

civilly enough makes over to me a half-eaten plate of gurnet, which I wave aside, thus, saying, I eat no fish of which I cannot affirm 'rari sunt boni,' few are the bones . . . and I protest to you he knew it not for fool's latin. Thus I'm driven, from mere discouragement, to leave prating for listening, which thou knowest, mistress, is no fool's office; and among y<sup>e</sup> sundrie matters I hear at my lord's table . . . for he minds not what he says before his servants, thereby giving new proof 'tis he should wear the motley. . . . I note his saying that y<sup>e</sup> king's private marriage will assuredlie be made publick this coming Easter, and my Lady Anne will be crowned . . . more by token, he knows y<sup>e</sup> merchant that will supply the Genoa velvet and cloth of gold, and the masquers that are to enact the pageant. For the love o' safety, then, mistress Meg, bid thy good father e'en take a fool's advice, and eat humble pie betimes, for, doubt not this proud madam to be as vindictive as Herodias, and one that, unless he appease her full early, will have his head set before her in a charger. I've said my say."

Three bishops have been here this forenoon, to bid father to y<sup>e</sup> coronation, and offer him twenty pounds to provide his dress; but father hath, with courtesie, declined to be present. After much friendly pressing, they parted, seemingly on good terms; but I have misgivings of y<sup>e</sup> issue.

A ridiculous charge hath been got up 'gainst dear father; no less than of bribery and corruption. One Parnell complaineth of a decree given agaynst him in favour of one Vaughan, whose wife, he deponeth, gave father a gilt flaggon. To y<sup>e</sup> noe small surprise of the Council, father admitted that she had done soe: "But, my lords," proceeded he, when they had uttered a few sentences of reprehension somewhat too exultantlie, "will ye list the conclusion of the tale? I bade my butler fill the cup with wine, and having drunk her health, I made her pledge me, and then restored her the gift, and would not take it again."

As innocent a matter, touching the offering him a pair of gloves containing forty pounds, and his taking the first and returning the last, saying he preferred his gloves without lining, hath been made publick with like triumph to his own good fame; but alack! these feathers show which way sets the wind.

#### WORDSWORTH, BYRON, SCOTT, AND SHELLEY.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH is generally allowed to have exercised a deeper and more permanent influence upon the literature and modes of thinking of our age, than any of the great poets who lived and wrote during the first quarter of the present century. In proportion as his fame was of slower growth, and his poems were longer in making their way to the understanding and affections of his countrymen, so their roots seem to have struck deeper down,

and the crown of glory that encircles his memory is of gold, that has been purified and brightened by the fiery ordeal through which it has passed. Tennyson says of the laureate wreath which he so deservedly wears, that it is

Greener from the brows  
Of him who uttered nothing base.

And this, which seems at first sight negative praise, is, in reality, a proof of exquisite discernment; for it is just that which constitutes the marked distinction between Wordsworth and the other really original poets who are likely to share with him the honor of representing poetically to posterity the early part of the nineteenth century. In their crowns there is alloy, both moral and intellectual. His may not be of so imperial a fashion; the gems that stud it may be less dazzling, but the gold is of ethereal temper, and there is no taint upon his robe. Weakness, incompleteness, imperfection he had, for he was a mortal man of limited faculties, but spotless purity is not to be denied him—he uttered nothing base. Our readers will anticipate us in ranking with him, as the representative poets of their age, Byron, Scott, and Shelley. Of each of these we shall say a few words, especially in this representative character.

Lord Byron's poems are the actual life-experience of a man whose birth and fortune enabled him to mix with the highest society, and whose character led him to select for his choice that portion of it which pursued pleasure as the main if not the sole object of existence. Under a thin disguise of name, country, and outward incident, they present us with the desires which actuated, the passions which agitated, and the characters which were the ideals of the fashionable men and women of the earlier part of this century. Limited and monotonous as they are in their essential nature, ringing perpetual changes upon one passion and one phase of passion, the brilliance of their diction, the voluptuous melody of their verse, the picturesque beauty of their scenery, well enough represent that life of the richer classes, which chases with outstretched arms all the Protean forms of pleasure, only to find the subtle essence escape as soon as grasped, leaving behind in its place weariness, disappointment, and joyless stagnation. The loftiest joys they paint are the thrillings of the sense, the raptures of a fine nervous organization; their pathos is the regret, and their wisdom the languor and the satiety of the jaded voluptuary. These form the staple, the woof of Lord Byron's poetry, and with it is enwoven all that which gives outward variety and incessant stimulating novelty to the pursuits of an Englishman of fashion. These pursuits are as numerous, as absorbing, and demand as much activity of a kind as those of the student or the man of business. Among them will be found those upon which the student and the man of business are employed, though in a different spirit, and with a different aim. Thus we frequently see among the votaries of pleasure men who are fond of literature, of art, of politics, of foreign travel, of all manly and active enterprise,

