page. To quote again: "She is, indeed, the Mother of her People, taking the deepest interest in all that concerns them, without respect of persons, from the highest to the lowest."

As a picture of the Royal Court in those days this is exceedingly valuable, for it shows what an example the Queen and her husband were setting to the whole nation in the simple life they led in their Highland home.

That the old people especially loved her can be seen from the greetings and blessings she received in the cottages she used to visit. "May the Lord attend ye with mirth and with joy; may He ever be with ye in this world, and when ye leave it."

[Illustration: Queen Victoria in the Highlands G. Amato]

The Queen was never weary of the beauties of the Highlands, and quotes the following lines from a poem by Arthur Hugh Clough to describe 'God's glorious works':

The gorgeous bright October,
Then when brackens are changed, and heather blooms are faded,
And amid russet of heather and fern, green trees are bonnie;
Alders are green, and oaks; the rowan scarlet and yellow;
One great glory of broad gold pieces appears the aspen,



And the jewels of gold that were hung in the hair of the birch tree;
Pendulous, here and there, her coronet, necklace, and earrings,
Cover her now, o'er and o'er; she is weary and scatters them from
her.

Page 38

In the year 1883 the Queen published *More Leaves from the Journal*, and dedicated it “To my loyal Highlanders, and especially to the memory of my devoted personal attendant and faithful friend, John Brown.” They are records of her life in Scotland during the years 1862 to 1882.

In the August of 1862 a huge cairn, thirty-five feet high, was erected to the memory of the Prince Consort. It was set on the summit of Craig Lowrigan, where it could be seen all down the valley.

A short extract will serve as a specimen of the Queen’s style of writing:

“At a quarter to twelve I drove off with Louise and Leopold in the waggonette up to near the ‘Bush’ (the residence of William Brown, the farmer) to see them ‘juice the sheep.’ This is a practice pursued all over the Highlands before the sheep are sent down to the low country for the winter. It is done to preserve the wool. Not far from the burnside, where there are a few hillocks, was a pen in which the sheep were placed, and then, just outside it, a large sort of trough filled with liquid tobacco and soap, and into this the sheep were dipped one after the other; one man took the sheep one by one out of the pen and turned them on their backs; and then William and he, holding them by their legs, dipped them well in, after which they were let into another pen into which this trough opened, and here they had to remain to dry. To the left, a little lower down, was a cauldron boiling over a fire and containing the tobacco with water and soap; this was then emptied into a tub, from which it was transferred into the trough. A very rosy-faced lassie, with a plaid over her head, was superintending this part of the work, and helped to fetch the water from the burn, while children and many collie dogs were grouped about, and several men and shepherds were helping. It was a very curious and picturesque sight.”

CHAPTER X: The Great Exhibition

The idea of a “great exhibition of the Works and Industries of all Nations” was Prince Albert’s. The scheme when first proposed in 1849 was coldly received in this country. It was intended, to use the Prince’s own words, “To give us a true test and a living picture of the point of development at which the whole of mankind has arrived in this great task, and a new starting-point from which all nations will be able to direct their further exertions.”

The Times led the attack against the proposed site in Hyde Park, and the public was uneasy at the thought of large numbers of foreigners congregating in London, and at the expected importation of foreign goods.

As showing the absurd things which ‘John Bull’ could say at this time in his jealousy and dislike of foreigners the Prince wrote: “The strangers, they give out, are certain to

commence a thorough revolution here, to murder Victoria and myself, and to proclaim the Red Republic in England; the Plague is certain to ensue from the confluence of such vast multitudes, and to swallow up those whom the increased price of everything has not already swept away. For all this I am to be responsible, and against all this I have to make efficient provision.”

Page 39

Punch pictured the young Prince begging, cap in hand, for subscriptions:

Pity the sorrows of a poor, young Prince
Whose costly schemes have borne him to your door;
Who's in a fix, the matter not to mince,
Oh! help him out, and Commerce swell your store!

Such constant worry and anxiety affected the Prince's health, but the support of Sir Robert Peel and of many great firms gradually wore down the opposition.

The building was designed by Paxton, who had risen from being a gardener's boy in the Duke of Devonshire's service to the position of the greatest designer of landscape-gardening in the kingdom.

He took his main ideas for the Crystal Palace from the great conservatories at Kew and Chatsworth. It was like a huge greenhouse in shape, nearly one thousand feet long and ninety feet high, with fountains playing in the naves and a great elm-tree in full leaf under the roof.

On May 1, 1851, the opening day, everything went well. The crowds in the streets were immense, and there were some 34,000 visitors present in the building during the opening ceremony.

Lord Macaulay was much impressed with the Exhibition, for he wrote after the opening: "I was struck by the numbers of foreigners in the streets. All, however, were respectable and decent people. I saw none of the men of action with whom the Socialists were threatening us. . . . I should think there must have been near three hundred thousand people in Hyde Park at once. The sight among the green boughs was delightful. The boats, and little frigates, darting across the lake; the flags; the music; the guns;—everything was exhilarating, and the temper of the multitude the best possible. . . .

"I made my way into the building; a most gorgeous sight; vast; graceful; beyond the dreams of the Arabian romances. I cannot think that the Caesars ever exhibited a more splendid spectacle. I was quite dazzled, and I felt as I did on entering St Peter's. I wandered about, and elbowed my way through the crowd which filled the nave, admiring the general effect, but not attending much to details."

And again on the last day he wrote: "Alas! alas! it was a glorious sight; and it is associated in my mind with all whom I love most. I am glad that the building is to be removed. I have no wish to see the corpse when the life has departed."

The Royal Party were received with acclamation all along the route. "It was a complete and beautiful triumph,—a glorious and touching sight, one which I shall ever be proud of

for my beloved Albert and my country,” wrote the Queen. Six million people visited the Great Fair during the time it remained open.

In one respect, however, it could scarcely be considered a triumph for this country. It was still an ugly, and in some respects a vulgar, age. The invention of machinery had done little or nothing to raise the level of the public taste for what was appropriate and beautiful in design. That an article cost a large sum of money to manufacture and to purchase seemed sufficient to satisfy the untrained mind.

Page 40

Generally speaking, the taste of the producers was uneducated and much inferior to that of the French. Most of the designs in carpets, hangings, pottery, and silks were merely copies, and were often extremely ugly. England, at this time the first among the Industrial Nations, had utterly failed to hold her own in the Arts.

Machinery had taken the place of handwork, and with the death of the latter art and industry had ceased to have any relation. Public taste in architecture was equally bad. A 'revival' of the art of the Middle Ages resulted only in a host of poor imitations. "Thirty or forty years ago, if you entered a cathedral in France or England, you could say at once, 'These arches were built in the age of the Conqueror—that capital belonged to the earlier Henrys.' . . . Now all this is changed. You enter a cathedral, and admire some iron work so rude you are sure it must be old, but which your guide informs you has just been put up by Smith of Coventry. You see . . . some painted glass so badly drawn and so crudely coloured it must be old—Jones of Newcastle." [9]

[Footnote 9: Fergusson, *History of Modern Styles of Architecture*.]

John Ruskin, who was in many ways the greatest art teacher of his age, was the first to point out the value and the method of correct observation of all that is beautiful in nature and in art.

In an address on "Modern Manufacture and Design," delivered to the working men of Bradford, he declared: "Without observation and experience, no design—without peace and pleasurable occupation, no design—and all the lecturings, and teachings, and prizes and principles of art, in the world are of no use, so long as you don't surround your men with happy influences and beautiful things. . . . Inform their minds, refine their habits, and you form and refine their designs; but keep them illiterate, uncomfortable, and in the midst of unbeautiful things, and whatever they do will still be spurious, vulgar, and valueless."

At the time, however, the Exhibition proved a great success, and the Duke of Coburg carried most favourable impressions away with him. He says: "The Queen and her husband were at the zenith of their fame. . . . Prince Albert was not satisfied to guide the whole affair only from above; he was, in the fullest sense of the word, the soul of everything. Even his bitterest enemies, with unusual unreserve, acknowledged the completeness of the execution of the scheme."

So far from there being a loss upon the undertaking there was actually half a million of profit. The proceeds were devoted to securing ground at South Kensington upon which a great National Institute might be built. This undertaking (the purchase of the ground) was not carried through without great difficulty and anxiety. The Queen's sympathy and encouragement were, as always, of the greatest help to her husband, and he quoted a verse from a German song, to illustrate how much he felt and appreciated it:

Page 41

When man has well nigh lost his hope in life,
Upwards in trust and love still looks the wife,
Towards the starry world all bright with cheer,
Faint not nor fear, thus speaks her shining tear.

The Great Exhibition was sufficient proof—if any had been needed—of how the Prince with his wife laboured incessantly for the good of others. Without his courage, perseverance, and ability there is no doubt that this great undertaking would never have been carried through successfully. He recognized the fact that princes live for the benefit of their people; his desire for the improvement in all classes was never-ending, and from him his wife learnt many lessons which proved of the greatest value to her in later life when she stood alone and her husband was no longer there to aid her with his unfailing wise advice.

