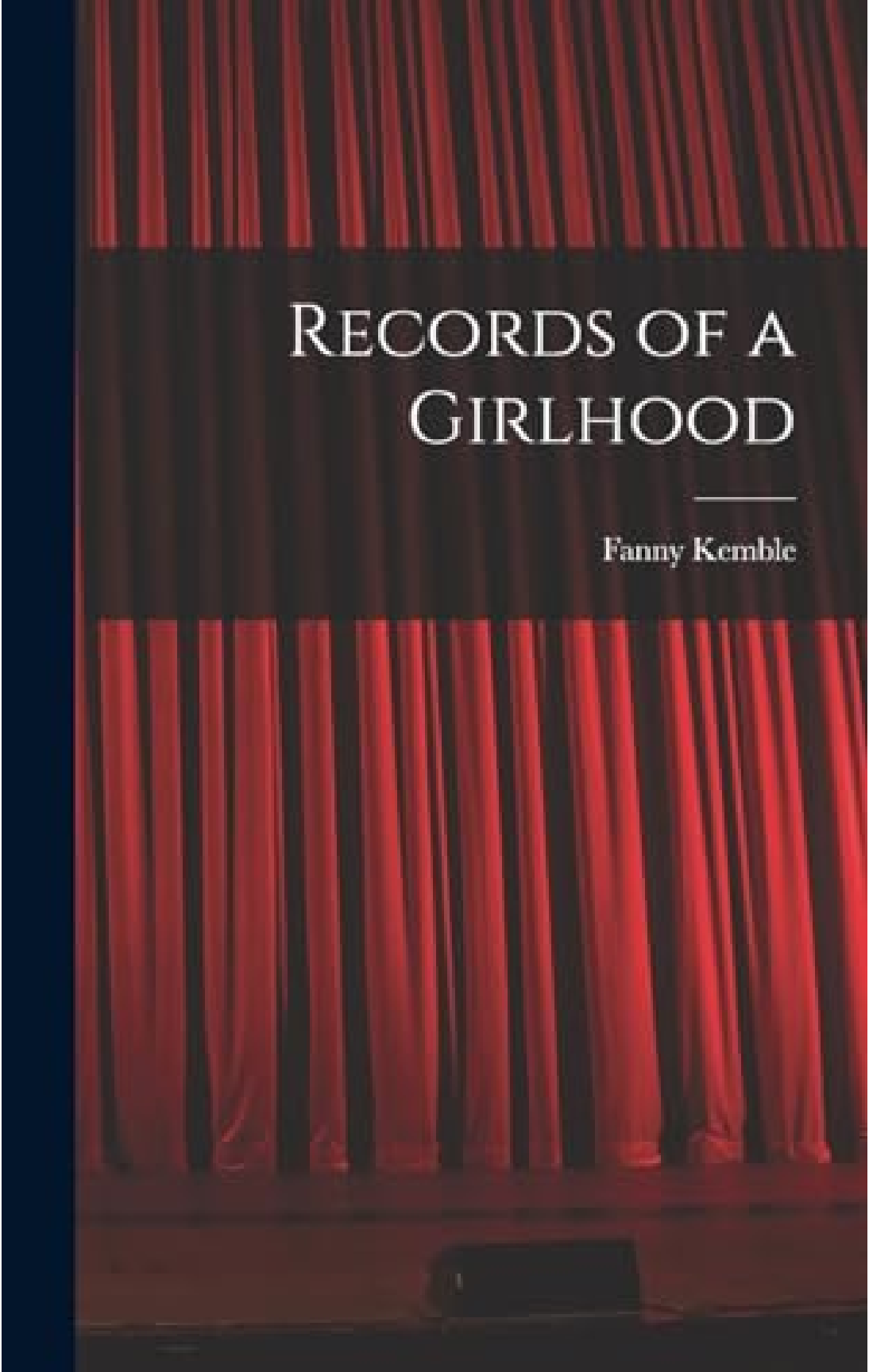

RECORDS OF A GIRLHOOD
Fanny Kemble

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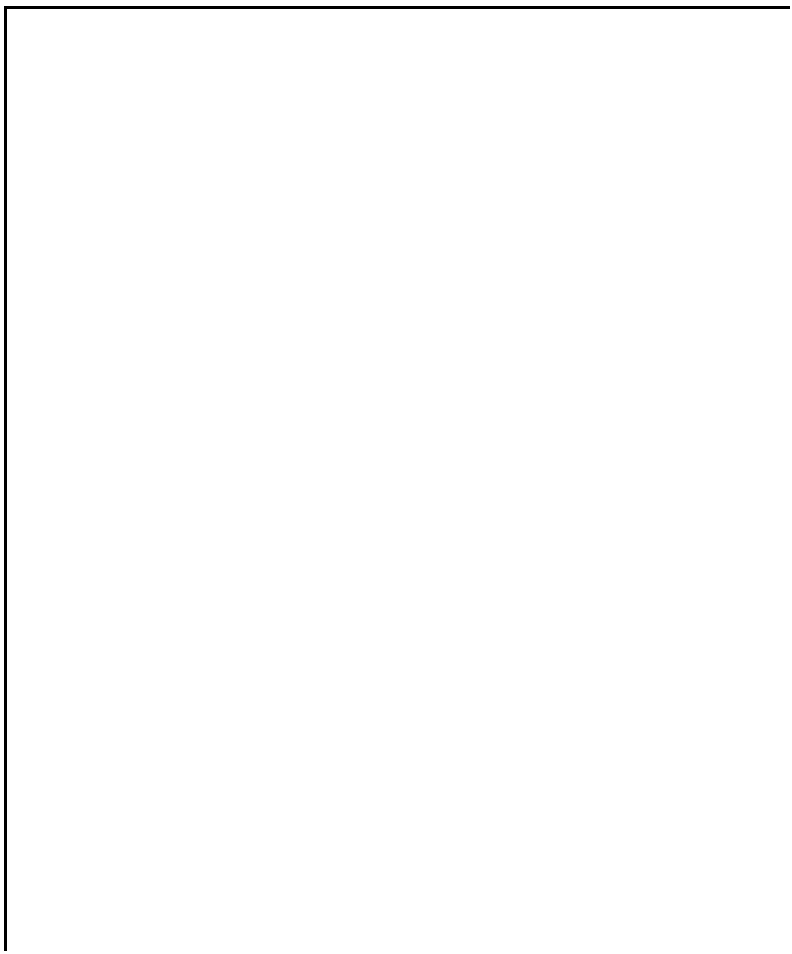
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Transcriber's note

The spellings in this book are inconsistent in the original, and have not been corrected except in the index, as explicitly noted below.





