

I

ONCE in the time of Louis the King
 Happened a smiling and holy thing.
 'T was all in the out-door days of old,
 Days that fancy has warmed with gold,
 Days that are gone with the leaves, alas!
 When the light-legged juggler Barnabas
 From city to wondering city went,
 Sprinkling the world with his merriment.

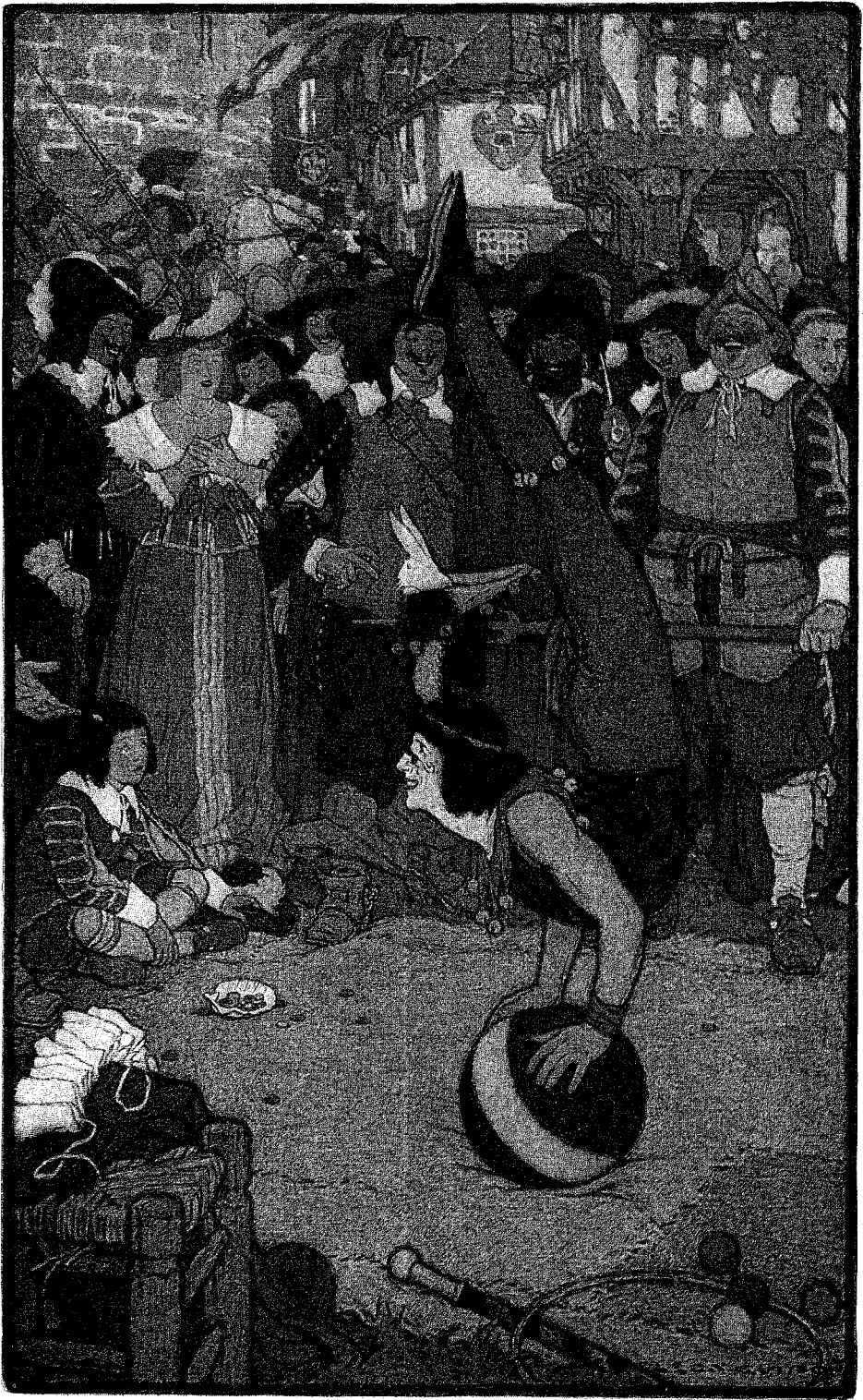
He would startle the Square on festival-days,
 When all the town was a sudden blaze,
 A clamor of tongues, and a clack of feet,
 A flurry of thousands filling the street—
 Princes with plumes and gartered knees;
 Sailors back from the Indian seas;
 Mayors and marshals viewing the town,
 Horsed, and robed in the violet gown;
 Thieves alert for the thoughtless purse,
 And ever free with the easy curse;
 Shepherds leading their April flocks;
 Damsels driving their turkey-cocks;
 Beggars droning their practised whine;
 Troopers red from the tavern wine;
 Ladies in feathers and flaring hoops;
 Monks with relics and pious stoops;
 Bullies with long mustachio twirls