but all these will be pursued, not as duties to be done, in an earnest, hopeful, self-sacrificing spirit, "that scorns delights and lives laborious days," but for amusement, for immediate pleasure to be reaped, as a resource against ennui and vacuity, to which none but the weakest and most effeminate nature will succumb. This difference of object and of motive necessitates a difference in the value of the results. The soil, which is plowed superficially, and for a quick return, will bear but frail and fading flowers; the planter of oaks must toil in faith and patience, and sublime confidence in the future. And so, into whatever field the wide and restless energies of men like Lord Byron carry them, they bring home no treasures that will endure—no marble of which world-lasting statue or palace may be hewn or built—no iron, of which world-subduing machines may be wrought. Poems, pictures, history, science, the magnificence and loveliness of Nature, cities of old renown, adventures of desperate excitement, new manners, languages, and characters, supply them with an ever fresh flow of sensation and emotion, keep the senses and the faculties cognate with sense in a pleasant activity, but no well-based generalization is gained for the understanding; facts are not even carefully observed and honestly studied; pleasant sensation was the object, and that once obtained, there is no more worth in that which produced it, though in it may lie a law of God's manifestation, one of those spiritual facts, to know and obey which would seem the chief purpose of man's existence, to discover and make them known, the noblest glory and highest function of genius. It is in this spirit that Lord Byron has questioned Life: "Oh! where can pleasure be found?" and Life, echo-like, would only answer, "Where!" It is because he put that question more earnestly, lived up to its spirit more fearlessly, and more faithfully and experimentally reported the answer, that he is so eminently a representative poet—representative of what a large and important class in every country actually is, of what a far larger class aspires to be. It is in his fearless attempt at solving the problem of life in his own way, his complete discomfiture, and his unshrinking exhibition of that discomfiture, that the absolute and permanent value of his social teaching consists. For he was endowed with such gifts of nature and of fortune, so highly placed, so made to attract and fascinate, adorned with such beauty and grace, with such splendor of talents, with such quick susceptibility to impressions, with such healthy activity of mind, with such rich flow of speech, with such vast capacity of enjoyment, that no one is likely to make the experiment he made from a higher vantage-ground, with more chances of success. And the result of his experience he has given to the world, and has thrown over the whole the charm of a clear, vigorous, animated style, at once masculine, and easy, and polished, sparkling with beauty, instinct with life, movement, and variety; by turns calm, voluptuous, impassioned, enthusias-

tic, terse, and witty, and always most prominent that unstudied grace, that Rubens-like facility of touch, which irresistibly impresses the reader with a sense of power, of strength not put fully forth, of resources carelessly flowing out with exhaustless prodigality, not husbanded with timid anxiety, and exhibited with pompous ostentation. It is the combination of these qualities of the artist, with his peculiar fearlessness and honesty of avowal—his plain, unvarnished expression of what he found pleasant, and chose for his good, that will ever give him a high, if not almost the highest place among the poets of the nineteenth century, even with those readers who perceive and lament the worthlessness of his matter, the superficiality and scantiness of his knowledge, the want of purity and elevation in his life and character. Those will best appreciate his wonderful talents who are acquainted with the works of his countless imitators, who have admirably succeeded in re-producing his bad morality, his superficial thoughts, and his characterless portraits, without the fervor of his feeling, the keenness of his sensations, the ease and vigor of his language, the flash of his wit, or the knowledge of the world, and the manly common-sense which redeemed and gave value to what else had been entirely worthless.

If the name of Lord Byron naturally links itself with the fashionable life of great cities; with circles where men and women live mutually to attract and please each other; where the passions are cherished as stimulants and resources against ennui, are fostered by luxurious idleness, and heightened by all the aids that an old and elaborate material civilization can add to the charms of beauty, and the excitements of brilliant assemblies; where art and literature are degraded into handmaids and bondslaves of sensuality; where the vanity of social distinction fires the tongue of the eloquent speaker, wakens the harp of the poet, colors the canvas of the painter, moulds the manners and sways the actions, directs even the loves and the hatreds of all; no less naturally does the name of Sir Walter Scott stand as the symbol and representative of the life and tastes of the country aristocracy, who bear the titles and hold the lands of the feudal barons, and of the country gentlemen whose habits and manners are in such perfect contrast to those of the Squire Westerns to whose places they have succeeded. Possessing in a high degree the active and athletic frame, the robust health, the hardy training, the vigorous nerve, the bold spirit, the frank bearing, and the genial kindness of the gentlemen of the olden time, he could heartily appreciate and unhesitatingly approve all that time and revolution had spared of feudal dominion and territorial grandeur. The ancient loyalty, so happily tempering the firmness of a principle with the fervor of a feeling, never beat higher in the heart of a cavalier of the seventeenth than in that of the Scottish advocate of the nineteenth century. Every one will remember that he refused to write a life of Mary Queen of Scots, because in reference to her con-