A second Exhibition was held in 1862, and so far as decorative art was concerned there were distinct signs of improvement. 'Art manufacture' had now become a trade phrase, but manufacturers were still far from understanding what 'Art' really meant. As an instance of this, one carpet firm sent a carpet to be used as a hanging on which Napoleon III is depicted presenting a treaty of Commerce to the Queen. Particular attention had apparently been paid to the 'shine' on Napoleon's top boots and to the Queen's smile!

The Prince's great wish was to restore to the workman his pride in the work of his hands, to relieve the daily toil of some of its irksomeness by the interest thus created in it, and, where the work was of a purely mechanical nature, and individual skill and judgment were not called for, he wished the worker to understand the principles upon which the machine was built and the ingenuity with which it worked.

His schemes for the building and equipment of Museums of Science and Art were arranged with the purpose in view that both rich and poor should have equal opportunities of seeing what improvements had been made throughout the ages, and how vast and far-reaching the effects of such improvements were on the lives of the whole nation.

It was under his direction that the pictures in the National Gallery were first arranged in such a manner as to show the history and progress of art. In his own words: "Our business is not so much to create, as to learn to appreciate and understand the works of others, and we can never do this till we have realized the difficulties to be overcome. Acting on this principle myself, I have always tried to learn the rudiments of art as much as possible. For instance, I learnt oil-painting, water-colours, etching, lithography, etc., and in music I learnt thorough bass, the pianoforte, organ, and singing—not, of course, with a view of doing anything worth looking at or hearing, but simply to enable me to judge and appreciate the works of others."

Page 42

It is interesting to note how closely the views of the Prince agreed with those of John Ruskin in matters of art and literature. Ruskin declared that it was the greatest misfortune of the age that, owing to the wholesale introduction of machinery, the designer and maker were nearly always different people instead of being one and the same person. He declared that no work of art could really be 'living' or capable of moving us to admiration as did the masterpieces of the Middle Ages unless the maker had thought out and designed it himself.

It was largely owing to his teachings that the 'Arts and Crafts' movement under William Morris and Walter Crane arose—a movement which has since that time spread over the whole civilized world.

In 1862, together with some of his friends, Morris formed a company to encourage the use of beautiful furniture and to introduce 'Art in the House.' Morris himself had learnt to be a practical carpet-weaver and dyer, and had founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

All the work of this firm was done by hand as far as possible; only the best materials were to be used and designs were to be original. They manufactured stained glass, wall paper, tapestry, tiles, embroidery, carpets, *etc.*, and many of the designs were undertaken by Edward Burne-Jones.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the poet-painter, Holman Hunt (best remembered by his famous picture "The Light of the World") and others, formed what was known as the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, to instruct public taste in creative work in art and literature. At the Kelmscott Press some of the most beautiful printed books of their kind were produced under the direction of Morris.

Ruskin, like so many others of his time, was greatly influenced by Carlyle, and his views on the 'condition of England' question were practically the same. He bewailed the waste of work and of life, the poverty and the 'sweating.' He urged employers to win the goodwill of those who worked for them as the best means of producing the best work. He preached the 'rights' of Labour—that high wages for good work was the truest economy in the end, and that beating down the wages of workers does not pay in the long run. He declared that the only education worth having was a 'humane' education—that is, first of all, the building of character and the cultivation of wholesome feelings. "You do not educate a man by telling him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not," was the theory which he endeavoured to put into practice by experiments such as an attempt to teach every one to "learn to do something well and accurately with his hands."

In common with Wordsworth Ruskin held that the love of Nature was the greatest of educators. He believed that

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.

The beauty and the everlasting marvel of Nature's works were, to him as to the poet of the Lakes, the real road to knowledge:

Page 43

Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

An education of not the brain alone, but of heart and hand as well, all three working in co-operation, was necessary to raise man to the level of an intelligent being.

Ruskin's teachings fared no better than those of Carlyle at first, and though he is spoken of sometimes as being 'old-fashioned,' yet his lesson is of the old-fashioned kind which does live and will live, for, like Dickens, he knew how to appeal to the hearts of his readers. He is one of the most picturesque writers in the language, a man of great nobility of character and generous feelings, who had a tremendous belief in himself and knew how to express his thoughts in the most beautiful language. Some of his books, for example *Sesame and Lilies* and *Unto this Last*, are probably destined for immortality.

CHAPTER XI: Albert the Good

The year 1861 was a black year for the Queen. On March 15th her mother, the Duchess of Kent, died. She had been living for some time at Frogmore, a pleasant house in the Windsor Home Park, and here in the mausoleum erected by her daughter her statue is to be seen.

She was sincerely loved by every member of her household, and her loss was felt as one affecting the whole nation. In the words of Disraeli: "She who reigns over us has elected, amid all the splendour of empire, to establish her life on the principle of domestic love. It is this, it is the remembrance and consciousness of this, which now sincerely saddens the public spirit, and permits a nation to bear its heartfelt sympathy to the foot of a bereaved throne, and to whisper solace to a royal heart."

The death of the Queen's' mother came as a great shock to the Prince Consort. The Queen was, for a time, utterly unable to transact any business, and this added to his already heavy burden of cares and responsibilities.

In the following November the King of Portugal died. The Prince had loved him like a son, and this fresh disaster told so severely upon his health that he began to suffer much from sleeplessness. The strain of almost ceaseless work for many years was gradually wearing him out.

He had never been afraid of death, and not long before his last illness he had said to his wife: "I do not cling to life. You do; but I set no store by it. If I knew that those I love were well cared for, I should be quite ready to die to-morrow. . . . I am sure, if I had a severe illness, I should give up at once, I should not struggle for life."

On the 1st of December the Queen felt anxious and depressed. Her husband grew worse and could not take food without considerable difficulty, and this made him very weak and irritable.

The physicians in attendance were now obliged to tell her that the illness was low fever, but that the patient himself was not to know of this. The Ministers became alarmed at his state, and when the news of his illness became public there was the greatest and most universal anxiety for news.

Page 44

In spite of slight improvements from time to time, the Prince showed no power of fighting the disease, and on the evening of the 14th December he passed gently away.

It is no exaggeration to say that the death of the Queen's beloved husband saddened every home in the land; it was a sorrow felt equally by the highest and the lowest. He died in the fulness of his manhood, leaving her whom he had loved and guarded so tenderly to reign in lonely splendour.

In the dedication of *Idylls of the King* to the memory of Prince Albert, Tennyson, the poet-laureate, wrote:

Break not, O woman's-heart, but still endure;
Break not, for thou art Royal, but endure,
Remembering all the beauty of that star
Which shone so close beside Thee that ye made
One light together, but has past and leaves
The Crown a lonely splendour.

When one looks over the vista of years which have passed since that mournful day, it is with sadness mingled with regret. For it is too true that "a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country."

'Albert the Good' was, like many other great men, in advance of his times, and not until he was dead did the nation as a whole realize the blank he had left behind him.

Even so late as 1854 Greville writes in his Diary of the extraordinary attacks which were made upon the Prince in the public Press. Letter after letter, he noted, appeared "full of the bitterest abuse and all sorts of lies. . . . The charges against him are principally to this effect, that he has been in the habit of meddling improperly in public affairs, and has used his influence to promote objects of his own and the interests of his own family at the expense of the interests of this country; that he is German and not English in his sentiments and principles; that he corresponds with foreign princes and with British Ministers abroad without the knowledge of the Government, and that he thwarts the foreign policy of the Ministers when it does not coincide with his own ideas and purposes." And again: "It was currently reported in the Midland and Northern counties, and actually stated in a Scotch paper, that Prince Albert had been committed to the Tower, and there were people found credulous and foolish enough to believe it."

But English gratitude is always such
To hate the hand which doth oblige too much.

These words of Daniel Defoe help to explain something of the attitude of a part of the nation toward the Prince in his lifetime.

He had given his life in the service of his wife and his adopted country, but he was a 'foreigner,' and the insular Briton, brought up in the blissful belief that "one Englishman was as good as three Frenchmen," could not and would not overcome his distrust of one who had not been, like himself, so singularly blessed in his nationality.

But Time has its revenges, and the services of Prince Albert will "smell sweet and blossom in the dust" long after the very names of once famous lights of the Victorian era have been forgotten.

Page 45

His home life was singularly sweet and happy, and a great contrast to that of some of his wife's predecessors upon the English throne. The Queen, writing to her Uncle Leopold in this the twenty-first year of their marriage, says: "Very few can say with me that their husband at the end of twenty-one years is *not* only full of the friendship, kindness, and affection which a truly happy marriage brings with it, but the same tender love of the *very first days of our marriage!*"

The Prince, in a letter to a friend, rejoiced that their marriage "still continues green and fresh and throws out vigorous roots, from which I can, with gratitude to God, acknowledge that much good will yet be engendered for the world."

