

ern France is better supplied with the Royalist propaganda of M. Charles Maurras and M. Léon Daudet than is Nîmes. It has been said, indeed, that Monarchism presented itself in the first instance to these two writers as a solution of local Provençal problems.

As one goes toward the coast from Nîmes, whether southeast by 'illuminated' Martignes, the birthplace of Maurras, or southwest by Aigues-Mortes, near the Gulf of Lyons, the Protestant population becomes smaller. The seaports of Languedoc are almost wholly Catholic. Yet where the ramparts of Aigues-Mortes rise among green lakes, the chief sight for the tourist is still the Tower of Constance, the scene of a famous Protestant martyrdom. In this tower the Protestant women, taken in childhood, endured a captivity of forty years. Martignes belongs decidedly to the classical and Catholic Provence of Anatole France's poem, 'A Charles Maurras':

Le long du rivage sacré,
Parmi les fleurs de sel qui s'ouvrent dans
les sables,
Tu médisais d'ingénieuses fables,
Charles Maurras; les dieux indigènes, les
dieux
Exilés et le Dieu qu'apporta Madeleine
T'aimaient: ils t'ont donné le roseau de
Silène
Et l'orgue tant sacré des pins mélodieux,
Pour soutenir ta voix qui dit la beauté
sainte,
L'Harmonie, et le chœur des Lois traçant
l'enceinte
Des cités, et l'Amour et sa divine sœur,
La Mort, qui l'égale en douceur.

It is curious to remember, however, that Maurras, now so long a Parisian controversialist, the theorist of authority in religion and politics, was associated at one time with that group of the Felibrige, headed by Napoleon Péyrat, which claimed liberty for the southern provinces and put the free-thinking

Troubadours of the thirteenth century at the head of the southern tradition. M. Mariéton, in *La Terre Provençale*, tells the story of the schism. Péyrat, a Protestant and the historian of the Albigensian heresy, argued that the Reformed Church of France was the sister of the Johannite Church of Aquitaine, an Oriental sister issued from Patmos and the Seven Churches of Asia. He attempted to establish a chain of pure traditions (the name of the Albigensians being *καθάρως*, pure), which passed through St. Francis, Dante, and the author of the first three books of the *Imitation of Christ* (who might be, he said, Bertrand de Born, the Troubadour!). 'For every renaissance,' he told the patriots of the Languedoc, 'supposes a death, a martyr who rises in his tomb. And that great and holy martyr is Aquitaine.'

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THE VANISHED TSARINA

BY MARIE, QUEEN OF ROUMANIA

MANY times, in the course of the years before the war, I found myself with the Tsar Nicholas and his wife. With the Tsarina, although she was my own cousin, I established no kind of intimacy whatever, for her ways were strangely cold, while the affectionate regard the Tsar and I had for each other remained unchanged by time. The feeling that the royal pair had not come up to the expectations entertained of them was thus borne in upon me more by the talk of my family and by the voice of all classes in society than by my own personal observations. Every time I heard these rumors, I derived from them a profound chagrin. Nicholas had in him more than one good and really noble impulse, a real urge toward greater ideas and modern

conceptions, yet it seemed ever that some occult force thwarted his will.

For a long time we waited, hope remained in our hearts, then, little by little, murmurs began to reach the court; there was criticism of the court way of life. Under other reigns, the sovereigns had always played a larger part in the public fêtes. They had been the soul of public ceremonies; no fête, no popular manifestation was complete without them, the splendor which surrounded them seemed a social necessity, the rallying point for the great and the small.

Little by little the new sovereigns retired from public life. The health of the Tsarina was bad; jealously attached to her husband, she scarcely could endure his going anywhere without her, and this tended to withdraw the Emperor himself from ceremonies in which his wife could not take part. She bore four daughters before having the joy of giving the Empire an heir to the throne. This series of deceptions, acting upon her intense and morbid ambition, lessened her little faith in life, and when the much desired son was born at length, he was of delicate health; a secret and curious weakness menaced the security of his existence. This was too much for a woman naturally given to melancholy, and always on the defensive against the world and those who followed the ways of the world.