duct, his feelings were at variance with his judgment. And in painting those old times in which his imagination delighted to revel, all that would most have revolted our modern mildness of manners, and shocked our modern sense of justice, was softened down or dropped out of sight, and the nobler features of those ages, their courage, their devotion, their strength and clearness of purpose, their marked individuality of character, their impulses of heroism and delicacy, their manly enterprise, their picturesque costumes and manners of life, were all brought into bold relief, and placed before the reader with such fullness of detail, in such grandeur of outline, in such bright and vivid coloring, as gave even to the unimaginative a more distinct conception of, and a more lively sympathy with the past than they could gain for themselves of the present, as it was whirling and roaring round them, confusing them with its shifting of hues and forms, and stunning them with its hurricane of noises. And apart from the fascination which History, so presented, must have for the descendants of men and classes of historical renown, for the hereditary rulers and the privileged families of a great country, and though probably the creator of the splendid pageantry was definitely conscious of no such purpose, yet there must have mingled with this fascination, and have infused into it a deeper and more personal feeling, the regretful sense that the state of society so glowingly depicted had passed away—a foreboding that even its last vestiges were fast disappearing before the wave of democratic equality, and the uprising of a new aristocracy of wealth and intellect. If at the time those famous verse and prose romances came upon the world in a marvelously rapid succession, all that the public were conscious of was a blind pleasure and unreflecting delight, it is no less true that in an age of revolution they raised up before it in a transformed and glorified life the characters, the institutions, the sentiments and manners of an age of absolute government by the strong arm or by divine right—of an age of implicit belief, inspiring heroic action, sanctioning romantic tenderness, harmonizing and actuating all the virtues that adorn and elevate fallen humanity; and that since then there has arisen in our country a thoughtful reverence and love for the past—a sense of the livingness and value of our history—a desire and a determination to appreciate and comprehend, and so not forfeit, the inheritance of wisdom, forethought, brave action, and noble self-denial, which our ancestors have bequeathed to us. How many false and puerile forms this feeling has taken it does not fall within our present scope to notice. In spite of white waistcoat politics and Pugin pedantries, the feeling is a wise and a noble one—one which is the surety and the safeguard of progress; and that much of it is owing to the interest excited so widely and so deeply by Sir Walter Scott's writings, those will be least disposed to deny who have thought most on the causes which mould a nation's character, and the influences which work out a nation's destiny.

It is in no fanciful or arbitrary spirit of system that, while we assign to Byron the empire over the world of fashion and of pleasure, and seek the mainspring of Scott's popularity in the sway of old historical traditions over a landed aristocracy, and the longing regret with which they look back to a state of society passed or rapidly passing away, we should regard Shelley as the poetical representative of those whose hopes and aspirations and affections rush forward to embrace the great Hereafter, and dwell in rapturous anticipation on the coming of the golden year, the reign of universal freedom, and the establishment of universal brotherhood. By nature and by circumstance he was marvelously fitted for his task—gentle, sensitive, and fervid, he shrank from the least touch of wrong, and hated injustice with the zeal and passion of a martyr; while, as if to point him unmistakably to his mission, and consecrate him by the divine ordination of facts, he was subjected at his first entrance into life to treatment, both from constituted authority and family connection, so unnecessarily harsh, so stupidly cruel, as would have driven a worse man into reckless dissipation, a weaker man into silent despair. "Most men," he says himself,

"Are cradled into poetry by wrong;

They learn in suffering what they teach in song."

Whether this be the best or most usual training for the poet may well be doubted, but it is quite indubitable that such discipline will soonest open a man's eyes to the evils of existing institutions, and the vices of old societies; and will lend to his invectives that passion which raises them above satire—to his schemes, that enthusiasm which redeems them from being crotchets; will turn his abstract abhorrence of oppression into hatred against the oppressors—his loathing of corruption into a withering scorn and contempt for tyrants and their tools, the knaves and hypocrites who use holy names and noble offices to promote their selfish ends, and to fetter and enslave their brother men. And so it happened with Shelley. The feelings of poignant anguish and bitter indignation, which had been roused in him by cruelty and injustice toward himself, colored all his views of society, and at once sharpened his hostility to the civil and religious institutions of his country, and lent more glowing colors to the rainbow of promise that beamed upon him from the distance, through the storm of bloodshed and revolution. Add to this, that his mind was ill-trained, and not well furnished with facts; that he reveled with the delight of an eagle on the wing in the most audacious speculations, and was drawn on by the force of mental gravitation toward the boldest and most startling conclusions; that he was at once pure and impassioned—sensuous and spiritual; that he could draw from form, color, and sound a voluptuous enjoyment, keener and more intense than the grosser animal sensations of ordinary men; that his intellect hungered and thirsted after absolute truth, after central being, after a living personal unity of all things. Thus he united in himself many of the mightiest tenden-

cies of our time—its democratic, its skeptical, its pantheistic, its socialistic spirit; and thus he has become the darling and the watchword of those who aim at reconstructing society, in its forms, in its principles, and in its beliefs—who regard the past as an unmitigated failure, as an entire mistake—who would welcome the deluge for the sake of the new world that would rise after the subsidence of the waters. Nor has their affectionate admiration been ill-bestowed. With one exception, a more glorious poet has not been given to the English nation; and if we make one exception, it is because Shakspeare was a man of profounder insight, of calmer temperament, of wider experience, of more extensive knowledge; a greater philosopher, in fact, and a wiser man; not because he possessed more vital heat, more fusing, shaping power of imagination, or a more genuine poetic impulse and inspiration. After the passions and the theories, which supplied Shelley with the subject-matter of his poems have died away and become mere matters of history, there will still remain a song, such as mortal man never sung before, of inarticulate rapture and of freezing pain—of a blinding light of truth and a dazzling weight of glory, translated into English speech, as colored as a painted window, as suggestive, as penetrating, as intense as music.