The finest tribute to the Prince Consort's memory is to be found in the Dedication written by Lord Tennyson to his *Idylls of the King*:

These to His Memory—since he held them dear,
Perchance as finding there unconsciously
Some image of himself—I dedicate,
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears—
These Idylls.

Like Arthur, 'the flower of kings,' he was a man of ideals, above petty jealousies and small ambitions:

Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the Good.

The *Idylls* produced such a deep impression upon the Prince that he wrote to the author, asking him to inscribe his name in the volume. The book remained always a great favourite with him, and Princess Frederick William was engaged upon a series of pictures illustrating her favourite passages at the time of his death.

An enumeration of the varied activities of Prince Albert during his lifetime would need a volume. His position was always a difficult one and was seldom made easier by the section of the Press which singled him out as a target for its poisoned arrows. Only a strong sense of duty and an unwavering belief in his wife's love could have sustained him through the many dark hours of tribulation and sorrow. He rose early all the year round, and prepared drafts of answers to the Queen's Ministers, wrote letters and had cleared off a considerable amount of work before many men would have thought of beginning the day's tasks.

[Illustration: THE ALBERT MEMORIAL]

No article of any importance in the newspapers or magazines escaped his attention. Every one appealed to him for help or advice, and none asked in vain. His wide

knowledge and judgment were freely used by the Queen's statesmen, and the day proved all too short for the endless amount of work which had to be done.

In spite of increasing burdens and poor health he was always in good spirits. "At breakfast and at luncheon, and also at our family dinners, he sat at the top of the table, and kept us all enlivened by his interesting conversation, by his charming anecdotes, and droll stories without end of his childhood, of people at Coburg, of our good people in Scotland, which he would repeat with a wonderful power of mimicry, and at which he would himself laugh most heartily. Then he would at other times entertain us with his talk about the most interesting and important topics of the present and of former days, on which it was ever a pleasure to hear him speak." [10]

Page 46

[Footnote 10: Queen Victoria's *Journal*.]

His rule in life was to make his position entirely a part of the Queen's, "to place all his time and powers at her command." Every speech which he made in public was carefully considered beforehand, and then written out and committed to memory. As he had to speak in a foreign tongue, he considered this precaution absolutely necessary. At the same time it often made him feel shy and nervous when speaking before strangers, and this sometimes gave to those who did not know him a mistaken impression of coldness and reserve.

His sympathy with the working classes was sincere and practical. He was convinced that "any real improvement must be the result of the exertion of the working people themselves." He was President of the Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes, and never lost an opportunity of pointing out that, to quote his own words, "the Royal Family are not merely living upon the earnings of the people (as these publications try to represent) without caring for the poor labourers, but that they are anxious about their welfare, and ready to co-operate in any scheme for the amelioration of their condition. We may possess these feelings, and yet the mass of the people may be ignorant of it, because they have never heard it expressed to them, or seen any tangible proof of it."

His grasp of detail and knowledge of home and foreign political affairs astonished every one who met him, ministers and ambassadors alike. His writing-table and that of the Queen stood side by side in their sitting-room, and here they used to work together, every dispatch which left their hands being the joint work of both. The Prince corrected and revised everything carefully before it received the Queen's signature. Considering the small amount of time at his disposal, it was remarkable how much he was able to read, and read thoroughly, both with the Queen and by himself. "Not many, but much," was his principle, and every book read was carefully noted in his diary.

Even to the last he exerted his influence in the cause of peace. The American Civil War broke out in 1861, and Great Britain declared her neutrality. But an incident, known as 'The Trent Affair,' nearly brought about a declaration of war.

The Southern States, or 'Confederates,' as they were usually called, sent two commissioners to Europe on board the British mail steamer *Trent*. The *Trent* was fired upon and boarded by a Federal officer, who arrested the commissioners.

This was regarded as an insult to our flag, as it was a breach of international law to attack the ship of a neutral power. The Government therefore decided to demand redress, and a dispatch, worded by Palmerston, was forwarded to the Queen for her signature.

The Prince realized at once that if the dispatch were forwarded as it was written it would lead to open war between the Northern States and our country, and he suggested certain alterations to the Queen, who agreed to them. A more courteously worded message was sent, and the Northern States at once agreed to liberate the commissioners and offered an ample apology.

Page 47

CHAPTER XII: Friends and Advisers

Possibly the person to whom the Queen owed most—next to her husband—was Lord Melbourne. His position at the time when the young Queen came to the throne was a unique one. Victoria was just eighteen years of age—that is to say, if she had been a little younger it would have been necessary to appoint a Regent until such time as she came of age. For many years it had not been a matter of certainty that she would succeed to the throne, and the late King's unreliable temper had been the means of preventing the matter from being properly arranged as regards certain advantages which might have been given to the Princess during his life-time. In many ways, however, it was fortunate that the Queen came to the throne at such an early age: if her knowledge of State politics was small, she possessed, at any rate, a well-trained mind, a sense of duty, and a clear idea as to the responsibilities of her position as ruler of a great nation.

There had been four reigning queens in this country before Victoria, but all of them had had some previous training for their duties. The two Tudor queens came of a ruling stock, and were older in years and experience. The times, too, were very different. Queen Elizabeth, for example, before coming to the throne possessed an intimate knowledge of political affairs, and experience—she had been confined in the Tower of London and narrowly escaped losing her head—had endowed her with the wisdom of the serpent. The two Stuart queens were no longer young, and both were married.

The circumstances in the case of the young Victoria were thus totally different. She stood alone, and it was clear that some one must help her to grapple with the thousand and one difficulties which surrounded her. It was for some time uncertain who would undertake the duty, until, almost before he had realized it himself, Lord Melbourne found himself in the position of 'guide, philosopher, and friend.'

How he devoted himself to this work can be judged from the fact that no one—not even any of his opponents—regarded him with the slightest mistrust or jealousy.

Melbourne was at this time fifty-eight years of age, an honourable, honest-hearted Englishman. He was sympathetic by nature, fond of female society, and, in addition, was devoted to the Queen. His manner toward her was always charming, and he was in constant attendance upon her.

Nor was the training which the Queen received from him limited to politics, but matters of private interest were often discussed. Every morning he brought dispatches with him to be read and answered; after the midday meal he went out riding with her, and, whenever his parliamentary duties allowed, he was to be found at her side at the dinner-table. When he retired from office he was able to state with pride that he had seen his Sovereign every day during the past four years.

Page 48

The news of her engagement to Prince Albert was received by him with the keenest pleasure, and the Queen in writing to her uncle says: "Lord Melbourne, whom I of course have consulted about the whole affair, quite approves my choice, and expresses great satisfaction at the event, which he thinks in every way highly desirable. Lord Melbourne has acted in this business, as he has always done toward me, with the greatest kindness and affection."

It was a real wrench to the Queen when the time for parting came. Melbourne, with his easy-going nature and somewhat free and easy language, had schooled himself as well as his young pupil, and had become a friend as well as an adviser. Some words of Greville's might aptly serve for this great statesman's epitaph:

"It has become his providence to educate, instruct, and form the most interesting mind and character in the world. No occupation was ever more engrossing or involved greater responsibility . . . it is fortunate that she has fallen into his hands, and that he discharges this great duty wisely, honourably, and conscientiously."

The Queen was equally fortunate in his successor, Sir Robert Peel, a statesman for whom she had every confidence and respect, "a man who thinks but little of party and never of himself."

Peel was never afraid of making up his mind and then sticking to his plan of action, although, as often happened, it brought him into opposition with members of his own party. In his hands both the Queen and her husband felt that the interests of the Crown were secure.

Peel naturally felt considerable embarrassment on first taking up office, as he had given support in the previous year to a motion which proposed cutting down the Prince's income. But the Prince felt no resentment, and so frank and cordial was his manner that Peel, following Lord Melbourne's lead, continued to keep him, from day to day, thoroughly in touch with the course of public affairs.

The relations between the Queen and her Minister were cordial in the extreme. Peel appreciated very fully her simple domestic tastes, and he was able at a later date to bring before her notice Osborne, which might serve as a "loophole of retreat" from the "noise and strife and questions wearisome."

The Queen was delighted with the estate. "It is impossible to see a prettier place, with woods and valleys and *points de vue*, which would be beautiful anywhere; but when these are combined with the sea (to which the woods grow down), and a beach which is quite private, it is really everything one could wish."

In 1845 the Queen asked Lord Aberdeen if she could not show in some way her appreciation of the courage with which Sir Robert Peel had brought forward and

supported two great measures, in the face of tremendous opposition. She suggested that he should be offered the Order of the Garter, the highest distinction possible.

Page 49

Sir Robert Peel's reply was that he would much prefer not to accept any reward at all; he sprang, he said, from the people, and such a great honour in his case was out of the question. The only reward he asked for was Her Majesty's confidence, and so long as he possessed that he was content.

When his ministry came to an end the Prince wrote to him, begging that their relations should not on that account cease. Sir Robert replied, thanking him for "the considerate kindness and indulgence" he had received at their hands, and regretting that he should no longer be able to correspond so frequently as before. The Prince and he were in the fullest sympathy in matters of politics, art, and literature, and Peel had supported the Prince loyally through all the anxieties connected with the arrangements for the Great Exhibition.