Fanny Kemble

Records of a Girlhood

BY

FRANCES ANN KEMBLE

SECOND EDITION.



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PREFATORY NOTE.

Considerable portions of this work originally appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, but there is added to these a large amount of new matter not hitherto published, and the whole work has been thoroughly revised.

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CHAPTER I.

A few years ago I received from a friend to whom they had been addressed a collection of my own letters, written during a period of forty years, and amounting to thousands—a history of my life.

The passion for universal history (*i.e.* any and every body's story) nowadays seems to render any thing in the shape of personal recollections good enough to be printed and read; and as the public appetite for gossip appears to be insatiable, and is not unlikely some time or other to be gratified at my expense, I have thought that my own gossip about myself may be as acceptable to it as gossip about me written by another.

I have come to the garrulous time of life—to the remembering days, which only by a little precede the forgetting ones. I have much leisure, and feel sure that it will amuse me to write my own reminiscences; perhaps reading them may amuse others who have no more to do than I have. To the idle, then, I offer these lightest of leaves gathered in the idle end of autumn days, which have succeeded years of labor often severe and sad enough, though its ostensible purpose was only that of affording recreation to the public.

There are two lives of my aunt Siddons: one by Boaden, and one by the poet Campbell. In these biographies due mention is made of my paternal grandfather and grandmother. To the latter, Mrs. Roger Kemble, I am proud to see, by Lawrence's portrait of her, I bear a personal resemblance; and I

please myself with imagining that the likeness is more than "skin deep." She was an energetic, brave woman, who, in the humblest sphere of life and most difficult circumstances, together with her husband fought manfully a hard battle with poverty, in maintaining and, as well as they could, training a family of twelve children, of whom four died in childhood. But I am persuaded that whatever qualities of mind or character I inherit from my father's family, I am more strongly stamped with those which I derive from my mother, a woman who, possessing no specific gift in such perfection as the dramatic talent of the Kembles, had in a higher degree than any of them the peculiar organization of genius. To the fine senses of a savage rather than a civilized nature, she joined an acute instinct of correct criticism in all matters of art, and a general quickness and accuracy of perception, and brilliant vividness of expression, that made her conversation delightful. Had she possessed half the advantages of education which she and my father labored to bestow upon us, she would, I think, have been one of the most remarkable persons of her time.

My mother was the daughter of Captain Decamp, an officer in one of the armies that revolutionary France sent to invade republican Switzerland. He married the daughter of a farmer from the neighborhood of Berne. From my grandmother's home you could see the great Jungfrau range of the Alps, and I sometimes wonder whether it is her blood in my veins that so loves and longs for those supremely beautiful mountains.

Not long after his marriage my grandfather went to Vienna, where, on the anniversary of the birth of the great Empress-King, my mother was born, and

named, after her, Maria Theresa. In Vienna, Captain Decamp made the acquaintance of a young English nobleman, Lord Monson (afterwards the Earl of Essex), who, with an enthusiasm more friendly than wise, eagerly urged the accomplished Frenchman to come and settle in London, where his talents as a draughtsman and musician, which were much above those of a mere amateur, combined with the protection of such friends as he could not fail to find, would easily enable him to maintain himself and his young wife and child.

In an evil hour my grandfather adopted this advice, and came to England. It was the time when the emigration of the French nobility had filled London with objects of sympathy, and society with sympathizers with their misfortunes. Among the means resorted to for assisting the many interesting victims of the Revolution, were representations, given under the direction of Le Texier, of Berquin's and Madame de Genlis's juvenile dramas, by young French children. These performances, combined with his own extraordinary readings, became one of the fashionable frenzies of the day. I quote from Walter Scott's review of Boaden's life of my uncle the following notice of Le Texier: "On one of these incidental topics we must pause for a moment, with delighted recollection. We mean the readings of the celebrated Le Texier, who, seated at a desk, and dressed in plain clothes, read French plays with such modulation of voice, and such exquisite point of dialogue, as to form a pleasure different from that of the theatre, but almost as great as we experience in listening to a first-rate actor. We have only to add to a very good account given by Mr. Boaden of this extraordinary entertainment, that when it commenced Mr. Le Texier read over the *dramatis*

personæ, with the little analysis of character usually attached to each name, using the voice and manner with which he afterward read the part; and so accurate was the key-note given that he had no need to name afterward the person who spoke; the stupidest of the audience could not fail to recognize them."

Among the little actors of Le Texier's troupe, my mother attracted the greatest share of public attention by her beauty and grace, and the truth and spirit of her performances.

The little French fairy was eagerly seized upon by admiring fine ladies and gentlemen, and snatched up into their society, where she was fondled and petted and played with; passing whole days in Mrs. Fitzherbert's drawing-room, and many a half hour on the knees of her royal and disloyal husband, the Prince Regent, one of whose favorite jokes was to place my mother under a huge glass bell, made to cover some large group of precious Dresden china, where her tiny figure and flashing face produced even a more beautiful effect than the costly work of art whose crystal covering was made her momentary cage. I have often heard my mother refer to this season of her childhood's favoritism with the fine folk of that day, one of her most vivid impressions of which was the extraordinary beauty of person and royal charm of manner and deportment of the Prince of Wales, and his enormous appetite: enormous perhaps, after all, only by comparison with her own, which he compassionately used to pity, saying frequently, when she declined the delicacies that he pressed upon her, "Why, you poor child! Heaven has not blessed you with an appetite." Of the precocious feeling and imagination of the poor little girl, thus

taken out of her own sphere of life into one so different and so dangerous, I remember a very curious instance, told me by herself. One of the houses where she was a most frequent visitor, and treated almost like a child of the family, was that of Lady Rivers, whose brother, Mr. Rigby, while in the ministry, fought a duel with some political opponent. Mr. Rigby had taken great notice of the little French child treated with such affectionate familiarity by his sister, and she had attached herself so strongly to him that, on hearing the circumstance of his duel suddenly mentioned for the first time, she fainted away: a story that always reminded me of the little Spanish girl Florian mentions in his "Mémoires d'un jeune Espagnol," who, at six years of age, having asked a young man of upward of five and twenty if he loved her, so resented his repeating her question to her elder sister that she never could be induced to speak to him again.