We have assigned to three great poets of our age the function of representing three classes, distinct in character, position, and taste. But as these classes intermingle and become confused in life, so that individuals may partake of the elements of all three, and, in fact, no one individual can be exactly defined by his class type, so the poets that represent them have, of course an influence and a popularity that extend far beyond the classes to whose peculiar characteristics and predominant tastes we have assumed them to have given form and expression. Men read for amusement, to enlarge the range of their ideas and sympathies, to stimulate the emotions that are sluggish or wearied out; and thus the poet is not only the interpreter of men and of classes to themselves, but represents to men characters, modes of life, and social phenomena with which they are before unacquainted, excites interest, and arouses sympathy, and becomes the reconciler, by causing misunderstandings to vanish, as each man and each class comprehends more fully the common humanity that lies under the special manifestation, the same elemental passions and affections, the same wants, the same desires, the same hopes, the same beliefs, the same duties. It is thus especially that poets are teachers, that they aid in strengthening and civilizing nations, in drawing closer the bonds of brotherhood.

Wordsworth has said of himself, "The poet is a teacher. I wish to be considered as a teacher, or as nothing." If we are asked wherein lay the value of his teaching, we reply, that it lay mainly in the power that was given him of unfolding the glory and the beauty of the material world, and in bringing consciously before the minds of men the high moral function that belonged in the

human economy to the imagination, and in thereby redeeming the faculties of sense from the comparatively low and servile office of ministering merely to the animal pleasures, or what Mr. Carlyle has called "the beaver inventions." That beside, and in connection with this, he has shown the possibility of combining a state of vivid enjoyment, even of intense passion, with the activity of thought, and the repose of contemplation. He has, moreover, done more than any poet of his age to break down and obliterate the conventional barriers that, in our disordered social state, divide rich and poor into two hostile nations; and he has done this, not by bitter and passionate declamations on the injustice and vices of the rich, and on the wrongs and virtues of the poor, but by fixing his imagination on the elemental feelings, which are the same in all classes, and drawing out the beauty that lies in all that is truly natural in human life. Dirt, squalor, disease, vice, and hard-heartedness, are not natural to any grade of life; where they are found, they are man's work, not God's; and the poet's business is not with the misery of man's making, but with the escape from that misery revealed to those that have eyes to see, and ears to hear—we mean, that no true poet will be merely a painter of that which is low, deformed, essentially inhuman, as his ultimate and highest aim, though, as means, he may, as the greatest poets have done, use them to move and rouse the sleeping soul. This, we say, in answer to those that asserted that Wordsworth was not a true painter of manners and character from humble life: we say he was, for that he painted, as minutely as served his aim, that which was essential to its occupations and its general outward condition—that which it must be, if Christian men are to look upon the inequalities of wealth and station as a permanent element in society. And all this which he taught in his writings, he taught equally by his life. And furthermore, he manifested a deep sense of the sacredness of the gift of genius, and refused to barter its free exercise for aught that the world could hold out to him, either to terrify or to seduce; and he lived to prove, not only that the free exercise of poetic genius is its own exceeding great reward, bringing a rich harvest of joy and peace, and the sweet consciousness of duty well discharged, and God's work done; but, what was quite as much needed in our time, he showed that for the support and nourishment of poetic inspiration, no stimulants of social vanity, vicious sensuality, or extravagant excitement, were requisite, and that it could flourish in the highest vigor on the simple influence of external nature, and the active exercise of the family affections.

#### THE LAST DAYS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER.\*

THE knowledge of an extensively organized conspiracy embittered the last years of the Emperor Alexander, and increased his constitu-

\* Translated from the French of Alexandre Dumas, with omissions and additions, by Miss Jane Strickland.



tional melancholy. His attachment to Tzarsko Zelo made him linger longer at his summer palace than was prudent in a man subject to erysipelas. The wound in his leg re-opened with very unfavorable symptoms, and he was compelled to leave his favorite residence in a closed litter for St. Petersburg; and the skill and firmness of Mr. Wyllie, his Scotch surgeon, alone saved the diseased limb from amputation. As soon as he was cured, he returned again to Tzarsko Zelo, where the spring found him as usual alone, without a court or chamberlain, only giving audience to his ministers twice a week. His existence resembled rather that of an anchorite weeping for the sins of his youth, than that of a great emperor who makes the happiness of his people.

He regulated his time in the following manner: in summer he rose at five, and in winter at six o'clock every morning, and as soon as the duties of the toilet were ended, entered his cabinet, in which the greatest order was observed.

He found there a cambric handkerchief folded, and a packet of new pens. He only used these pens in signing his name, and never made use of them again. As soon as he had concluded this business, he descended into the garden, where, notwithstanding the report of a conspiracy which had existed two years against his life and government, he walked alone, with no other guards than the sentinels always stationed before the palace of Alexander. At five he returned, to dine alone, and after his solitary meal was lulled to sleep by the melancholy airs played by the military band of the guard regiment on duty. The selection of the music was always made by himself, and he seemed to sink to repose, and to awake, with the same sombre dispositions and feelings which had been his companions throughout the day.

His empress, Elizabeth, lived like her consort, in profound solitude, watching over him like an invisible angel. Time had not extinguished in her heart the profound passion with which the youthful Czarowitz had inspired her at first sight, and which she had preserved in her heart, pure and inviolate. His numerous and public infidelities could not stifle this holy and beautiful attachment, which formed at once the happiness and misery of a delicate and sensitive woman.

At this period of her life, the empress at five-and-forty retained her fine shape and noble carriage, while her countenance showed the remains of considerable beauty, more impaired by sorrow than time. Calumny itself had never dared to aim her envenomed shafts at one so eminently chaste and good. Her presence demanded the respect due to virtue, still more than the homage proper to her elevated rank.