His death in 1850 was a calamity. Prince Albert, in a letter, speaks of Peel as "the best of men, our truest friend, the strongest bulwark of the throne, the greatest statesman of his time."

The Duke of Wellington said in the Upper House: "In all the course of my acquaintance with Sir Robert Peel I never knew a man in whose truth and justice I had a more lively confidence, or in whom I saw a more invariable desire to promote the public service. In the whole course of my communications with him I never knew an instance in which he did not show the strongest attachment to truth; and I never saw in the whole course of my life the slightest reason for suspecting that he stated anything which he did not believe to be the fact." The Queen writing to her uncle said that "Albert . . . felt and feels Sir Robert's loss dreadfully. He feels he has lost a second father."

As a statesman it was said of him that "for concocting, producing, explaining and defending measures, he had no equal, or anything like an equal."

By far the most interesting person who acted as both friend and adviser to the Queen and her husband was the Baron Christian Friedrich von Stockmar, who had been private physician to Prince Leopold, and afterward private secretary and controller of his household. He took an active part in the negotiations which led to his master becoming King of the Belgians. Long residence in this country had given him a thorough knowledge of England and the English, and he claimed friendship with the leading diplomatists both at home and on the European continent.

In 1834 he retired to Coburg, but later was chosen, as we have seen, to lend his valuable advice toward bringing about a union between Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, both of whom he knew and admired.

Immediately before Victoria's accession King Leopold had sent him to England, where his counsel, judgment, and thorough knowledge of the English Constitution were placed

at the service of the young Princess. He accompanied Prince Albert on a tour in Italy, and again returned to England to make arrangements for the Prince's future household.

Page 50

All that he did during this period was done quietly and behind the scenes, and though he was a foreigner by birth, he worked to bring about the marriage for the sake of the country he loved so well. He looked upon England as the home of political freedom. "Out of its bosom," he stated, "singly and solely has sprung America's free Constitution, in all its present power and importance, in its incalculable influence upon the social condition of the whole human race; and in my eyes the English Constitution is the foundation-, corner-, and cope-stone of the entire political civilization of the human race, present and to come."

He soon became the Prince's confidential adviser, and his unrivalled knowledge and strict sense of truth and duty proved of the utmost value.

He endeared himself to both the Queen and the Prince, and successive statesmen trusted him absolutely for his freedom from prejudice and for his sincerity.

In 1842 he drew up for the Queen some rules for the education of her children. "A man's education begins the first day of his life," was one of his maxims. He insisted that "the education of the royal infants ought to be from its earliest beginning *a truly moral and a truly English one*." The persons to whom the children are entrusted should receive the full support and confidence of the parents, otherwise "education lacks its very soul and vitality." He suggested that a lady of rank should be placed at the head of the nursery, as being better able to understand the responsibilities and duties attached to the education and upbringing of the Queen's children.

His advice was again taken when it was necessary to settle upon what plan the young Prince of Wales should be educated.

Stockmar's judgment of men was singularly correct and just. He formed the highest opinion of Sir Robert Peel, and on the Duke of Wellington's death in 1852 he wrote in a letter to the Prince a masterly analysis of the great commander's character, concluding with these words: "As the times we live in cannot fail to present your Royal Highness with great and worthy occasions to distinguish yourself, you should not shrink from turning them to account . . . as Wellington did, for the good of all, yet without detriment to yourself."

The Prince corresponded regularly with 'the good Stockmar,' and always in time of doubt and trial came sage counsel from his trusted friend. In fact, the Prince took both the Queen and his friend equally into his confidence; they were the two to whom he could unbosom himself with entire freedom.

Disraeli, afterward Lord Beaconsfield, obtained the Queen's fullest confidence and won her friendship to an extent which no Minister since Melbourne had ever been able to do. 'Dizzy,' the leader of the 'Young England' party, the writer of political novels, was a very different person from the statesman of later years. It is difficult to remember or to

realize in these days that it was looked upon as something quite extraordinary for a member of a once despised and persecuted race, the Jews, to hold high office. The annual celebrations of 'Primrose Day,' April 19, the anniversary of his death, are sufficient proof that this great statesman's services to the British Empire are not yet forgotten.

Page 51

Lord Beaconsfield, whom she regarded with sincere affection, possessed a remarkable influence over the Queen, for the simple reason that he never forgot to treat her as a woman. He was noted throughout his life for his chivalry to the opposite sex, and his devotion to his wife was very touching.

He was a firm believer in the power of the Crown for good. "The proper leader of the people," he declared, "is the individual who sits upon the throne." He wished the Sovereign to be in a position to rule as well as to reign, to be at one with the nation, above the quarrels and differences of the political parties, and to be their representative.

When quite a young man, he declared that he would one day be Prime Minister, and with this end in view he entered Parliament against the wishes of his family. He was an untiring worker all his life, and a firm believer in action. "Act, act, act without ceasing, and you will no longer talk of the vanity of life," was his creed.

His ideas on education were original, and he did everything in his power to improve the training of the young. In 1870 he supported the great measure for a scheme of national education. Some years earlier he declared that "it is an absolute necessity that we should study to make every man the most effective being that education can possibly constitute him. In the old wars there used to be a story that one Englishman could beat three members of some other nation. But I think if we want to maintain our power, we ought to make one Englishman equal really in the business of life to three other men that any other nation can furnish. I do not see otherwise how . . . we can fulfil the great destiny that I believe awaits us, and the great position we occupy."

He did more than any other Minister to raise the Crown to the position it now occupies, and no monarch ever had a more devoted and faithful servant. His high standard of morals and his force of character especially appealed to the English people, and his loyalty to his friends and colleagues remained unshaken throughout his whole life. He impressed not only his own countrymen, but also foreigners, with his splendid gifts of imagination and foresight.

Bismarck, the man of 'blood and iron,' who welded the disunited states of Germany into a united and powerful empire, considered that Queen Victoria was the greatest statesman in Europe, and of the great Beaconsfield he said: "Disraeli *is* England."

Disraeli was a master of wit and phrase, and many of his best sayings and definitions have become proverbial, e.g. "the hansom, the 'gondola' of London," "our young Queen and our old institutions," "critics, men who have failed," "books, the curse of the human race."

[Illustration: Sir Robert Peel, Lord Melbourne, Benjamin Disraeli Photo W.A. Mansell & Co.]

Page 52

The central figure of his time was the statesman-warrior, the great Duke of Wellington, 'the Duke.' After the famous Marlborough, England had not been able to boast of such a great commander. He was the best known figure in London, and though he never courted popularity or distinction, yet he served his Queen as Prime Minister when desired. "The path of duty" was for him "the way to glory." In 1845 the greatest wish of his life was realized when the Queen and her husband paid him a two days' visit at his residence, Strathfieldsaye.

Alfred Tennyson's "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington," in 1852, praises him as 'truth-teller' and 'truth-lover,' and mourns for him:

Let the long, long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful, martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

In striking contrast to the 'Iron Duke' was the man whom Disraeli could never learn to like, Lord John Russell. Generally depicted in the pages of *Punch* as a pert, cocksure little fellow, 'little Johnny,' the leader of the Whig party was a power as a leader. He knew how to interpret the Queen's wishes in a manner agreeable to herself, yet he did not hesitate, when he thought it advisable, to speak quite freely in criticism of her actions.

His ancestors in the Bedford family had in olden days been advisers of the Crown, and Lord John thus came of a good stock; he himself, nevertheless, was always alert to prevent any encroachment upon the growing powers and rights of the people.

He was a favourite of the Queen, and she gave him as a residence a house and grounds in Richmond Park. He was a man of the world and an agreeable talker, very well read, fond of quoting poetry, and especially pleased if he could indulge in reminiscences in his own circle of what his royal mistress had said at her last visit.

Finally, mention must be made of one who, though he held no high position of State, can with justice be regarded as both friend and adviser of the Queen—John Brown. He entered the Queen's service at Balmoral, became later a gillie to the Prince Consort, and in 1851 the Queen's personal outdoor attendant. He was a man of a very straightforward nature and blunt speech, and even his Royal Mistress was not safe at times from criticism. In spite of his rough manner, he possessed many admirable qualities, and on his death in 1883 the Queen caused a granite seat to be erected in the grounds of Osborne with the following inscription:

A TRUER, NOBLER, TRUSTIER HEART, MORE LOVING
AND MORE LOYAL, NEVER BEAT WITHIN
A HUMAN BREAST.

CHAPTER XIII: Queen and Empire

What should they know of England who only England know?

The England of Queen Elizabeth was the England of Shakespeare:

Page 53

This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise;
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war;
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands;
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.

In Tennyson's *Princess* we find an echo of these words, where the poet, in contrasting England and France, monarchy and republic—much to the disadvantage of the latter—says:

God bless the narrow sea which keeps her off,
And keeps our Britain, whole within herself,
A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled.