Teasing the fops with the scented curls;
 Quacks with doses for all the ills—
 Coughs and colics, and gripes and chills;
 Brigands home from their sorry trade,
 And marked to dance with the hempen maid;
 Hucksters bragging across the din;
 Gaffers agaze with shaking chin;
 Gamesters, too, with the shifty eye
 And the conical hat an arm's-length high,
 Clackering loud their lottery dice,
 Shouting the winning numbers thrice,
 Giving to all their wild advice.

In through it all, like a straddling ape,
 The juggler strode, with the town agape;
 A punchinello on tipsy stilts,
 Wading his way with leaps and lilt.
 A peaked hat on his bobbing head
 Was half of yellow and half of red.
 On his powdered face was the unicorn,
 One cheek for the tail and one for the horn.
 His gown, puffed out over belly and back,
 Was sprinkled with signs of the Zodiac.
 His sleeves, blown up like young balloons,
 Were floating skies stuck full of moons.
 And his quips and cranks seemed never to fail
 To draw the crowd like a comet's tail!

Why, even duennas on way to Mass
 Would follow the train with their maids, alas;
 And the First Epistle be reached and read,
 While they were held by a feather-head!
 For he stretched a carpet along the grass,
 Where the murmurs mix and the laughter pass;
 And ripping the skies from arms and back,
 He stood trim-trig as a tumbling jack.
 Like a blowing bough was his whimsy grace;
 Like a rising moon was his fresh young face.
 Now he poised on hands on a rolling sphere,
 And cracked his heels at the Marshal's ear.
 Now he scattered nine balls to the morning air,
 And kept them a-shine and a-weaving there;
 For they flew to their places, one by one,
 As planets tethered about the sun.
 With toes to head, in a spangling round,
 He ran as a light wheel over the ground.
 He swallowed the Notary's signet-ring,
 And down in your pocket you found the thing!
 On, on he went till the crowd was full
 Of tarradiddle and cock-and-bull;
 And a shower of coins on the carpet fell,
 Like a rain of leaves on an autumn well.

Oh, blithe is the trade of Pantaloon,
 Light as the flight of an April moon;
 Blithe are the travels of Harlequin,
 Till the leaves turn red and the frosts begin.



"SPRINKLING THE WORLD WITH HIS MERRIMENT"

PAINTED FOR THE CENTURY BY LEON GUIPON

And light went the days of Barnabas—
 Light as the dews on a blade of grass,
 Till the first faint frost at Michaelmas.
 He and the cricket went chirruping by
 Till the delicate snows began to fly.
 Then all things crept to a snug abode—
 Squirrel and lizard and lumbering toad—
 And he and the wind were alone on the road.
 For his purse was lean, his friends were few,
 And the lodge for the night he never knew.
 But whether the hours dropt good or ill,
 He only smiled on the old world still,
 Sharing his heart with the sun's wide will.

And he kept him clear of the deadly sins,
 Nor bragged and brawled in the noisy inns,
 Where unfrocked abbés and tipsy churls
 Made light-hour love to the loveless girls.
 Through all the ways that went so wild,
 He kept the heart of a little child.
 And he never failed at a wayside shrine
 With the bended knee and the holy sign,
 And a candle, tipt with a tender flame,
 Lighted in praise of Our Lady's name.
 And he never failed of his parting prayer:
 "Mother of Jesus, Queen of the skies,
 Shine on the ways my feet may fare;
 And when God pleases to shut my eyes,
 Take me home to your paradise!"

One eve, on the edge of a lonely town,
 As the clouds drove by and the rain shot down,
 Poor Barnabas, hugging his knives and balls,
 And seeking a bed in the cattle stalls,
 Fell in with a friar from the cloistral halls—
 A cheery friar, with a wind of words
 And a head crooked out like a long-necked bird's.
 "How is it, son," said the beaming friar,
 "That a grasshopper green is your winter tire?
 Are you trigged for the clown in a mystery play?
 Are you out as a droll till the break o' day?"
 "Father," said Barnabas, "this that you see,
 This is the kill-care Barnabas, he
 Who has lighted with laughter a hundred towns,
 Driving before him the phlegms and frowns—
 Lord of the revels; but now, ah, now,
 Blown in the wind as a leafless bough.
 Oh, the juggler's trade would the sweetest be
 Of all in the world, if bread were free!"