Meantime, while the homes of the great and gay were her constant resort, the child's home was becoming sadder, and her existence and that of her parents more precarious and penurious day by day. From my grandfather's first arrival in London, his chest had suffered from the climate; the instrument he taught was the flute, and it was not long before decided disease of the lungs rendered that industry impossible. He endeavored to supply its place by giving French and drawing lessons (I have several small sketches of his, taken in the Netherlands, the firm, free delicacy of which attest a good artist's handling); and so struggled on, under the dark London sky, and in the damp, foggy, smoky atmosphere, while the poor foreign wife bore and nursed four children.

It is impossible to imagine any thing sadder than the condition of such a family, with its dark fortune closing round and over it, and its one little human jewel, sent forth from its dingy case to sparkle and glitter, and become of hard necessity the single source of light in the growing gloom of its daily existence. And the contrast must have been cruel enough between the scenes into which the child's genius spasmodically lifted her, both in the assumed parts she performed and in the great London world where her success in their performance carried her, and the poor home, where sickness and sorrow were becoming abiding inmates, and poverty and privation the customary conditions of life—poverty and privation doubtless often increased by the very outlay necessary to fit her for her public appearances, and not seldom by the fear of offending, or the hope of conciliating, the fastidious taste of the wealthy and refined patrons whose favor toward the poor little child-actress might prove infinitely helpful to her and to those who owned her.

The lives of artists of every description in England are not unapt to have such opening chapters as this; but the calling of a player alone has the grotesque element of fiction, with all the fantastic accompaniments of sham splendor thrust into close companionship with the sordid details of poverty; for the actor alone the livery of labor is a harlequin's jerkin lined with tatters, and the jester's cap and bells tied to the beggar's wallet. I have said artist life in England is apt to have such chapters; artist life everywhere, probably. But it is only in England, I think, that the full bitterness of such experience is felt; for what knows the foreign artist of the inexorable element of Respectability? In England alone is the pervading atmosphere of respectability

that which artists breathe in common with all other men—respectability, that English moral climate, with its neutral tint and temperate tone, so often sneered at in these days by its new German title of Philistinism, so often deserving of the bitterest scorn in some of its inexpressibly mean manifestations—respectability, the pre-eminently unattractive characteristic of British existence, but which, all deductions made for its vulgar alloys, is, in truth, only the general result of the individual self-respect of individual Englishmen; a wholesome, purifying, and preserving element in the homes and lives of many, where, without it, the recklessness bred of insecure means and obscure position would run miserable riot; a tremendous power of omnipotent compression, repression, and oppression, no doubt, quite consistent with the stern liberty whose severe beauty the people of these islands love, but absolutely incompatible with license, or even lightness of life, controlling a thousand disorders rampant in societies where it does not exist; a power which, tyrannical as it is, and ludicrously tragical as are the sacrifices sometimes exacted by it, saves especially the artist class of England from those worst forms of irregularity which characterize the Bohemianism of foreign literary, artistic, and dramatic life.

Of course the pleasure-and-beauty-loving, artistic temperament, which is the one most likely to be exposed to such an ordeal as that of my mother's childhood, is also the one liable to be most injured by it, and to communicate through its influence peculiar mischief to the moral nature. It is the price of peril, paid for all that brilliant order of gifts that have for their scope the exercise of the imagination through the senses, no less than for that crown of

gifts, the poet's passionate inspiration, speaking to the senses through the imagination.

How far my mother was hurt by the combination of circumstances that influenced her childhood I know not. As I remember her, she was a frank, fearless, generous, and unworldly woman, and had probably found in the subsequent independent exercise of her abilities the shield for these virtues. How much the passionate, vehement, susceptible, and most suffering nature was banefully fostered at the same time, I can better judge from the sad vantage-ground of my own experience.

After six years spent in a bitter struggle with disease and difficulties of every kind, my grandfather, still a young man, died of consumption, leaving a widow and five little children, of whom the eldest, my mother, not yet in her teens, became from that time the bread-winner and sole support.

Nor was it many years before she established her claim to the approbation of the general public, fulfilling the promise of her childhood by performances of such singular originality as to deserve the name of genuine artistic creations, and which have hardly ever been successfully attempted since her time: such as "The Blind Boy" and "Deaf and Dumb;" the latter, particularly, in its speechless power and pathos of expression, resembling the celebrated exhibitions of Parisot and Bigottini, in the great tragic ballets in which dancing was a subordinate element to the highest dramatic effects of passion and emotion expressed by pantomime. After her marriage, my mother remained but a few years on the stage, to which she bequeathed, as specimens of her ability as a dramatic writer, the

charming English version of "La jeune Femme colère," called "The Day after the Wedding;" the little burlesque of "Personation," of which her own exquisitely humorous performance, aided by her admirably pure French accent, has never been equaled; and a play in five acts called "Smiles and Tears," taken from Mrs. Opie's tale of "Father and Daughter."

She had a fine and powerful voice and a rarely accurate musical ear; she moved so gracefully that I have known persons who went to certain provincial promenades frequented by her, only to see her walk; she was a capital horsewoman; her figure was beautiful, and her face very handsome and strikingly expressive; and she talked better, with more originality and vivacity, than any English woman I have ever known: to all which good gifts she added that of being a first-rate *cook*. And oh, how often and how bitterly, in my transatlantic household tribulations, have I deplored that her apron had not fallen on my shoulders or round my waist! Whether she derived this taste and talent from her French blood, I know not, but it amounted to genius, and might have made her a pre-eminent *cordon bleu*, if she had not been the wife, and *cheffe*, of a poor professional gentleman, whose moderate means were so skillfully turned to account, in her provision for his modest table, that he was accused by ill-natured people of indulging in the expensive luxury of a French cook. Well do I remember the endless supplies of potted gravies, sauces, meat jellies, game jellies, fish jellies, the white ranges of which filled the shelves of her store-room—which she laughingly called her boudoir—almost to the exclusion of the usual currant jellies and raspberry jams of such receptacles: for she had the real *bon vivant's*

preference of the savory to the sweet, and left all the latter branch of the art to her subordinates, confining the exercise of her own talents, or immediate superintendence, to the production of the above-named "elegant extracts." She never, I am sorry to say, encouraged either my sister or myself in the same useful occupation, alleging that we had what she called better ones; but I would joyfully, many a time in America, have exchanged all my boarding-school smatterings for her knowledge how to produce a wholesome and palatable dinner. As it was, all I learned of her, to my sorrow, was a detestation of bad cookery, and a firm conviction that that which was exquisite was both wholesomer and more economical than any other. Dr. Kitchener, the clever and amiable author of that amusing book, "The Cook's Oracle" (his name was a *bonâ fide* appellation, and not a drolly devised appropriate *nom de plume*, and he was a doctor of physic), was a great friend and admirer of hers; and she is the "accomplished lady" by whom several pages of that entertaining kitchen companion were furnished to him.