But at a later date, in an "Epilogue to the Queen," at the close of the *Idylls of the King*, Tennyson has said farewell to his narrow insular views, and speaks of

Our ocean-empire with her boundless homes
For ever-broadening England, and her throne
In our vast Orient, and one isle, one isle,
That knows not her own greatness: if she knows
And dreads it we are fall'n.

He had come to recognize the necessity for guarding and maintaining the Empire, with all its greatness and all its burdens, as part of this country's destiny.

It is a little difficult to realize that the British Empire, as we now know it, has been created within only the last hundred years. Beaconsfield, in his novel *Contarini Fleming*, describes the difference between ancient and modern colonies. "A modern colony," he says, "is a commercial enterprise, an ancient colony was a political sentiment." In other words, colonies were a matter of 'cash' to modern nations, such as the Spaniards: in the time of the ancients there was a close tie, a feeling of kinship, and the colonist was not looked upon with considerable contempt and dislike by the Mother Country.

Beaconsfield believed that there would come a time, and that not far distant, when men would change their ideas. "I believe that a great revolution is at hand in our system of colonization, and that Europe will soon recur to the principles of the ancient polity."

This feeling of pride in the growth and expansion of our great over-seas dominions is comparatively new, and there was a time when British ministers seriously proposed separation, from what they considered to be a useless burden.

The ignorance of all that concerned the colonies in the early years of Victoria's reign was extraordinary, and this accounted, to a great extent, for the indifference with which the English people regarded the prospect of drifting apart.

Page 54

Lord Beaconsfield was a true prophet, for this indifference is now a thing of the past, and in the year 1875 an Imperial Federation League was formed, which, together with the celebrations at the Jubilees in 1887 and 1897, helped to knit this country and the Dominions together in bonds of friendship and sympathy. The rapid improvements in communication have brought the different parts of the Empire closer together; the Imperial Penny Postage and an all-British cable route to Australia have kept us in constant touch with our kinsmen in every part of the world where the Union Jack is flown.

But this did not all come about in a day. Prejudice and dislike are difficult to conquer, and it was chiefly owing to the efforts of Lord Beaconsfield that they were eventually overcome.

Imperialism too often means 'Jingoism,'—wild waving of flags and chanting of such melodies as:

We don't want to fight,
But, by Jingo, if we do,
We've got the ships, we've got the men,
We've got the money too.

The true Imperialism is "defence, not defiance." Beaconsfield looked back into the past and sought to "resume the thread of our ancient empire." For him empire meant no easy burden but a solemn duty, a knitting together of all the varied races and religions in one common cause. "Peace with honour" was his and England's watchword. He believed, in fact, like Shakespeare, in saying

Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
Bear't, that th' opposed may beware of thee.

He was very particular on the duty of "if necessary, saying rough things kindly, and not kind things roughly," which was a lesson Lord Palmerston never seemed to be capable of learning. Another of his maxims was that it was wiser from every point of view to treat semi-barbarous nations with due respect for their customs and feelings. He preached Confederation and not Annexation. "By pursuing the policy of Confederation," he declared, "we bind states together, we consolidate their resources, and we enable them to establish a strong frontier, that is the best security against annexation."

His whole policy was to foster the growth of independence and build the foundations of a peace which should be enduring. "Both in the East and in the West our object is to have prosperous, happy, and contented neighbours."

The object of his imperialism was to progress, at the same time paying due respect to the traditions of the past; he rightly believed that the character of a nation, like that of an individual, is strengthened by responsibility.

“The glory of the Empire and the prosperity of the people” was what he hoped to achieve.

During the anxious times of the Indian Mutiny he alone seemed to grasp the real meaning of this sudden uprising of alien races. He declared that it was a revolt and not a mutiny; a revolt against the English because of their lack of respect for ancient rights and customs.

Page 55

After the war was ended he declared that the Government ought to tell the people of India "that the relation between them and their real ruler and sovereign, Queen Victoria, shall be drawn nearer." This should be done "in the Queen's name and with the Queen's authority." He appealed to the whole Indian nation by his 'Royal Titles Bill,' by means of which the Queen received the title of Empress of India. This brought home to the minds and imaginations of the native races the real meaning and grandeur of the Empire of which they were now a part. The great Queen was now *their* Empress, or, to use the Indian title, '*Kaiser-i-Hind*.'

The Queen took the deepest interest in the Proclamation to the Indian people in 1858, and insisted on a number of alterations before she would allow it to be passed as satisfactory. She wrote to Lord Derby asking him to remember that "it is a female sovereign who speaks to more than a hundred millions of Eastern people on assuming the direct government over them after a bloody, civil war, giving them pledges which her future reign is to redeem, and explaining the principles of her government. Such a document should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence, and religious feeling, pointing out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilization."

Direct mention was to be made of the introduction of railways, canals, and telegraphs, with an assurance that such works would be the cause of general welfare to the Indian people. In conclusion she added: "Her Majesty wishes expression to be given to her feelings of horror and regret at the results of this bloody civil war, and of pleasure and gratitude to God at its approaching end, and Her Majesty thinks the Proclamation should terminate by an invocation to Providence for its blessing on a great work for a great and good end."

The amended Proclamation was read in every province in India and met everywhere with cordial approval by princes and natives alike. The feeling of loyalty was aroused by the Queen's assurance that "in your prosperity is our strength, in your contentment our security, and in your gratitude our best reward."

On May 1, 1859, in England, and on July 28, 1859, in India, there was a general thanksgiving for the restoration of peace.

Although the Queen was never able to visit India in person, in 1875 the Prince of Wales went, at her request, to mark her appreciation of the loyalty of the native princes. The welcome given to the future King of England was truly royal. Reviews, banquets, illuminations, state dinners followed one another in rapid succession. Benares, the sacred city of the Hindoos, was visited, and here the Prince witnessed a great procession which included large numbers of elephants and camels, and an illumination of the entire river and city.

Page 56

At Delhi, the capital of the Great Mogul, the Prince was met by Lord Napier of Magdala at the head of fifteen thousand troops, and at Lucknow an address and a crown set with jewels were presented to him.

[Illustration: The Secret of England's Greatness J.T. Baker Photo W.A. Mansell & Co.]

It was in the same year that Disraeli, on behalf of the British Government, purchased a very large number of shares in the Suez Canal, thus gaining for us a hand in its administration—a vitally important matter when one realizes how much closer India has been brought by this saving in time over the long voyage round the Cape.

To pass in review the growth and expansion of the Empire during the Queen's reign would be a difficult task, and an impossible one within the limits of a small volume. The expressions of loyalty and devotion from the representatives of the great over-seas dominions on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee in 1887 were proof enough that England and the English were no longer an insular land and people, but a mighty nation with one sovereign head.

In the address which was presented to the Queen it was stated that during her reign her colonial subjects of European descent had increased from two to nine millions, and in Asia and India there was an increase of population from ninety-six to two hundred and fifty-four millions.

After the great ceremony of thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral the Queen expressed her thanks to her people in the following message:

"I am anxious to express to my people my warm thanks for the kind, and more than kind, reception I met with on going to and returning from Westminster Abbey with all my children and grandchildren.

"The enthusiastic reception I met with then, as well as on those eventful days in London, as well as in Windsor, on the occasion of my Jubilee, has touched me most deeply, and has shown that the labours and anxieties of fifty long years—twenty-two years of which I spent in unclouded happiness, shared with and cheered by my beloved husband, while an equal number were full of sorrows and trial borne without his sheltering arm and wise help—have been appreciated by my people. This feeling and the sense of duty towards my dear country and subjects, who are so inseparably bound up with my life, will encourage me in my task, often a very difficult and arduous one, during the remainder of my life.

"The wonderful order preserved on this occasion, and the good behaviour of the enormous multitudes assembled, merits my highest admiration. That God may protect and abundantly bless my country is my fervent prayer."

And in laying the foundation-stone of the Imperial Institute, she said:

“I concur with you in thinking that the counsel and exertions of my beloved husband initiated a movement which gave increased vigour to commercial activity, and produced marked and lasting improvements in industrial efforts. One indirect result of that movement has been to bring more before the minds of men the vast and varied resources of the Empire over which Providence has willed that I should reign during fifty prosperous years.

Page 57

"I believe and hope that the Imperial Institute will play a useful part in combining those resources for the common advantage of all my subjects, conducing towards the welding of the colonies, India, and the mother-country, into one harmonious and united community. . . ."

When war was declared in South Africa and the Boer forces invaded Cape Colony and Natal, contingents from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Cape Colony, and Natal joined the British force and fought side by side throughout that long and trying campaign.

In 1897 was celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the Queen's reign, and every colony sent a detachment of troops to represent it. At the steps of St Paul's Cathedral the Queen remained to return thanks to God for all the blessings of her reign, and after the magnificent procession had returned she once again sent a message to her people:

"In weal and woe I have ever had the true sympathy of all my people, which has been warmly reciprocated by myself. It has given me unbounded pleasure to see so many of my subjects from all parts of the world assembled here, and to find them joining in the acclamations of loyal devotion to myself, and I wish to thank them all from the depth of my grateful heart."