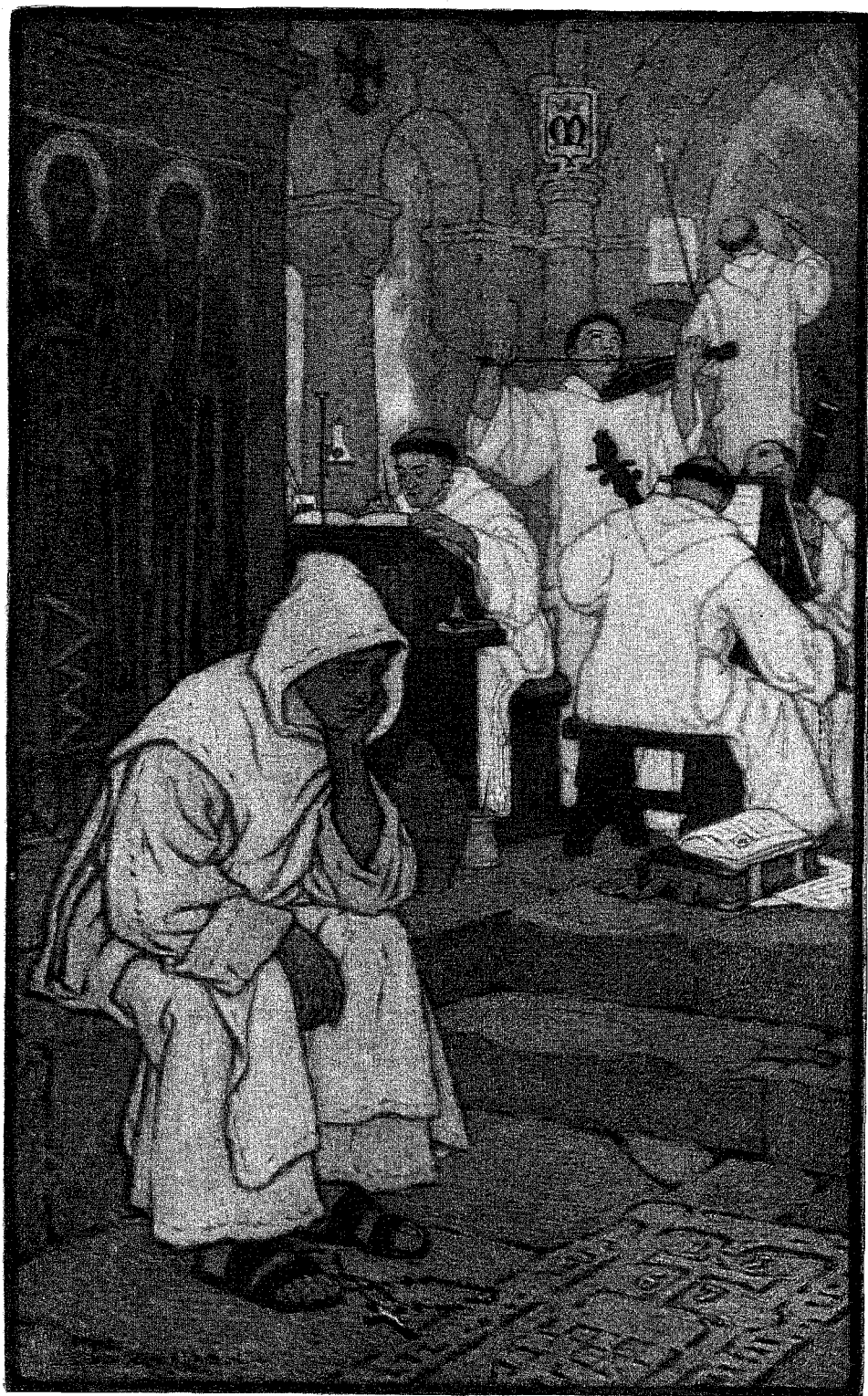
"Beware," said the friar, "beware, my son:
 The cloistral trade is the sweetest one.
 For the friars keep orison day and night,
 And join the song of the souls in light,
 And the Seven Throne Angels burning white."—
 "Father, my tongue ran loose and long:
 Your trade is the sweetest: I did God wrong.