She resembled indeed more an angel exiled from heaven, than the imperial consort of a prince who ruled a large portion of the earth.

In the summer of 1825, the last he was destined to see, the physicians of the emperor unanimously recommended a journey to the Crimea, as the best medicine he could take. Alexander ap-

peared perfectly indifferent to a measure which regarded his individual benefit, but the empress, deeply interested in any event likely to restore her husband's health, asked and obtained permission to accompany him. The necessary preparations for this long absence overwhelmed the emperor with business, and for a fortnight he rose earlier, and went to bed later, than was customary to him.

In the month of June, no visible alteration was observed in his appearance, and he quitted St. Petersburg after a service had been chanted, to bring down a blessing from above on his journey. He was accompanied by the empress, his faithful coachman Ivan, and some officers belonging to the staff of General Diebitch. He stopped at Warsaw a few days, in order to celebrate the birthday of his brother, the Grand-Duke Constantine, and arrived at Tangaroff in the end of August, 1825. Both the illustrious travelers found their health benefited by the change of scene and climate. Alexander took a great liking to Tangaroff, a small town on the borders of the Sea of Azof, comprising a thousand ill-built houses, of which a sixth-part alone are of brick and stone, while the remainder resemble wooden cages covered with dirt. The streets are large, but then they have no pavement, and are alternately loaded with dust, or inundated with mud. The dust rises in clouds, which conceals alike man and beast under a thick veil, and penetrates every where the carefully closed jealousies with which the houses are guarded, and covers the garments of their inhabitants. The food, the water, are loaded with it; and the last can not be drunk till previously boiled with salt of tartar, which precipitates it; a precaution absolutely necessary to free it from this disagreeable and dangerous deposit.

The emperor took possession of the governor's house, where he sometimes slept and took his meals. His abode there in the day-time rarely exceeded two hours. The rest of his time was passed in wandering about the country on foot, in the hot dust or wet mud. No weather put any stop to his out-door exercise, and no advice from his medical attendant nor warning from the natives of Tangaroff, could prevail upon him to take the slightest precaution against the fatal autumnal fever of the country. His principal occupation was planning and planting a great public garden, in which undertaking he was assisted by an Englishman whom he had brought with him from St. Petersburg for that purpose. He frequently slept on the spot on a camp-bed, with his head resting upon a leather pillow.

If general report may be credited, planting gardens was not the principal object that engrossed the Russian emperor's attention. He was said to be employed in framing a new constitution for Russia, and unable to contend at St. Petersburg with the prejudices of the aristocracy, had retired to this small city, for the purpose of conferring this benefit upon his enslaved country.

However this might be, the emperor did not

stay long at a time at Tangaroff, where his empress, unable to share with him the fatigues of his long journeys, permanently resided, during his frequent absences from his head-quarters. Alexander, in fact, made rapid excursions to the country about the Don, and was sometimes at Tcherkask, sometimes at Donetz. He was on the eve of departure for Astracan, when Count Woronzoff in person, came to announce to his sovereign, the existence of the mysterious conspiracy which had haunted him in St. Petersburg, and which extended to the Crimea, where his personal presence could alone appease the general discontent.

The prospect of traversing three hundred leagues appeared a trifle to Alexander, whom rapid journeys alone diverted from his oppressive melancholy. He announced to the empress his departure, which he only delayed till the return of a messenger he had sent to Alapka. The expected courier brought new details of the conspiracy, which aimed at the life, as well as the government of Alexander. This discovery agitated him terribly. He rested his aching head on his hands, gave a deep groan, and exclaimed, "Oh, my father, my father!" Though it was then midnight, he caused Count Diebitch to be roused from sleep and summoned into his presence. The general, who lodged in the next house, found his master in a dreadfully excited state, now traversing the apartment with hasty strides, now throwing himself upon the bed with deep sighs and convulsive starts. He at length became calm, and discussed the intelligence conveyed in the dispatches of Count Woronzoff. He then dictated two, one addressed to the Viceroy of Poland, the other to the Grand-Duke Nicholas.

With these documents, all traces of his terrible agitation disappeared. He was quite calm, and his countenance betrayed nothing of the emotion that had harassed him the preceding night.

Count Woronzoff, notwithstanding this apparent calmness, found him difficult to please, and unusually irritable, for Alexander was constitutionally sweet-tempered and patient. He did not delay his journey on account of this internal disquiet, but gave orders for his departure from Tangaroff, which he fixed for the following day.

His ill-humor increased during the journey; he complained of the badness of the roads and the slowness of the horses. He had never been known to grumble before. His irritation became more apparent when Sir James Wyllie, his confidential medical attendant, recommended him to take some precaution against the frozen winds of the autumn; for he threw away with a gesture of impatience the cloak and pelisse he offered, and braved the danger he had been entreated to avoid. His imprudence soon produced consequences. That evening he caught cold, and coughed incessantly, and the following day on his arrival at Orieloff, an intermittent fever appeared, which soon after, aggravated by the obstinacy of the invalid, turned to the remittent

fever common to Tangaroff and its environs in the autumn.