Appendix to Chapter XIII

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The population of the Empire is estimated to be 355 millions of coloured and 60 millions of white people.

CANADA

1840. The Act of Union passed. The two colonies of Upper and Lower Canada united, and a representative Assembly formed.

1867. Bill for the Federation of Canada passed. The various provinces united under the title of Dominion of Canada, ruled by a Governor-General, nominated by the Crown. The Central Parliament, which dealt with matters relating to the Dominion, established at Ottawa.

1885. Completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which led to the opening up of the North-West. The great stream of emigration from Europe commences.

AUSTRALIA

Australia became a United Commonwealth at the beginning of the present century.

From 1851 onward the transportation of convicts was prohibited.

The expansion of the Commonwealth has taken place to a great extent during the reign of Queen Victoria. The majority of the settlers are of British descent.

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa finally united in 1910 with self-government.

INDIA

Disraeli, in 1876, introduced the Royal Titles Bill, by means of which the Queen was able to assume the title of Empress of India.

CHAPTER XIV: Stress and Strain

Page 58

Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.
TENNYSON

The greatest Revolutions are not always those which are accompanied by riot and bloodshed. England's Revolution was peaceful, but it worked vast and almost incredible changes.

We find, in the first place, that after the great Napoleonic Wars and during the 'forty years' peace' a new class, the 'Middle Class,' came into being. It had, of course, existed before this time, but it had been unable to make its power felt. The astonishing increase of trade and consequently of wealth, the application of steam power with special influence upon land and sea transit, transformed England into "the Workshop of the World."

By the year 1840 railways were no longer regarded as something in the nature of an experiment, which might or might not prove a success; they had, indeed, become an integral part of the social life of the nation. In 1840 the Railway Regulation Act was passed, followed in 1844 by the Cheap Trains Act, which required that passengers must be carried in covered waggons at a charge of not more than one penny a mile and at a speed of not less than twelve miles an hour.

From 1844 onward the construction of railways proceeded apace, until by the year 1874 no less than 16,449 miles had been laid. Ocean traffic under steam progressed equally rapidly; in 1812 the first steamer appeared upon the Clyde, and in 1838 the famous *Great Western* steamed from Bristol to New York.

The quickening and cheapening of transport called for new and improved methods of manufacture; small business concerns grew into great mercantile houses with interests all over the face of the globe. Everywhere movement and expansion; everywhere change. A powerful commercial class came into existence, and power—that is, voting power—passed to this class and was held by it until the year 1865. From this year, roughly speaking, the power passed into the hands of the democracy.

Education, which had been to a great extent a class monopoly, gradually penetrated to all ranks and grades of society. In 1867 the second Reform Act was passed; a very large proportion of the urban working classes were given the power of voting, and it was naturally impossible to entrust such powers for long to an illiterate democracy. Therefore, in 1870, Mr Forster's Education Act was passed, which required that in every district where sufficient voluntary schools did not exist a School Board should be formed to build and maintain the necessary school accommodation at the cost of the rates. By a later Act of 1876 school attendance was made compulsory. Every effort was made in succeeding years to raise the level of intelligence among present and future citizens. Education became national and universal.

During the period 1865-85 the population of the kingdom increased, and the emigration to the British colonial possessions reached its maximum in the year 1883, when the figures were 183,236.

Page 59

The rapid rise in population of the large towns drew attention more and more urgently to the question of public health. Every city and every town had its own problems to face, and the necessity for solving these cultivated and strengthened the sense of civic pride and responsibility. We find during this period an ever-growing interest throughout the country in the welfare, both moral and mental, of the great mass of the workers. Municipal life became the training-ground where many a member of Parliament served his apprenticeship.

Municipalities took charge of baths and washhouses, organized and built public markets, ensured a cheap and ample supply of pure water, installed modern systems of drainage, provided housing accommodation at low rents for the poorer classes, built hospitals for infectious diseases, and, finally, carried on the great and important work of educating its citizens.

The power of Labour began, at last, to make itself felt. The first attempt at co-operation made by the Rochdale Pioneers in 1844 stimulated others to follow their example, and in 1869 the Co-operative Union was formed. The Trade Unions showed an increased interest in education, in forming libraries and classes, and in extending their somewhat narrow policy as their voting power increased. Out of this movement sprang Working Men's Clubs attached to the Unions and carrying on all branches of work, educational and beneficial, amongst its members.

The standard of society was continually rising, and it was already a far cry to the Early Victorian England described in an earlier chapter.

The world was growing smaller—that is to say, communications between country and country, between continent and continent, were growing more easy. The first insulated cable was laid in 1848, across the Hudson River, from Jersey City to New York, and in 1857 an unsuccessful attempt was made to connect the New and the Old World. In 1866 the *Great Eastern*, after two trials, succeeded in laying a complete cable. The expansion of the powers of human invention led to a great increase in the growth of comfort of all classes. To take only a few striking examples: at the beginning of the century matches were not yet invented, and only in 1827 were the 'Congreve' sulphur matches put on the market; they were sold at the rate of one shilling a box containing eighty-four matches! In the year 1821 gas was still considered a luxury; soap and candles were both greatly improved and cheapened. By the withdrawal of the window tax in 1851 obvious and necessary advantages were gained in the building of houses.

In 1855 the stamp duty on newspapers was abolished. In these days of cheap halfpenny papers with immense circulations it is difficult to realize that at a date not very far distant from us, the poor scarcely, if ever, saw a newspaper at all. Friends used to club together to reduce the great expense of buying a single copy, and agents hired out copies for the sum of one penny per hour. The only effect of the stamp duty had been to cut off the poorer classes from all sources of trustworthy information.

Page 60

In 1834 not a single town in the kingdom with the exception of London possessed a daily paper. The invention of steam printing, and the introduction of shorthand reporting and the use of telegraph and railways, revolutionized the whole world of journalism.

Charles Dickens, on the occasion of his presiding, in May 1865, at the second annual dinner of the Newspaper Press Fund, gave his hearers an idea of what newspaper reporters were and what they suffered in the early days. "I have pursued the calling of a reporter under circumstances of which many of my brethren here can form no adequate conception. I have often transcribed for the printer, from my shorthand notes, important public speeches in which the strictest accuracy was required, and a mistake in which would have been to a young man severely compromising, writing on the palm of my hand, by the light of a dark lantern, in a post-chaise and four, galloping through a wild country, and through the dead of the night, at the then surprising rate of fifteen miles an hour. . . . I have worn my knees by writing on them on the old back-row of the old gallery of the old House of Commons; and I have worn my feet by standing to write in a preposterous pen in the old House of Lords, where we used to be huddled together like so many sheep—kept in waiting, say, until the woosack might want re-stuffing. Returning home from exciting political meetings in the country to the waiting press in London, I do verily believe I have been upset in almost every description of vehicle known in this country. I have been, in my time, belated on miry by-roads, towards the small hours, forty or fifty miles from London, in a wheelless carriage, with exhausted horses and drunken post-boys, and have got back in time for publication, to be received with never-forgotten compliments by the late Mr Black, coming in the broadest of Scotch from the broadest of hearts I ever knew."

During these later years England came to look upon her duties and responsibilities toward her colonial possessions in quite a different light. Imperialism became a factor in the political life of the nation.

The builders of Empire in the time of Queen Elizabeth took a very narrow view of their responsibilities; they were not in the least degree concerned about the well-being of a colony or possession for its own sake. The state of Ireland in those days spoke for itself. The horrors of the Indian Mutiny in 1857 was the first lesson which opened England's eyes to the fact that an Empire, if it is to be anything more than a name, must be a united whole under wise and sympathetic guidance.

The rebellion proved to be the end of the old East Indian Company. England took over the administration of Indian affairs into her own hands. An "Act for the better Government of India" was passed in 1858, which provided that all the territories previously under the government of the Company were to be vested in Her Majesty, and all the Company's powers to be exercised in her name. The Viceroy, with the assistance of a Council, was to be supreme in India.

Page 61

In 1867 a great colonial reform was carried out, the Confederation of the North American Provinces of the British Empire. By this Act the names of Upper and Lower Canada were changed respectively to Ontario and Quebec. The first Dominion Parliament met in the autumn of the same year, and lost no time in passing an Act to construct an Inter-Colonial Railway affording proper means of communication between the maritime and central provinces.

In 1869 the Hudson Bay territory was acquired from the Company which held it, and after the Red River Insurrection, headed by a half-breed, Louis Riel, had been successfully crushed by the Wolseley Expedition, the territory was made part of the Federation. In 1871 British Columbia became part of the Dominion, on condition that a railway was constructed within the following ten years which should extend from the Pacific to the Rocky Mountains and connect with the existing railway system.

The great Canadian Pacific Railway was completed in 1885, opening out the West to all-comers.