It is much to dance with a feather thin
 Or a crooked sword on the upturned chin,
 And to get the laugh and the *rat-tat-tat*,
 When I pull the hen out of Gaston's hat.
 But little are these to the cloistral ways,
 Where long hours go to Our Lady's praise;
 Where the pale friars pass with feet unshod,
 And the bread is changed to the body of God.
 Oh, would that I might the great hours know,
 Where the Sanctus sounds and the gray monks go,
 And the candles burn in a saintly row!"

So simply told was the wistful tale
 That the word of the juggler had avail.
 "Come," said the friar, "to the cloistral rest;
 For the God who gives to the bird a nest,
 And guides the worm on its lampless quest,
 Has sent me out on the edge of night
 To lead your soul to the place of light."
 Sweet as the sound of a sudden stream
 That cools the heat of a traveler's dream,
 So sweet was the sound of the friendly word
 The weary heart of the juggler heard.
 That night he entered the convent door,
 That night he slept on the frater's floor.
 He had found a home for his heart at last,
 And the piteous chance of the road was past.

II

Lightly and still went the busy days
 Where each one toiled in Our Lady's praise.
 The Almoner lauded in lovely words
 That went to the heart like a flight of birds:
 She was the Lily, the Tower of Gold,
 Gate of Ivory, Roof of the Fold,
 The Rock of Vision, the Well that Flows,
 The Star of the Sea, the Mystic Rose.
 And ever the good Friar Estevan,
 A little mysterious thread of a man,
 Lauded her grace in Virgilian verse,
 In numbers majestic, tender and terse.
 Friar Glorian copied the stately chants
 With all of his scholarly curves and slants,
 Prinking the pages in rainbow dyes,
 Strewing them over with butterflies,
 Winding the border with loop and lock
 Of the fleur-de-lis and the hollyhock.—
 Bonaccord, Basil, and Théophile
 Praised her in music, as others kneel;
 Blowing silver and touching string,
 Till hearts were struck by the mystic wing.
 Bonaccord's love in the 'cello sang;
 Théophile's praise in the hautboy rang
 Or tenderly cried in the violin.
 Basil, puffing his horn, came in,
 Bladdering wide his jovial cheeks,
 Till his eyes went out into little streaks.



"NOTHING OF THESE COULD HE DO, ALAS!"

PAINTED FOR THE CENTURY BY LEON GUIPON

Friar Julian painted her pictures ; one
 The throne of the great King Solomon,
 With lions at corners, awake, aware,
 And Our Lady bowed in her beauty there.
 Two souls at her feet cried not in vain
 For the grace that whitens the mortal stain.
 Around her head, in a haloed light,
 Were seven doves whirled in a silver flight,
 The seven great gifts of the Holy Breath—
 Devotion that saveth the soul from death,
 Strength that steadies us, Awe that stills,
 Science that measures the seas and hills,
 Wisdom, Intelligence, Good Advice
 That balks the throw of the devil's dice.—
 And ever the stout Friar Palemone
 Chiseled and hammered the patient stone,
 Carving her beauty the whole day long,
 Edging the time with a quiet song.
 Like bearded rye were his bristling brows,
 And white with the dust, as bended boughs
 Are white with the sift of the early snow,
 When dead leaves stir and begin to go.

But to laud in marble, to praise in brass,
 To honor in color, poor Barnabas,
 Nothing of these could he do, alas!
 As leaves on a desert his learning was scant:
 He knew neither litany, credo, nor chant;
 Nor Pater, nor Ave—not even a prayer,
 Like a sheep of the field, like a hawk of the air.
 One day, when his heart was nigh to fail,
 The Prior to comfort him told a tale—
 Told of a friar from a Southern isle,
 His face all lit with a heavenly smile,
 So lean in learning he could recite
 Only an ave—and that half right!
 Yet beautiful tremblings went over his soul,
 As stars go over a hidden shoal.
 He died, and out of his bosom sprang
 Four doves that flew to a wood and sang.
 The four white doves that so lightly came
 Were the four white letters of Mary's name!