The mode of opening one of her chapters, "I always bone my meat" (*bone* being the slang word of the day for steal), occasioned much merriment among her friends, and such a look of ludicrous surprise and reprobation from Liston, when he read it, as I still remember.

My mother, moreover, devised a most admirable kind of *jujube*, made of clarified gum-arabic, honey, and lemon, with which she kept my father supplied during all the time of his remaining on the stage; he never acted without having recourse to it, and found it more efficacious in sustaining the voice and

relieving the throat under constant exertion than any other preparation that he ever tried; this she always made for him herself.

The great actors of my family have received their due of recorded admiration; my mother has always seemed to me to have been overshadowed by their celebrity; my sister and myself, whose fate it has been to bear in public the name they have made distinguished, owe in great measure to her, I think, whatever ability has enabled us to do so not unworthily.

I was born on the 27th of November, 1809, in Newman Street, Oxford Road, the third child of my parents, whose eldest, Philip, named after my uncle, died in infancy. The second, John Mitchell, lived to distinguish himself as a scholar, devoting his life to the study of his own language and the history of his country in their earliest period, and to the kindred subject of Northern Archæology.

Of Newman Street I have nothing to say, but regret to have heard that before we left our residence there my father was convicted, during an absence of my mother's from town, of having planted in my baby bosom the seeds of personal vanity, while indulging his own, by having an especially pretty and becoming lace cap at hand in the drawing-room, to be immediately substituted for some more homely daily adornment, when I was exhibited to his visitors. In consequence, perhaps, of which, I am a disgracefully dress-loving old woman of near seventy, one of whose minor miseries is that she can no longer find *any* lace cap whatever that is either pretty or becoming to her gray head. If my father had not been so foolish then, I should not be so

foolish now—perhaps.

The famous French actress, Mlle. Clairon, recalled, for the pleasure of some foreign royal personage passing through Paris, for one night to the stage, which she had left many years before, was extremely anxious to recover the pattern of a certain cap which she had worn in her young days in "La Coquette corrigée," the part she was about to repeat. The cap, as she wore it, had been a Parisian rage; she declared that half her success in the part had been the cap. The milliner who had made it, and whose fortune it had made, had retired from business, grown old; luckily, however, she was not dead: she was hunted up and adjured to reproduce, if possible, this marvel of her art, and came to her former patroness, bringing with her the identical head-gear. Clairon seized upon it: "Ah oui, c'est bien cela! c'est bien là le bonnet!" It was on her head in an instant, and she before the glass, in vain trying to reproduce with it the well-remembered effect. She pished and pshawed, frowned and shrugged, pulled the pretty *chiffon* this way and that on her forehead; and while so doing, coming nearer and nearer to the terrible looking-glass, suddenly stopped, looked at herself for a moment in silence, and then, covering her aged and faded face with her hands, exclaimed, "Ah, c'est bien le bonnet! mais ce n'est plus la figure!"

Our next home, after Newman Street, was at a place called Westbourne Green, now absorbed into endless avenues of "palatial" residences, which scoff with regular-featured, lofty scorn at the rural simplicity implied by such a name. The site of our dwelling was not far from the Paddington Canal, and was then so far out of town that our nearest neighbors, people of the name of Cockrell, were the owners of a charming

residence, in the middle of park-like grounds, of which I still have a faint, pleasurable remembrance. The young ladies, daughters of Mr. Cockrell, really made the first distinct mark I can detect on the *tabula rasa* of my memory, by giving me a charming pasteboard figure of a little girl, to whose serene and sweetly smiling countenance, and pretty person, a whole bookful of painted pasteboard petticoats, cloaks, and bonnets could be adapted; it was a lovely being, and stood artlessly by a stile, an image of rustic beauty and simplicity. I still bless the Miss Cockrells, if they are alive, but if not, their memory for it!

Of the curious effect of dressing in producing the *sentiment* of a countenance, no better illustration can be had than a series of caps, curls, wreaths, ribbons, etc., painted so as to be adaptable to one face; the totally different *character* imparted by a helmet, or a garland of roses, to the same set of features, is a "caution" to irregular beauties who console themselves with the fascinating variety of their *expression*.

At this period of my life, I have been informed, I began, after the manner of most clever children, to be exceedingly troublesome and unmanageable, my principal crime being a general audacious contempt for all authority, which, coupled with a sweet-tempered, cheerful indifference to all punishment, made it extremely difficult to know how to obtain of me the minimum quantity of obedience indispensable in the relations of a tailless monkey of four years and its elders. I never cried, I never sulked, I never resented, lamented, or repented either my ill-doings or their consequences, but accepted them alike with a philosophical buoyancy

of spirit which was the despair of my poor bewildered trainers.

Being hideously decorated once with a fool's cap of vast dimensions, and advised to hide, not my "diminished head," but my horrible disgrace, from all beholders, I took the earliest opportunity of dancing down the carriage-drive to meet the postman, a great friend of mine, and attract his observation and admiration to my "helmet," which I called aloud upon all wayfarers also to contemplate, until removed from an elevated bank I had selected for this public exhibition of myself and my penal costume, which was beginning to attract a small group of passers-by.

My next malefactions were met with an infliction of bread and water, which I joyfully accepted, observing, "Now I am like those poor dear French prisoners that everybody pities so." Mrs. Siddons at that time lived next door to us; she came in one day when I had committed some of my daily offenses against manners or morals, and I was led, nothing daunted, into her awful presence, to be admonished by her.