The rise and growth of the Imperialistic spirit has been greatly influenced by the literature on the subject, which dated its commencement from Professor Seeley's *Expansion of England* in 1883. This was followed by an immense number of works by various writers, the chief of whom, Rudyard Kipling, has popularized the conception of Imperialism and extended its meaning:

Never was isle so little, never was sea so lone,
But over the scud and the palm-trees an English flag was flown.

The Empire was not, however, to be consolidated without war and bloodshed, for relations with the two Boer Republics, the Transvaal and the Orange River, became more and more strained as years went on. The last years of the Queen's life were destined to be saddened by the outbreak of war in South Africa.

The facts which led to the outbreak were briefly these, though it is but fair to state that there are, even now, various theories current as to the causes. The discovery and opening up of the gold mines of the Transvaal had brought a stream of adventurous emigrants into the country, and it was these 'Outlanders' of whom the Dutch were suspicious. The Transvaal Government refused to admit them to equal political rights with the Dutch inhabitants. It was certain, however, that the Outlanders would never submit to be dependent on the policy of President Kruger, although the Dutch declared that they had only accepted the suzerainty of Great Britain under compulsion.

Negotiations between the two Governments led to nothing, as neither side would give way, and at last, in 1899, following upon an ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of British troops from the borders of the Republic, war broke out. It had undoubtedly been

hastened by the ill-fated and ill-advised raid in 1896 of Dr Jameson, the administrator of Rhodesia.

It is scarcely necessary to review the details of this war at any length. It proved conclusively that the Government of this country had vastly underrated the resisting powers of the Boers. For three years the British army was forced to wage a guerilla warfare, and adapt itself to entirely new methods of campaigning.

Page 62

On May 28, 1900, the Orange Free State was annexed under the name of the Orange River Colony. In June Lord Roberts entered Pretoria, but the war dragged on until 1902, when a Peace Conference was held and the Boer Republics became part of the British Empire. Very liberal terms were offered to and accepted by the conquered Dutch. But long before this event took place Queen Victoria had passed away. She had followed the whole course of the war with the deepest interest and anxiety, and when Lord Roberts returned to this country, leaving Lord Kitchener in command in South Africa, the Queen was desirous of hearing from his own lips the story of the campaign.

The public was already uneasy about the state of her health, and on January 20th it was announced that her condition had become serious. On Tuesday, January 22, she was conscious and recognized the members of her family watching by her bedside, but on the afternoon of the same day she peacefully passed away. One of the last wishes she expressed was that her body should be borne to rest on a gun-carriage, for she had never forgotten that she was a soldier's daughter.

On the day of the funeral the horses attached to the gun-carriage became restive, and the sailors who formed the guard of honour took their place, and drew the coffin, draped in the Union Jack, to its last resting-place.

Through the streets of London, which had witnessed two great Jubilee processions, festivals of rejoicing and thanksgiving, the funeral cortege passed, and a great reign and a great epoch in history had come to an end.

CHAPTER XV: Victoria the Great

The keynote of Queen Victoria's life was simplicity. She was a great ruler, and at the same time a simple-minded, sympathetic woman, the true mother of her people. She seemed by some natural instinct to understand their joys and their sorrows, and this was the more remarkable as for forty years she reigned alone without the invaluable advice and assistance of her husband.

Her qualities were not those which have made other great rulers famous, but they were typical of the age in which she lived.

All her life she was industrious, and never spared herself any time or trouble, however arduous and disagreeable her duties might be. She possessed the keenest sense of duty, and in dealing with men and circumstances she never failed to do or say the right thing. Her daily intercourse with the leading English statesmen of the time gave her an unrivalled knowledge of home and foreign politics. In short, her natural ability and good sense, strengthened by experience, made her what she was, a perfect model of a constitutional monarch.

During her reign the Crown once again took its proper place: no longer was there a gulf between the Ruler and the People, and Patriotism, the love of Queen and Country, became a real and living thing. Pope's adage, "A patriot is a fool in every age," could no longer be quoted with any truth.

Page 63

Queen Victoria was, above all, a great lover of peace, and did all in her power for its promotion. Her personal influence was often the means of smoothing over difficulties both at home and abroad when her Ministers had aggravated instead of lessening them. She formed her own opinions and held to them, though she was always willing to listen to reason.

The Memorandum which she drew up in the year 1850 shows how firm a stand she could take when her country's peace seemed to be threatened.

Lord Palmerston, though an able Minister in many respects, was a wilful, hot-headed man, who was over-fond of acting on the spur of the moment without consulting his Sovereign. His dispatches, written as they so often were in a moment of feverish enthusiasm, frequently gave offence to foreign monarchs and statesmen, and were more than once nearly the cause of war. It was remarked of him that "the desk was his place of peril, his pen ran away with him. His speech never made an enemy, his writing has left many festering sores. The charm of manner and urbanity which so served him in Parliament and in society was sometimes wanting on paper, and good counsels were dashed with asperity."

Lord Palmerston, the Queen complained, did not obey instructions, and she declared that before important dispatches were sent abroad the Sovereign should be consulted. Further, alterations were sometimes made by him when they had been neither suggested nor approved by the Crown.

Such proceedings caused England, in the Queen's own words, to be "generally detested, mistrusted, and treated with indignity by even the smallest Powers."

In the Memorandum the Queen requires:

"(1) That he will distinctly state what he proposes in a given case, in order that the Queen may know as distinctly to what she has given her royal sanction.

"(2) Having once given her sanction to a measure, that it be not arbitrarily altered or modified by the Minister. Such an act she must consider as a failure in sincerity towards the Crown, and justly to be visited by the exercise of her Constitutional right of dismissing that Minister. She expects to be kept informed of what passes between him and the Foreign Ministers, before important decisions are taken, based upon that intercourse; to receive the Foreign dispatches in good time and to have the drafts for her approval sent to her in sufficient time to make herself acquainted with their contents before they must be sent off. The Queen thinks it best that Lord John Russell should show this letter to Lord Palmerston."

More than once the alteration of a dispatch by the Queen prevented what might easily have plunged this country into a disastrous war.

After the Mutiny in India a proclamation was issued to the native races, and the Queen insisted upon alterations which would clearly show that their religious beliefs should in no way be interfered with, thus preventing a fresh mutiny.

Page 64

On rare occasions her indignation got the better of her—once, notably, when, owing to careless delay on the part of the Ministry, General Gordon perished at Khartoum, a rescue party failing to reach him in time. In a letter to his sisters she spoke of this as “a stain left upon England,” and as a wrong which she felt very keenly.

Her style of writing was as simple as possible, yet she always said the right thing at the right moment, and her letters of sympathy or congratulation were models of their kind and never failed in their effect.

Few, if any, reigns in history have been so blameless as hers, and her domestic life was perfect in its harmony and the devotion of the members of her family to one another. She possessed the ‘eye of the mistress’ for every detail, however small, which concerned housekeeping matters, and though her style of entertaining was naturally often magnificent, everything was paid for punctually.

After the visits of King Louis Philippe and the Emperor Nicholas of Russia, Sir Robert Peel acknowledged that “Her Majesty was able to meet every charge and to give a reception to the Sovereigns which struck every one by its magnificence without adding one tittle to the burdens of the country. I am not required by Her Majesty to press for the extra expenditure of one single shilling on account of these unforeseen causes of increased expenditure. I think that to state this is only due to the personal credit of Her Majesty, who insists upon it that there shall be every magnificence required by her station, but without incurring one single debt.”

When one remembers that the Queen had to superintend the household arrangements of Buckingham Palace, Balmoral Castle, Osborne, and Windsor, and that the latter alone gave employment, in one way and another, to two thousand people, it can be realized that this was a tremendous undertaking in itself. Method and neatness, first instituted by the Prince Consort, were always insisted upon in place of the disorder and waste which had reigned supreme before the Queen became head of the household.

[Illustration: THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON]

Before her life was saddened by the untimely loss of her husband the Queen was the leader of English society, and her influence was, as may be imagined, thoroughly wholesome and good. She was all her life a deeply religious woman, and though her observance of Sunday was strict, she never allowed it to become a day of penance. Her religion was ‘humane’—indeed, her intense sympathy with all sorrow and suffering was one of her supreme virtues, and her early upbringing made her dislike all elaborate forms of ceremony during the service. When in the Highlands she always attended the simple little Presbyterian church, where the congregation was, for the most part, made up of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

Page 65

It is this simplicity and 'homeliness' of the Queen which were so often misunderstood by those who could not realize how much she was at one with her people. The Queen was never more happy than when she was visiting some poor sufferer and comforting those in sorrow. Her memory for the little events which made up the lives and happiness of those far below her in social rank was amazing. She was a great and a truly democratic Queen. She gave the greater portion of her Jubilee present toward a fund to establish institutions to provide nurses for the sick poor.

During the latter years of her reign, when she was less and less to be seen at public functions and ceremonies, many complaints were made about her reputed neglect of royal duties. She felt the injustice of such statements very keenly and with good reason. No allowances were made for her poor health, for her years, for the family losses which left her every year more and more a lonely woman. Her duties, ever increasing in number and extent, left her no time, even if she had possessed the inclination, to take part in pomp and ceremony.