The emperor, whose increasing malady gave him a presage of his approaching death, expressed a wish to return to the empress, and once more took the route to Tangaroff; contrary to the prayers of Sir James Wyllie, he chose to perform a part of the journey on horseback, but the failure of his strength finally forced him to re-enter his carriage. He entered Tangaroff on the fifth of November, and swooned the moment he came into the governor's house. The empress, who was suffering with a complaint of the heart, forgot her malady, while watching over her dying husband. Change of place only increased the fatal fever which preyed upon his frame, which seemed to gather strength from day to day. On the eighth, Wyllie called in Dr. Stephiegen, and on the thirteenth they endeavored to counteract the affection of the brain, and wished to bleed the imperial patient. He would not submit to the operation, and demanded iced-water, which they refused. Their denial irritated him, and he rejected every thing they offered him, with displeasure. These learned men were unwise to deprive the suffering prince of the water, a safe and harmless beverage in such fevers. In fact, nature herself sometimes, in inspiring the wish, provides the remedy. The emperor, on the afternoon of that day wrote and sealed a letter, when, perceiving the taper remained burning, he told his attendant to extinguish it, in words that plainly expressed his feelings in regard to the dangerous nature of his malady. "Put out that light, my friend, or the people will take it for a bier candle, and will suppose I am already dead."

On the fourteenth of November, the physicians again urged their refractory patient to take the medicines they prescribed, and were seconded by the prayers of the empress. He repulsed them with some haughtiness, but quickly repenting of his hastiness of temper, which in fact was one of the symptoms of the disease, he said, "Attend to me, Stephiegen, and you too, Sir Andrew Wyllie. I have much pleasure in seeing you, but you plague me so often about your medicine, that really I must give up your company if you will talk of nothing else." He however was at last induced to take a dose of calomel.

In the evening, the fever had made such fearful progress that it appeared necessary to call in a priest. Sir Andrew Wyllie, at the instance of the empress, entered the chamber of the dying prince, and approaching his bed with tears in his eyes, advised him "to call in the aid of the Most High, and not to refuse the assistance of religion as he had already done that of medicine."

The emperor instantly gave his consent. Upon the fifteenth, at five o'clock in the morning, a humble village priest approached the imperial bed to receive the confession of his expiring sovereign. "My father, God must be merciful to kings," were the first words the emperor ad-

dressed to the minister of religion; "indeed they require it so much more than other men." In this sentence all the trials and temptations of the despotic ruler of a great people—his territorial ambition, his jealousy, his political ruses, his distrusts, and over-confidences, seem to be briefly comprehended. Then, apparently perceiving some timidity in the spiritual confessor his destiny had provided for him, he added, "My father, treat me like an erring man, not as an emperor." The priest drew near the bed, received the confession of his august penitent, and administered to him the last sacraments.

Then having been informed of the emperor's pertinacity in rejecting medicine, he urged him to give up this fatal obstinacy, remarking, "that he feared God would consider it absolutely suicidal." His admonitions made a deep impression upon the mind of the prince, who recalled Sir Andrew Wyllie, and, giving him his hand, bade him do what he pleased with him. Wyllie took advantage of this absolute surrender, to apply twenty leeches to the head of the emperor, but the application was too late, the burning fever continually increased, and the sufferer was given over. The intelligence filled the dying chamber with weeping domestics, who tenderly loved their master.

The empress still occupied her place by the bed-side, which she had never quitted but once, in order to allow her dying husband to unbosom himself in private to his confessor. She returned to the post assigned her by conjugal tenderness directly the priest had quitted it.

Two hours after he had made his peace with God, Alexander experienced more severe pain than he had yet felt; "Kings," said he, "suffer more than others." He had called one of his attendants to listen to this remark, with the air of one communicating a secret. He stopped, and then as if recalling something he had forgotten, said in a whisper, "they have committed an infamous action."

What did he mean by those words? Was he suspicious that his days had been shortened by poison? or did he allude, with the last accents he uttered, to the barbarous assassination of the Emperor Paul? Eternity can alone reveal the secret thoughts of Alexander I. of Russia.

During the night, the dying prince lost consciousness. At two o'clock in the morning, Count Diebitch came to the empress, to inform her that an old man, named Alexandrowitz, had saved many Tartars in the same malady. A ray of hope entered the heart of the imperial consort at this information, and Sir Andrew Wyllie ordered him to be sought for with haste.

This interval was passed by the empress in prayer, yet she still kept her eyes fixed upon those of her husband, watching with intense attention the beams of life and light fading in their unconscious gaze. At nine in the morning, the old man was brought into the imperial chamber almost by force. The rank of the patient, perhaps, inspiring him with some fear respecting the consequences that might follow

his prescriptions, caused his extreme unwillingness. He approached the bed, looked at his dying sovereign, and shook his head. He was questioned respecting this doubtful sign. "It is too late to give him medicine; besides, those I have cured were not sick of the same malady."

With these words of the peasant physician, the last hopes of the empress vanished; but if pure and ardent prayers could have prevailed with God, Alexander would have been saved.

On the sixteenth of November, according to the usual method of measuring time, but on the first of December, if we follow the Russian calendar, at fifty minutes after ten in the morning, Alexander Paulowitz, Emperor of all the Russias, expired. The empress, bending over him felt the departure of his last breath. She uttered a bitter cry, sank upon her knees, and prayed. After some minutes passed in communion with heaven, she rose, closed the eyes of her deceased lord, composed his features, kissed his cold and livid hands, and once more knelt and prayed.