Melpomene took me upon her lap, and, bending upon me her "controlling frown," discoursed to me of my evil ways in those accents which curdled the blood of the poor shopman, of whom she demanded if the printed calico she purchased of him "would wash." The tragic tones pausing, in the midst of the impressed and impressive silence of the assembled family, I tinkled forth, "What beautiful eyes you have!" all my small faculties having been absorbed in the steadfast upward gaze I fixed upon those magnificent orbs. Mrs. Siddons set me down with a

smothered laugh, and I trotted off, apparently uninjured by my great-aunt's solemn moral suasion.

A dangerous appeal, of a higher order, being made to me by my aunt's most intimate friend, Mrs. F——, a not very judicious person, to the effect, "Fanny, why don't you pray to God to make you better?" immediately received the conclusive reply, "So I do, and he makes me worse and worse." Parents and guardians should be chary of handling the deep chords upon whose truth and strength the highest harmonies of the fully developed soul are to depend.

In short, I was as hopelessly philosophical a subject as Madame Roland, when, at six years old, receiving her penal bread and water with the comment, "Bon pour la digestion!" and the retributive stripes which this drew upon her, with the further observation, "Bon pour la circulation!" In spite of my "wickedness," as Topsy would say, I appear to have been not a little spoiled by my parents, and an especial pet and favorite of all their friends, among whom, though I do not remember him at this early period of our acquaintance, I know was Charles Young, that most kindly good man and pleasant gentleman, one of whose many amiable qualities was a genuine love for little children. He was an intimate friend of Mrs. Siddons and her brothers, and came frequently to our house; if the elders were not at home, he invariably made his way to the nursery, where, according to the amusing description he has often since given me of our early intercourse, one of his great diversions was to make me fold my little fat arms—not an easy performance for small muscles—and with a portentous frown, which puckered up my mouth even more than my eyebrows, receive from him certain awfully unintelligible passages from

"Macbeth;" replying to them, with a lisp that must have greatly heightened the tragic effect of this terrible dialogue, "*My handth are of oo tolor*" (My hands are of your color). Years—how many!—after this first lesson in declamation, dear Charles Young was acting Macbeth for the last time in London, and I was his "wicked wife;" and while I stood at the side scenes, painting my hands and arms with the vile red stuff that confirmed the bloody-minded woman's words, he said to me with a smile, "Ah ha! *My handth are of oo tolor.*"

Mr. Young's own theatrical career was a sort of curious contradiction between his physical and mental endowments. His very handsome and regular features of the Roman cast, and deep, melodious voice, were undoubtedly fine natural requisites for a tragic actor, and he succeeded my uncle in all his principal parts, if not with any thing like equal genius, with a dignity and decorum that were always highly acceptable. He had, however, no tragic mental element whatever with these very decided external qualifications for tragedy; but a perception of and passion for humor, which he indulged in private constantly, in the most entertaining and surprising manner. Ludicrous stories; personal mimicry; the most admirable imitation of national accent—Scotch, Irish, and French (he spoke the latter language to perfection, and Italian very well); a power of grimace that equaled Grimaldi, and the most irresistibly comical way of resuming, in the midst of the broadest buffoonery, the stately dignity of his own natural countenance, voice, and manner.

He was a cultivated musician, and sang French and Italian with taste and expression, and English ballads with a pathos and feeling only inferior to that of

Moore and Mrs. Arkwright, with both which great masters of musical declamation he was on terms of friendly intimacy. Mr. Young was a universal favorite in the best London society, and an eagerly sought guest in pleasant country-houses, where his zeal for country sports, his knowledge of and fondness for horses, his capital equestrianism, and inexhaustible fund of humor, made him as popular with the men as his sweet, genial temper, good breeding, musical accomplishments, and infinite drollery did with the women.

Mr. Young once told Lord Dacre that he made about four thousand pounds sterling per annum by his profession; and as he was prudent and moderate in his mode of life, and, though elegant, not extravagant in his tastes, he had realized a handsome fortune when he left the stage.

Mr. Young passed the last years of his life at Brighton, and I never visited that place without going to see him, confined as he latterly was to his sofa with a complication of painful diseases and the weight of more than seventy years. The last time I saw him in his drawing-room he made me sit on a little stool by his sofa—it was not long after my father, his life-long friend and contemporary's death —and he kept stroking my hair, and saying to me, "You look so like a child—a good child." I saw him but once more after this; he was then confined to his bed. It was on Sunday; he lay propped with pillows in an ample flannel dressing-gown, with a dark-blue velvet skull-cap on his head, and I thought I had never seen his face look more strikingly noble and handsome; he was reading the church service and his Bible, and kept me by him for some time. I never saw him again.

As a proof of the little poetical imagination which Mr. Young brought to some of his tragic performances, I remember his saying of his dress in Cardinal Wolsey, "Well, I never could associate any ideas of grandeur with this old woman's red petticoat." It would be difficult to say what his best performances were, for he had never either fire, passion, or tenderness; but never wanted propriety, dignity, and a certain stately grace. Sir Pertinax McSycophant and Iago were the best things I ever saw him act, probably because the sardonic element in both of them gave partial scope to his humorous vein.

Not long after this we moved to another residence, still in the same neighborhood, but near the churchyard of Paddington church, which was a thoroughfare of gravel walks, cutting in various directions the green turf, where the flat tombstones formed frequent "play-tables" for us; upon these our nursery-maid, apparently not given to melancholy meditations among the tombs, used to allow us to manufacture whole delightful dinner sets of clay plates and dishes (I think I could make such now), out of which we used to have feasts, as we called them, of morsels of cake and fruit.

At this time I was about five years old, and it was determined that I should be sent to the care of my father's sister, Mrs. Twiss, who kept a school at Bath, and who was my godmother. On the occasion of my setting forth on my travels, my brother John presented me with a whole collection of children's books, which he had read and carefully preserved, and now commended to my use. There were at least a round dozen, and, having finished reading them, it occurred to me that to make a bonfire of them would

be an additional pleasure to be derived from them; and so I added to the intellectual recreation they afforded me the more *sensational* excitement of what I called "a blaze;" a proceeding of which the dangerous sinfulness was severely demonstrated to me by my new care-takers.