The outburst of loyalty and affection on the occasion of her two Jubilee celebrations proved that she still reigned supreme in the nation's heart.

The Queen was not only a great monarch, but also a great statesman. Consider for a moment the many and bewildering changes which took place in her own and other countries during her reign. Our country was almost continually at war in some portion of the globe. The British Army fought side by side with the French against Russia in the Crimea, and against the rebels in the Indian Mutiny; two Boer wars were fought in South Africa in 1881, and 1899-1902. There were also lesser wars in China, Afghanistan, Abyssinia, Zululand and Egypt.

The Queen lived to see France change from a Monarchy to a Republic; to see Germany beat France to her knees and become a united Empire, thanks to the foresight of her great statesman Bismarck, and her great general von Moltke. During the same year (1870) the Italian army entered Rome, as soon as the French garrison had been withdrawn, and Italy became a united country under King Victor Emmanuel.

Despite the fact that the map of Europe was continually changing, England managed to keep clear of international strife, and this was in no small degree due to the personal influence of the Queen.

The England of her early years would be an absolutely foreign country to us, if by some magic touch we were to be transplanted back down the line of years. It was different in thought, feeling, and outlook. The extraordinary changes in the modes of travelling, by means of which numbers of people who had never even thought of any other country beside their own, were enabled to visit other lands, broke down, bit by bit, the barrier between the Continent and ourselves. England became less of an insular and more of a continental power.

Page 66

The social changes were, as has been shown, all for good. Education became not the privilege of the few but the right of all who wished for it. Step by step the people gained in power and in the right to govern themselves. The idea of citizenship, of a patriotism which extended beyond the narrow limits of these isles, slowly took root and blossomed. Through all these manifold changes the Queen reigned, ever alert, and even in her last years taking the keenest interest in the growth of her mighty kingdom.

“The use of the Queen in a dignified capacity is incalculable,” declared Walter Bagehot in his famous essay on *The English Constitution*. He continues: “Without her in England, the present English Government would fail and pass away.” It is interesting to read the reasons which such a clear and distinguished thinker gives to explain the hold which the Monarchy retains upon the English nation as a whole.

Firstly: there is the Family, of which the Queen is the head; the Nation looks upon her as its mother, witness its enthusiasm at the marriage of the Prince of Wales.

Secondly: The Monarchy strengthens the Government with the strength of religion. It is the duty of a loyal citizen to obey his Queen; the oath of allegiance is no empty form. The Queen from her very position acts as a symbol of unity.

Thirdly: The Queen is the head of our society; she represents England in the eyes of foreign nations.

Fourthly: The Monarchy is the head of our morality. The example of Queen Victoria’s simple life has not been lost upon the nation. It is now quite a natural thing to expect and to find the domestic virtues personified in the ruling monarch, and this in spite of the fact that history has shown what temptations lie in the way of those possessed of the highest power in the state.

Shakespeare voiced the feeling of the people for the kingship in the words which he put into the mouth of Henry V:

Upon the king! let us our lives, our souls,
Our debts, our careful wives,
Our children, and our sins, lay on the king:
We must bear all.
O hard condition! twin-born with greatness,
Subject to the breath of every fool, whose sense
No more can feel but his own wringing!
What infinite heart’s ease must kings neglect,
That private men enjoy?
And what have kings that privates have not too,
Save ceremony, save general ceremony?

And lastly, the actual Government of the country may change but the Monarch remains, subject to no changes of Parliament, above and aloof from the strife of political parties, the steadying influence in times of transition.

The Sovereign has three rights: "The right to be consulted, the right to encourage, the right to warn." A comparison of the reigns of the four Georges with the reign of Queen Victoria shows that it was only during the latter's reign that the duties of the constitutional monarch were well and conscientiously performed. The Queen worked as well as her Ministers, and was their equal and often their superior in business capacity. To conclude: "The benefits of a good monarch are almost invaluable, but the evils of a bad monarch are almost irreparable."

Page 67

On the death of the Queen, Mr Arthur Balfour, speaking in the House of Commons, described his visit to Osborne at a time when the Royal Family was already in mourning. The Queen's desk was still littered with papers, the inkstand still open and the pen laid beside it. "She passed away with her children and her children's children to the third generation around her, beloved and cherished of all. She passed away without, I well believe, a single enemy in the world. Even those who loved not England loved her. She passed away not only knowing that she was, I had almost said, worshipped and revered by all her subjects, but that their feelings towards her had grown in depth and intensity with every year she was spared to rule over us."

Appendix

Victoria Alexandrina, only daughter of Edward, Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III. Born at Kensington, May 24, 1819. Became Queen, June 20, 1837.

Married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, Prince Consort, born August 26, 1819, died December 14, 1861.

Died January 22, 1901, after a reign of sixty-three years.

Summary of Chief Events during the Queen's Reign

1838. Commencement of the Chartist Movement.

1840. PENNY POSTAGE ESTABLISHED mainly through the efforts of Rowland Hill.
War with China.

1841. Sir Robert Peel appointed Premier.

1842. War with Afghanistan. Peace with China. The Chinese cede Hong Kong.

1843. Agitation in Ireland for the Repeal of the Union.
Arrest of Daniel O'Connell.

1845. War with the Sikhs.
Failure of potato crop in Ireland, which resulted in a famine in the following winter.

1846. Repeal of the Corn Laws.
Lord John Russell appointed Premier.



1848. Revolution in France. Prince Louis Napoleon becomes President of the Republic.
Chartist Agitation in London.
1849. Annexation of the Punjab.
1850. Death of Sir Robert Peel.
1851. THE GREAT EXHIBITION.
1852. Death of the Duke of Wellington.
Louis Napoleon elected Emperor of France.
1853. Turkey declares war against Russia.
1854. Great Britain and France declare war against Russia.
THE CRIMEAN WAR.
Invasion of the Crimea. The Battle of the Alma (Sept. 20).
Siege of Sebastopol. Battle of Balaclava and Charge of the Light Brigade (Oct. 25).
Battle of Inkerman (Nov. 5).
1855. Lord Palmerston appointed Premier.
Death of the Emperor Nicholas of Russia.
Fall of Sebastopol (Sept.).
1856. Peace concluded with Russia by the Treaty of Paris.
1857. THE INDIAN MUTINY.
The massacre at Cawnpore (July). Capture of Delhi (Sept.).
Sir Colin Campbell relieves Lucknow (Nov.).

Page 68

1858. Suppression of the Mutiny.
Abolition of the East India Company. The possessions and powers of the Company transferred to the Crown. The Queen's Proclamation to India issued by Lord Canning, first Viceroy.
1859. Establishment of the Volunteer Army.
Fenianism in Ireland. Trial of O'Donovan Rossa.
1860. Second Chinese War and occupation of Peking.
1861. THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR.
Repeal of the duty on paper.
1862. The second Great Exhibition.
1865. Death of Lord Palmerston. Lord Russell appointed Premier.
1866. THE ATLANTIC CABLE LAID. Lord Derby appointed Premier.
The war between Austria and Prussia.
1867. THE SECOND REFORM BILL passed. It largely extended the suffrage in English boroughs.
1868. Disraeli appointed Premier.
1869. Suez Canal opened.
1870. THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT passed, which compelled the attendance of children at efficient schools.
The Franco-German War.
Halfpenny postcards first came into use.
1871. Establishment of the German Empire.
TREATY OF WASHINGTON, which settled by arbitration the Alabama claims.
1872. The Ballot Act passed to secure secret voting at elections.
1874. Disraeli appointed Premier for the second time.
1875. Purchase of shares in the Suez Canal.
1876. Disraeli becomes Earl of Beaconsfield.
THE QUEEN PROCLAIMED EMPRESS OF INDIA.



1878. Congress of Berlin to settle the Eastern Question.
Great Britain was represented by Lords Salisbury and Beaconsfield.
Second Afghan War.
1879. War in Zululand.
1880. Rising of the Boers in the Transvaal.
1881. Defeat of the British at Majuba Hill. Peace concluded in March.
Death of Lord Beaconsfield.
1882. OCCUPATION OF EGYPT. Bombardment of Alexandria and the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir.
1883. War in the Soudan. Defeat of Hicks Pasha.
1885. Fall of Khartoum and death of General Gordon.
Redistribution Bill.
Number of Members of Parliament increased from 658 to 670.
The Revised Version of the Bible.
1886. Annexation of Upper Burmah.
1887. JUBILEE CELEBRATION.
1888. Death of the Emperor William I. of Germany, and of his son Frederick III. Succession of William II.
The Local Government Act, by which England and Wales was divided into counties and county boroughs for purposes of local government.
1889. Charter granted to British South African Co.
1896. The Jameson Raid.
1897. The 'Diamond' Jubilee.

Page 69

1898. Death of Gladstone.
War in Soudan. Battle of Omdurman.

1899. South African War.