The physicians entreated her to leave the chamber of death, and the pious empress consented to withdraw to her own. The autopsy exhibited the same appearance generally discovered in those subjects whose death has been caused by the fever of the country: the brain was watery, the veins of the head were gorged, and the liver was soft. No signs of poison were discovered; the death of the emperor was in the course of nature.

The body of the emperor lay in state, on a platform raised in an apartment of the house where he died. The presence-chamber was hung with black, and the bier was covered with a cloth of gold. A great many wax tapers lighted up the gloomy scene. A priest at the head of the bier prayed continually for the repose of his deceased sovereign's soul. Two sentinels, with drawn swords, watched day and night beside the dead, two were stationed at the doors, and two stood on each step leading to the bier. Every person received at the door a lighted taper, which he held while he remained in the apartment. The empress was present during these masses, but she always fainted at the conclusion of the service. Crowds of people united their prayers to hers, for the emperor was adored by the common people. The corpse of Alexander I. lay in state twenty-one days before it was removed to the Greek monastery of St. Alexander, where it was to rest before its departure for interment in St. Petersburg.

Upon the 25th December, the remains of the emperor were placed on a funeral car drawn by eight horses, covered to the ground with black cloth ornamented with the escutcheons of the empire. The bier rested on an elevated dais, carpeted with cloth of gold; over the bier was laid a flag of silver tissue, charged with the heraldic insignia proper to the imperial house. The imperial crown was placed under the dais. Four major-generals held the cords which supported the diadem. The persons composing the

household of the emperor and empress, followed the bier dressed in long black mantles, bearing in their hands lighted torches. The Cossacks of the Don every minute discharged their light artillery, while the sullen booming of the cannon added to the solemnity of the imposing scene.

Upon its arrival at the church, the body was transferred to a catafalco covered with red cloth, surmounted by the imperial arms in gold, displayed on crimson velvet. Two steps led up to the platform on which the catafalco was placed. Four columns supported the dais upon which the imperial crown, the sceptre, and the globe rested.

The catafalco was surrounded by curtains of crimson velvet and cloth of gold, and four massy candelabra, at the four corners of the platform, bore wax tapers sufficient to dispel the darkness, but not to banish the gloom pervading the church, which was hung with black, embroidered with white crosses. The empress made an attempt to assist at this funeral service, but her feelings overpowered her, and she was borne back to the palace in a swoon; but as soon as she came to herself, she entered the private chapel, and repeated there the same prayers then reciting in the church of St. Alexander.

While the remains of the Emperor Alexander were on their way to their last home, the report of his dangerous state which had been forwarded officially to the Grand-Duke Nicholas, was contradicted by another document, which bore date of the 29th of November, announcing that considerable amendment had taken place in the emperor's health, who had recovered from a swoon of eight hours' duration, and had not only appeared collected, but declared himself improved in health.

Whether this was a political ruse of the conspirators or the new emperor, remains quite uncertain; however, a solemn *Te Deum* was ordered to be celebrated in the cathedral of Casan, at which the empress-mother and the Grand-Dukes Nicholas and Michael were present. The joyful crowds assembled at this service scarcely left the imperial family and their suite a free space for the exercise of their devotions. Toward the end of the *Te Deum*, while the sweet voices of the choir were rising in harmonious concert to heaven, some official person informed the Grand-Duke Nicholas, that a courier from Tangaroff had arrived with the last dispatch, which he refused to deliver into any hand but his own. Nicholas was conducted into the sacristy, and with one glance at the messenger divined the nature of the document of which he was the bearer. The letter he presented was sealed with black. Nicholas recognized the handwriting of the empress-consort, and hastily opening it, read these words:

"Our angel is in heaven; I still exist on earth, but I hope soon to be re-united to him."

The bishop was summoned into the sacristy by the new emperor, who gave him the letter, with directions to break the fatal tidings it contained to the empress-mother with the tenderest

care. He then returned to his place by the side of his august parent, who alone, of the thousands assembled there, had perceived his absence.

An instant after, the venerable bishop re-entered the choir, and silenced the notes of praise and exultation with a motion of his hand. Every voice became mute, and the stillness of death reigned throughout the sacred edifice. In the midst of the general astonishment and attention he walked slowly to the altar, took up the massy silver crucifix which decorated it, and throwing over that symbol of earthly sorrow and divine hope, a black veil, he approached the empress-mother, and gave her the crucifix in mourning to kiss.

The empress uttered a cry, and fell with her face on the pavement; she comprehended at once that her eldest son was dead.

The Empress Elizabeth soon realized the sorrowful hope she had expressed. Four months after the death of her consort she died on her way from Tangaroff, at Beloff, and soon rejoined him she had pathetically termed, "*her angel in heaven.*"

The historical career of the Emperor Alexander is well known to every reader, but the minor matters of every-day life mark the man, while public details properly denote the sovereign.

The faults of Alexander are comprised in his infidelity to a beautiful, accomplished, and affectionate wife. He respected her even while wounding her delicate feelings by his criminal attachments to other women. After many years of mental pain, the injured Elizabeth gave him the choice of giving her up, or banishing an imperious mistress, by whom the emperor had a numerous family.

Alexander could not resolve to separate forever from his amiable and virtuous consort—he made the sacrifice she required of him.