Camden Place, Bath, was one of the lofty terraces built on the charming slopes that surround the site of the Aquæ Solis of the Romans, and here my aunt Twiss kept a girls' school, which participated in the favor which every thing belonging to, or even remotely associated with, Mrs. Siddons received from the public. It was a decidedly "fashionable establishment for the education of young ladies," managed by my aunt, her husband, and her three daughters. Mrs. Twiss was, like every member of my father's family, at one time on the stage, but left it very soon, to marry the grim-visaged, gaunt-figured, kind-hearted gentleman and profound scholar whose name she at this time bore, and who, I have heard it said, once nourished a hopeless passion for Mrs. Siddons. Mrs. Twiss bore a soft and mitigated likeness to her celebrated sister; she had great sweetness of voice and countenance, and a graceful, refined, feminine manner, that gave her great advantages in her intercourse with and influence over the young women whose training she undertook. Mr. Twiss was a very learned man, whose literary labors were, I believe, various, but whose "Concordance of Shakespeare" is the only one with which I am acquainted. He devoted himself, with extreme assiduity, to the education of his daughters, giving them the unusual advantage of a thorough classic training, and making of two of them learned women in the more restricted, as well as the more general, sense of the term. These ladies were what so

few of their sex ever are, *really well informed*; they knew much, and they knew it all thoroughly; they were excellent Latin scholars and mathematicians, had read immensely and at the same time systematically, had prodigious memories stored with various and well-classed knowledge, and, above all, were mistresses of the English language, and spoke and wrote it with perfect purity—an accomplishment out of fashion now, it appears to me, but of the advantage of which I retain a delightful impression in my memory of subsequent intercourse with those excellent and capitally educated women. My relations with them, all but totally interrupted for upward of thirty years, were renewed late in the middle of my life and toward the end of theirs, when I visited them repeatedly at their pretty rural dwelling near Hereford, where they enjoyed in tranquil repose the easy independence they had earned by honorable toil. There, the lovely garden, every flower of which looked fit to take the first prize at a horticultural show, the incomparable white strawberries, famous throughout the neighborhood, and a magnificent Angola cat, were the delights of my out-of-door life; and perfect kindness and various conversation, fed by an inexhaustible fund of anecdote, an immense knowledge of books, and a long and interesting acquaintance with society, made the indoor hours passed with these quiet old lady governesses some of the most delightful I have ever known. The two younger sisters died first; the eldest, surviving them, felt the sad solitude of their once pleasant home at "The Laurels" intolerable, and removed her residence to Brighton, where, till the period of her death, I used to go and stay with her, and found her to the last one of the most agreeable companions I have ever known.

At the time of my first acquaintance with my cousins, however, neither their own studies nor those of their pupils so far engrossed them as to seclude them from society. Bath was then, at certain seasons, the gayest place of fashionable resort in England; and, little consonant as such a thing would appear at the present day with the prevailing ideas of the life of a teacher, balls, routs, plays, assemblies, the Pump Room, and all the fashionable dissipations of the place, were habitually resorted to by these very "stylish" school-mistresses, whose position at one time, oddly enough, was that of leaders of "the ton" in the pretty provincial capital of Somersetshire. It was, moreover, understood, as part of the system of the establishment, that such of the pupils as were of an age to be introduced into society could enjoy the advantage of the chaperonage of these ladies, and several did avail themselves of it.

What profit I made under these kind and affectionate kinsfolk I know not; little, I rather think, ostensibly; perhaps some beneath the surface, not very manifest either to them or myself at the time; but painstaking love sows more harvests than it wots of, wherever or whenever (or if never) it reaps them.

I did not become versed in any of my cousins' learned lore, or accomplished in the lighter labors of their leisure hours—to wit, the shoemaking, bread-seal manufacturing, and black and white Japan, table and screen painting, which produced such an indescribable medley of materials in their rooms, and were fashionable female idle industries of that day.

Remote from the theatre, and all details of theatrical life, as my existence in my aunt's school was, there still were occasional infiltrations of that element

which found their way into my small sphere. My cousin John Twiss, who died not very long ago, an elderly general in her Majesty's service, was at this time a young giant, studying to become an engineer officer, whose visits to his home were seasons of great delight to the family in general, not unmixed on my part with dread; for a favorite diversion of his was enacting my uncle John's famous rescue of Cora's child, in "Pizarro," with me clutched in one hand, and exalted to perilous proximity with the chandelier, while he rushed across the drawing-rooms, to my exquisite terror and triumph.

I remember, too, his sisters, all three remarkably tall women (the eldest nearly six feet high, a portentous petticoat stature), amusing themselves with putting on, and sweeping about the rooms in, certain regal mantles and Grecian draperies of my aunt Mrs. Whitelock's, an actress, like the rest of the Kembles, who sought and found across the Atlantic a fortune and celebrity which it would have been difficult for her to have achieved under the disadvantage of proximity to, and comparison with, her sister, Mrs. Siddons. But I suppose the dramatic impression which then affected me with the greatest and most vivid pleasure was an experience which I have often remembered, when reading Goethe's "Dichtung und Wahrheit," and the opening chapters of "Wilhelm Meister." Within a pleasant summer afternoon's walk from Bath, through green meadows and by the river's side, lay a place called Claverton Park, the residence of a family of the name of A——. I remember nothing of the house but the stately and spacious hall, in the middle of which stood a portable theatre, or puppet-show, such as Punch inhabits, where the small figures, animated with voice and movement by George A——, the eldest son of the family, were

tragic instead of grotesque, and where, instead of the squeaking "Don Giovanni" of the London pavement, "Macbeth" and similar solemnities appeared before my enchanted eyes. The troupe might have been the very identical puppet performers of Harry Rowe, the famous Yorkshire trumpeter. These, I suppose, were the first plays I ever saw. Those were pleasant walks to Claverton, and pleasant days at Claverton Hall! I wish Hans Breitmann and his "Avay in die Ewigkeit" did not come in, like a ludicrous, lugubrious burden, to all one's reminiscences of places and people one knew upward of fifty years ago.

I have been accused of having acquired a bad habit of *punning from Shakespeare!*—a delightful idea, that made me laugh till I cried the first time it was suggested to me. If so, I certainly began early to exhibit a result, of which the cause was, in some mysterious way, long subsequent to the effect; unless the Puppet Plays of Claverton inspired my wit. However that may be, I developed at this period a decided faculty for punning, and that is an unusual thing at that age. Children have considerable enjoyment of humor, as many of their favorite fairy and other stories attest; they are often themselves extremely droll and humorous in their assumed play characters and the stories they invent to divert their companions; but punning is a not very noble species of wit; it partakes of mental dexterity, requires neither fancy, humor, nor imagination, and deals in words with double meanings, a subtlety very little congenial to the simple and earnest intelligence of childhood.