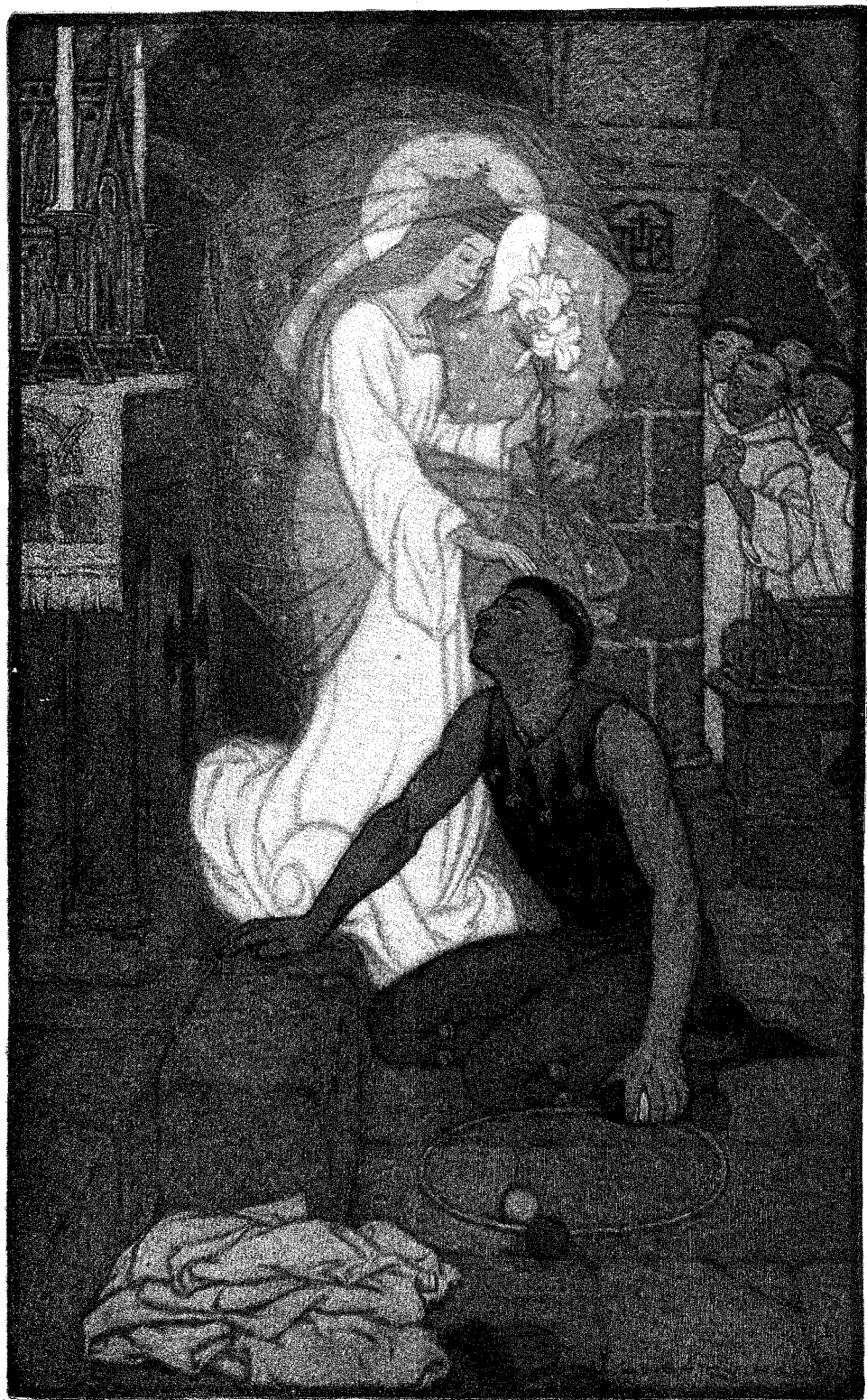
But the Prior's story was little relief
 To Barnabas, bearing his daily grief.
 So morning by morning the young friar slipped
 Through doors and halls to a secret crypt,
 And kneeling low at the altar cried:
 "O Madam and Mother, O Virgin Bride,
 Here am I only a tethered ox,
 Eating the grass of the useful flocks!
 The choir can sing, and the deacons read
 The Gospel to scatter the living seed.
 Others can praise where the censers swing,
 And the white smoke circles, ring on ring.
 And the learned can laud you with art and craft,
 In the Latin chant and the marble shaft.

But I, poor Barnabas, nothing can I,
But drone in the sun as a drowsy fly."

So the year crept on till a white dawn came
When a thought flashed over his soul like flame;
And he leaped from his cell all legs and arms,
Filling the cloister with looks and alarms,
As he shot his way to the chapel dim,
Running for joy in the heart of him.
And when he came out of the hidden place,
A light as of stars was over his face.
Now day after day to the secret crypt,
He sped light-foot as the old earth dipped
Softly and still in the fire of dawn;
For the restless pain of his heart was gone.