His gallantry sometimes placed him in unprinciply situations, and brought him in contact with persons immeasurably beneath him. He once fell in love with a tailor's wife at Warsaw, and not being well acquainted with the character of the pretty grisette, construed her acceptance of the visit he proposed making her, into approbation of his suit. The fair Pole was too simple, and had been too virtuously brought up, to comprehend his intentions. Her husband was absent, so she thought it would not be proper to receive the imperial visit alone; she made, therefore, a re-union of her own and her husband's relations—rich people of the bourgeoisie class—and when the emperor entered her saloon, he found himself in company with thirty or forty persons, to whom he was immediately introduced by his fair and innocent hostess. The astonished sovereign was obliged to make himself agreeable to the party, none of whom appear to have divined his criminal intentions. He made no further attempt to corrupt the innocence of this beautiful woman, whose simplicity formed the safeguard of her virtue.

A severe trial separated him forever from his last mistress, who had borne him a daughter;



this child was the idol of his heart, and to form her mind was the pleasure of his life. At eighteen the young lady eclipsed every woman in his empire by her dazzling beauty and graceful manners. Suddenly she was seized with an infectious fever, for which no physician in St. Petersburg could find a remedy. Her mother, selfish and timid, deserted the sick chamber of the suffering girl, over whom the bitter tears of a father were vainly shed, while he kept incessant vigils over one whom he would have saved from the power of the grave at the expense of his life and empire. The dying daughter asked incessantly for her mother upon whose bosom she desired to breathe her last sigh, but neither the passionate entreaties nor the commands of her imperial lover could induce the unnatural parent to risk her health by granting the interview for which her poor child craved, and she expired in the arms of her father, without the consolation of bidding her mother a last adieu.

Some days after the death of his natural daughter, the Emperor Alexander entered the house of an English officer, to whom he was much attached. He was in deep mourning, and appeared very unhappy.

"I have just followed to the grave," he said, "as a private person, the remains of my poor child, and I can not yet forgive the unnatural woman who deserted the death-bed of her daughter. Besides, my sin, which I never repented of, has found me out, and the vengeance of God has fallen upon its fruits. Yes, I deserted the best and most amiable of wives, the object of my first affection, for women who neither possessed her beauty nor merit. I have preferred to the empress even this unnatural mother, whom I now regard with loathing and horror. My wife shall never again have cause to reproach my broken faith.

Devotion and his strict adherence to his promise balm the wound, which, however, only death could heal. To the secret agony which through life had haunted the bosom of the son was added that of the father, and the return of Alexander to the paths of virtue and religion originated in the loss of this beloved daughter, smitten, he considered, for his sins.

The friendship of this prince for Madame Krudener had nothing criminal in its nature, though it furnished a theme for scandal to those who are apt to doubt the purity of Platonic attachments between individuals of opposite sexes.

In regard to this emperor's political career, full of ambition and stratagem, we can only re-echo his dying words to his confessor: "God must be merciful to kings!" His career, however, varied by losses on the field, or humiliated by treaties, ended triumphantly with the laurels of war and the olives of peace; and he bore to his far northern empire the keys of Paris as a trophy of his arms. His moderation demands the praise of posterity, and excited the admiration of the French nation at large. His immoral conduct as a man and a husband was afterward

effaced by his sincere repentance, and he died in the arms of the most faithful and affectionate of wives, who could not long survive her irreparable loss. His death was deeply lamented by his subjects, who, if they did not enroll his name among the greatest of their rulers, never have hesitated to denote him as the best and most merciful sovereign who ever sat upon the Russian throne.

#### AN EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF JOHN RAYNER.

##### I.

IT was the strangest and most beautiful sight in the world—certainly the most beautiful they had ever seen or dreamt of; and the party, after surmounting the perils of the ascent, stood gazing in astonished amazement. "The Falls of Niagara may be very grand," observed they; not that they could speak from experience, never having crossed the Atlantic to view them; the sight of the Pyramids of Egypt, worth a pilgrimage thither, and all the other known wonders of the earth, natural and artificial, equally imposing and sublime, but it was scarcely to be conceived that any one of them could vie in beauty with the Glaciers of Switzerland.

The party, some half-dozen in number, and of the English nation, had arrived at Chamouny in the night, later by some hours than they ought to have done, owing to the break-down of their nondescript vehicle, called a *char-à-banc*, just after they had quitted St. Martin, a quiet little village, whence the view of Mont Blanc is splendid in the extreme.

They were weary with traveling, and sought their beds at once, the earliest riser among them—and he not until the sun was up—rushing to his window, before his eyes were half open, to see if any view was to be obtained.

He pulled aside the curtain, and stood transfixed; utterly regardless of the bipeds, male and female, human and animal, whose attention might be attracted upward by the unusual apparition of a gentleman exhibiting himself at the open window in his costume *de nuit*, his tasseled nightcap stretching a yard into the air. But John Rayner was a man much more accustomed to act from impulse than from reflection, and it is possible that in this instance the scene he beheld excused it.

The Glacier de Bosson was before him—the large, unbroken Glacier de Bosson—with its color of bright azure, and its shining peaks of gold, rising to a sky more deeply blue than we ever see it in England, glittering along as far as the eye could reach. A glimpse of the Mer de Glace was caught in the distance, its white surface presenting a contrast to the blue of the glaciers.

John Rayner soon summoned his party; and, after a hasty breakfast, they commenced preparations for a visit to the Mer de Glace. They were soon ready—considering that some of the party were ladies, and one a staid damsel of five-and-forty, methodical and slow; another, a