Les enfans terribles say such things daily, and make their grandmothers' caps stand on end with their precocious astuteness; but the clever sayings of most

clever children, repeated and reported by admiring friends and relations, are, for the most part, simply the result of unused faculties, exercising themselves in, to them, an unused world; only therefore surprising to worn-out faculties, which have almost ceased to exercise themselves in, to them, an almost worn-out world.

To Miss B—— I was indebted for the first doll I remember possessing—a gorgeous wax personage, in white muslin and cherry-colored ribbons, who, by desire of the donor, was to be called Philippa, in honor of my uncle. I never loved or liked dolls, though I remember taking some pride in the splendor of this, my first-born. They always affected me with a grim sense of being a mockery of the humanity they were supposed to represent; there was something uncanny, not to say ghastly, in the doll existence and its mimicry of babyhood to me, and I had a nervous dislike, not unmixed with fear, of the smiling simulacra that girls are all supposed to love with a species of prophetic maternal instinct.

The only member of my aunt Twiss's family of whom I remember at this time little or nothing was the eldest son, Horace, who in subsequent years was one of the most intimate and familiar friends of my father and mother, and who became well known as a clever and successful public man, and a brilliant and agreeable member of the London society of his day.

My stay of a little more than a year at Bath had but one memorable event, in its course, to me. I was looking one evening, at bedtime, over the banisters, from the upper story into the hall below, with tiptoe eagerness that caused me to overbalance myself and turn over the rail, to which I clung on the wrong

side, suspended, like Victor Hugo's miserable priest to the gutter of Notre Dame, and then fell four stories down on the stone pavement of the hall. I was not killed, or apparently injured, but whether I was not really irreparably damaged no human being can possibly tell.

My next memories refer to a residence which my parents were occupying when I returned to London, called Covent Garden Chambers, now, I believe, celebrated as "Evans's," and where, I am told, it is confidently affirmed that I was born, which I was not; and where, I am told, a picture is shown that is confidently affirmed to be mine, which it is not. My sister Adelaide was born in Covent Garden Chambers, and the picture in question is an oil sketch, by Sir Thomas Lawrence, of my cousin Maria Siddons; quite near the truth enough for history, private or public. It was while we were living here that Mrs. Siddons returned to the stage for one night, and acted Lady Randolph for my father's benefit. Of course I heard much discourse about this, to us, important and exciting event, and used all my small powers of persuasion to be taken to see her.

My father, who loved me very much, and spoiled me not a little, carried me early in the afternoon into the market-place, and showed me the dense mass of people which filled the whole Piazza, in patient expectation of admission to the still unopened doors. This was by way of proving to me how impossible it was to grant my request. However that might then appear, it was granted, for I was in the theatre at the beginning of the performance; but I can now remember nothing of it but the appearance of a solemn female figure in black, and the tremendous *roar* of public greeting which welcomed her, and

must, I suppose, have terrified my childish senses, by the impression I still retain of it; and this is the only occasion on which I saw my aunt in public.

Another circumstance, connected in my mind with Covent Garden Chambers, was a terrible anguish about my youngest brother, Henry, who was for some hours lost. He was a most beautiful child, of little more than three years old, and had been allowed to go out on the door-steps, by an exceedingly foolish little nursery-maid, to look at the traffic of the great market-place. Returning without him, she declared that he had refused to come in with her, and had run to the corner of Henrietta Street, as she averred, where she had left him, to come and fetch authoritative assistance.

The child did not come home, and all search for him proved vain throughout the crowded market and the adjoining thoroughfares, thronged with people and choked with carts and wagons, and swarming with the blocked-up traffic, which had to make its way to and from the great mart through avenues far narrower and more difficult of access than they are now. There were not then, either, those invaluable beings, policemen, standing at every corner to enforce order and assist the helpless. These then were not; and no inquiry brought back any tidings of the poor little lost boy. My mother was ill, and I do not think she was told of the child's disappearance, but my father went to and fro with the face and voice of a distracted man; and I well remember the look with which he climbed a narrow outside stair leading only to a rain-water cistern, with the miserable apprehension that his child might have clambered up and fallen into it. The neighborhood was stirred with sympathy for the agony of the poor

father, and pitying gossip spreading the news through the thronged market-place, where my father's name and appearance were familiar enough to give a strong personal feeling to the compassion expressed. A baker's boy, lounging about, caught up the story of the lost child, and described having seen a "pretty little chap with curly hair, in a brown holland pinafore," in St. James's Square. Thither the searchers flew, and the child was found, tired out with his self-directed wandering, but apparently quite contented, fast asleep on the door-step of one of the lordly houses of that aristocratic square. He was so remarkably beautiful that he must have attracted attention before long, and *might* perhaps have been restored to his home; but God knows what an age of horror and anguish was lived through by my father and my poor aunt Dall in that short, miserable space of time till he was found.

My aunt Dall, of whom I now speak for the first time, was my mother's sister, and had lived with us, I believe, ever since I was born. Her name was Adelaide, but the little fellow whose adventure I have just related, stumbling over this fine Norman appellation, turned it into Idallidy, and then conveniently shortened it of its two extremities and made it Dall, by which title she was called by us, and known to all our friends, and beloved by all who ever spoke or heard it. Her story was as sad a one as could well be; yet to my thinking she was one of the happiest persons I have ever known, as well as one of the best. She was my mother's second sister, and as her picture, taken when she was twenty, shows (and it was corroborated by her appearance till upward of fifty), she was extremely pretty. Obliged, as all the rest of her family were, to earn her own bread, and naturally adopting the means of doing so that they

did, she went upon the stage; but I can not conceive that her nature can ever have had any affinity with her occupation. She had a robust and rather prosaic common-sense, opposed to any thing exaggerated or sentimental, which gave her an excellent judgment of character and conduct, a strong genial vein of humor which very often made her repartees witty as well as wise, and a sunny sweetness of temper and soundness of moral nature that made her as good as she was easy and delightful to live with. Whenever any thing went wrong, and she was "vexed past her patience," she used to sing; it was the only indication by which we ever knew that she was what is termed "out of sorts." She had found employment in her profession under the kindly protection of Mr. Stephen Kemble, my father's brother, who lived for many years at Durham, and was the manager of the theatre there, and, according to the fashion of that time, traveled with his company, at stated seasons, to Newcastle, Sunderland, and other places, which formed a sort of theatrical circuit in the northern counties, throughout which he was well known and generally respected.