The friars were a-flutter that this should be,
Till at last the Prior with two or three—
Elders and fraters of high degree—
Followed the juggler on tipping toe,
Their breath held mightily, hoping to know.
And they heard him cry at Our Lady's shrine:
"All that I am, Madam, all is thine!
Again I am come with spangle and ball
To lay at your altar my little, my all.
The friars know all of the saints—what they do;
But of all up in Heaven, I know only you!
Of holy St. Francis a little I've heard,
But not of St. Plato or Peter a word.
I know not Quintilian—nothing he said
Of the Three and the One, and the Wine and the Bread.
Ah, nothing know I of the holy books,
And nothing of paints to put beautiful looks
Of your eyes on the wall, nor the blowing of brass
To make sound of my love—ah, nothing, alas,
But the trade of the wandering Barnabas.
Yet, Lady and Queen, if my heart would live,
I must give the gift that I have to give."

And then the eyes of the elders shone,
As they peered from the shade of a pillared stone;
For laying his friar's robe tenderly by,
He flickers as light as a dragon-fly.
Then whirls into many a whimsical shape,
As once he had whirled with the crowd agape.
And softly he cried as his breath came quick:
"Look down, for, O Madam, this is the trick
I did at Toulon, when I took the eye
Of the King himself as he galloped by. . . .
This trick drew a duchess at Chateauroux. . . .
But this is the one I have made for you!"
So flinging his feet in the air, he stands,
Or goes and comes on his nimble hands,
Or tosses the balls up to twinkle and run
Like planets that circle about a sun.
"Lady," he cries again, "look, I entreat:
I worship with fingers and body and feet!"



"LIGHTLY DOWN FROM THE DARK DESCENDS THE LADY OF BEAUTY"

PAINTED FOR THE CENTURY BY LEON GUIPON

At this all the elders mutter and chide:
 "Nothing like this do the rules provide!
 This is a scandal, this is a shame,
 This madcap prank in Our Lady's name.
 Out of the doors with him; back to the street:
 He has no place at Our Lady's feet!"
 But why do the elders suddenly quake,
 Their eyes a-stare and their knees a-shake?
 Down from the rafters arching high,
 Her blowing mantle blue with the sky—
 Lightly down from the dark descends
 The Lady of Beauty, and lightly bends
 Where Barnabas lies in the altar place,
 And wipes the dew from his shining face;
 Then touching his hair with a look of light,
 Passes again from the mortal sight.
 An odor of lilies hallows the air;
 And sounds as of harpings are everywhere.

"Ah," cry the elders, beating the breast,
 "So the lowly deed is a lofty test!
 And whatever is done from the heart to Him
 Is done from the height of the Seraphim!"



THE REMINISCENCES OF LADY RANDOLPH CHURCHILL

BY MRS. GEORGE CORNWALLIS-WEST

(SECOND PAPER)

ENGLISH SOCIAL TRAITS—LIFE AT BLENHEIM

IMMEDIATELY after my marriage in April, 1874, I settled in London, to enjoy my first season with all the vigor and unjaded appetite of youth. After the comparatively quiet life of Paris, we seemed to live in a whirl of gaieties and excitement. Many were the delightful balls I went to, which, unlike those of the present day, invariably lasted till five o'clock in the morning. Masked balls were much the vogue. Holland House, with its wonderful historical associations and beautiful garden, was a fitting frame for such entertainments, and I remember enjoying myself immensely at one given there. Disguised in a painted mask and a yellow wig, I "took in" every one. My sister who was staying with us, had been walking in the garden with young Lord A—,

who was a *parti* and much run after by designing mothers with marriageable daughters. Introducing him to me, she pretended I was her mother. Later in the evening I attacked him, saying that my daughter had just confided to me that

he had proposed to her, and that she had promised to tell me. To this day I can see his face of horror and bewilderment. Vehemently he assured me that it was not so. But I kept up the farce, declaring that my husband would call on him next day and reveal our identity, and that meanwhile I should consider him engaged to my charming daughter. Being conceited and not overburdened with brains, he could not take the joke and left the house a miserable man.

Generally speaking, there is no doubt that Eng-



Photograph by W. Kurtz

MRS. LEONARD JEROME, MOTHER OF
LADY RANDOLPH CHURCHILL

(See page 11 of the November CENTURY)