Without a doubt, the Tsarina is largely responsible for her husband's conduct; she discouraged him instead of encouraging him; she used her influence to block rather than to hasten plans which should have been carried through; instead of inspiring him, she filled him with her own distrust. But in all justice, let us remember that her intentions were good and can in no way be indicted as guilty; she believed

firmly that she was in the right, never doubted of the excellence of her judgment, ever sure that all she did was done in the best interests of her husband, his country, and his people. He was the feeblar of the two, her will was the stronger, thus she led him unhesitatingly toward what she imagined to be a light; a light, alas, which turned out to be but a shadow.

The Tsarina is one of those personalities which from time to time have appeared in history. Their power is inexplicable; we are forever asking ourselves whence comes their force. Perhaps Alexandra really loved her husband, she certainly adored her son, but her attitude to the world was perpetually distrustful, strangely empty of tenderness, and, in a way, hostile. Placed above everything, dominating her husband, she held in her hands a terrible power; had tenderness dwelt in her heart, she might have accomplished miracles, but inspired with her universal distrust, she held both great and small at a distance, as if they intended to steal something which was hers. Placed by fortune on a pinnacle of power infinitely above all others, she imagined that she had been thus placed only in order to show others their errors, and finally, when she perceived that her ways had not won hearts to her, she became bitter because of her disappointment.

She belonged to that category of women who consider themselves eternally misunderstood, and isolate themselves in the certainty that common folk are unable to share their mind or arrive at their ideal. An unhappy attitude this, and one sure to bring misfortune; the misunderstood woman never adapts herself to circumstances; she prefers to dwell apart, locked in her grief as if within a sacred privilege.

The Tsarina was one of these beings, and with the passing of the years, her

morbid character being so accentuated there were some who doubted of her reason. Those who saw her intimately bore witness to the fact that on a majority of subjects she reasoned with an entire lucidity of intelligence, but the unshakable faith she had in her mission of bringing light to others caused her to pay no heed whatsoever to any advice; she pledged her faith to her own erroneous judgment, and thus became the prey of those impostors who spy upon souls walled within solitude and obscurity.

What force it was which gave her such a hold upon her husband has never been explained. Did he really love her? Was it simply his feebleness will bowing before the will of the Empress? Did she hold him through the mystical side of his nature? No one has ever known. One thing, however, is certain; her influence was dominant in act, and instead of diminishing with use, it became stronger and deadlier, until the unfortunate monarch, who was by instinct and personality attracted toward the light, fell into darkness so black that he was never again able to escape toward the light.

Poor distraught soul, she did not suspect that she had discovered the darkness; such is the secret tragedy of hearts which no longer have faith in mankind or in life, and who know not how to love. She knew not how to love; therein lay, in my opinion, the cause of her defeat.

And that defeat was destined to bring in its train the downfall of her husband, whom, nevertheless, she expected to save, the death of the son whom she adored, and the crumbling of the vast Empire which she desired to hold intact for that son, and which she hoped to retain for him impregnable and unimpaired. For Alexandra dreamed of the succession of her heir

to an absolutely undiminished autocratic sway over the greatest Empire in Europe, and she strove to maintain it for him in all its fullness.

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GOOD OLD DUMAS

BY OSCAR BROWNING

DUMAS, the author of *Monte Cristo* and *The Three Musketeers*, is known to all the civilized world. Into how many languages has *The Count of Monte Cristo* been translated? Many believe that the lovely island which bounds with its serrated peaks the expanse of the Tyrrhene Sea has derived its name from the book, and that the King and Queen of Italy go to shoot moufflons in the corries of a romance. That Dumas is the prince of modern novelists; that he is greater than Walter Scott, a rival to Balzac; that he has fancy, wit, a caressing style, and a penetrating insight into the most complicated and subtle folds of human character, is known to few, because they have not read the works in which these qualities are revealed. We may doubt whether he was conscious himself of where his strength lay. He began as a writer of plays. The success of *Henri III* gave him more pleasure than any succeeding triumph; the persecutions which beset *Anthony* were as savory as laudation would have been. He won his position as a novelist almost by accident, following the imperious bent of a genius which for a long time concealed not only its origin, but its course.

Dumas has suffered from being a master of Historical Romance. He is supposed to have kept a workshop like the *bottega* of Perugino or the *Seminar* of a German Professor. A number of assistants would write portions of history from given books,