In his company my aunt Dall found employment, and in his daughter, Fanny Kemble, since well known as Mrs. Robert Arkwright, an inseparable friend and companion. My aunt lived with Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Kemble, who were excellent, worthy people. They took good care of the two young girls under their charge, this linsey-woolsey Rosalind and Celia—their own beautiful and most rarely endowed daughter, and her light-hearted, lively companion; and I suppose that a merrier life than that of these lasses, in the midst of their quaint theatrical tasks and homely household duties, was seldom led by two girls in any sphere of life. They learned and acted

their parts, devised and executed, with small means and great industry, their dresses; made pies and puddings, and patched and darned, in the morning, and by dint of paste and rouge became heroines in the evening; and withal were well-conducted, good young things, full of the irrepressible spirits of their age, and turning alike their hard home work and light stage labor into fun. Fanny had inherited the beauty of her father's family, which in her most lovely countenance had a character of childlike simplicity and serene sweetness that made it almost angelic.

Far on in middle age she retained this singularly tender beauty, which added immensely to the exquisite effect of her pathetic voice in her incomparable rendering of the ballads she composed (the poetry as well as the music being often her own), and to which her singing of them gave so great a fashion at one time in the great London world. It was in vain that far better musicians, with far finer voices, attempted to copy her inimitable musical recitation; nobody ever sang like her, and still less did anybody ever look like her while she sang. Practical jokes of very doubtful taste were the fashion of that day, and remembering what wonderfully coarse and silly proceedings were then thought highly diverting by "vastly genteel" people, it is not, perhaps, much to be wondered at that so poor a piece of wit as this should have furnished diversion to a couple of light-hearted girls, with no special pretensions to elegance or education. Once they were driving together in a post-chaise on the road to Newcastle, and my aunt, having at hand in a box part of a military equipment intended for some farce, accoutred her upper woman in a soldier's cap, stock, and jacket, and, with heavily corked mustaches,

persisted in embracing her companion, whose frantic resistance, screams of laughter, and besmirched cheeks, elicited comments of boundless amazement, in broad north-country dialect, from the market folk they passed on the road, to whom they must have appeared the most violent runaway couple that ever traveled.

Liston, the famous comedian, was at this time a member of the Durham company, and though he began his career there by reciting Collins's "Ode to the Passions," attired in a pea-green coat, buckskins, top-boots, and powder, with a scroll in his hand, and followed up this essay of his powers with the tragic actor's battle-horse, the part of Hamlet, he soon found his peculiar gift to lie in the diametrically opposite direction of broad farce. Of this he was perpetually interpolating original specimens in the gravest performances of his fellow-actors; on one occasion suddenly presenting to Mrs. Stephen Kemble, as she stood disheveled at the side scene, ready to go on the stage as Ophelia in her madness, a basket with carrots, turnips, onions, leeks, and pot-herbs, instead of the conventional flowers and straws of the stage maniac, which sent the representative of the fair Ophelia on in a broad grin, with ill-suppressed fury and laughter, which must have given quite an original character of verisimilitude to the insanity she counterfeited.

On another occasion he sent all the little chorister boys on, in the lugubrious funeral procession in "Romeo and Juliet," with pieces of brown paper in their hands to wipe their tears with.

The suppression of that very dreadful piece of stage pageantry has at last, I believe, been conceded to the

better taste of modern audiences; but even in my time it was still performed, and an exact representation of a funeral procession, such as one meets every day in Rome, with torch-bearing priests, and bier covered with its black-velvet pall, embroidered with skull and cross-bones, with a corpse-like figure stretched upon it, marched round the stage, chanting some portion of the fine Roman Catholic requiem music. I have twice been in the theatre when persons have been seized with epilepsy during that ghastly exhibition, and think the good judgment that has discarded such a mimicry of a solemn religious ceremony highly commendable.

Another evening, Liston, having painted Fanny Kemble's face like a clown's, posted her at one of the stage side doors to confront her mother, poor Mrs. Stephen Kemble, entering at the opposite one to perform some dismally serious scene of dramatic pathos, who, on suddenly beholding this grotesque apparition of her daughter, fell into convulsions of laughter and coughing, and half audible exclamations of "Go away, Fanny! I'll tell your father, miss!" which must have had the effect of a sudden seizure of madness to the audience, accustomed to the rigid decorum of the worthy woman in the discharge of her theatrical duties.

Long after these provincial exploits, and when he had become the comedian *par excellence* of the English stage, for which eminence nature and art had alike qualified him by the imperturbable gravity of his extraordinarily ugly face, which was such an irresistibly comical element in his broadest and most grotesque performances, Mr. Liston used to exert his ludicrous powers of tormenting his fellow-actors in the most cruel manner upon that sweet singer, Miss

Stephens (afterward Countess of Essex). She had a curious nervous trick of twitching her dress before she began to sing; this peculiarity was well known to all her friends, and Liston, who certainly was one of them, used to agonize the poor woman by standing at the side scene, while the symphony of her pathetic ballads was being played, and indicating by his eyes and gestures that something was amiss with the trimming or bottom of her dress; when, as invariably as he chose to play the trick, poor Miss Stephens used to begin to twitch and catch at her petticoat, and half hysterical, between laughing and crying, would enchant and entrance her listeners with her exquisite voice and pathetic rendering of "Savourneen Deelish" or "The Banks of Allan Water."

CHAPTER II.

Two young men, officers of a militia regiment, became admirers of the two young country actresses: how long an acquaintance existed before the fact became evident that they were seriously paying their addresses to the girls, I do not know; nor how long the struggle lasted between pride and conventional respectability on the part of the young men's families and the pertinacity of their attachment.

Fanny Kemble's suitor, Robert Arkwright, had certainly no pretensions to dignity of descent, and the old Derbyshire barber, Sir Richard, or his son could hardly have stood out long upon that ground, though the immense wealth realized by their

ingenuity and industry was abundant worldly reason for objections to such a match, no doubt.

However that may be, the opposition was eventually overcome by the determination of the lovers, and they were married; while to the others a far different fate was allotted. The young man who addressed my aunt, whose name I do not know, was sent for by his father, a wealthy Yorkshire squire, who, upon his refusing to give up his mistress, instantly assembled all the servants and tenants, and declared before them all that the young gentleman, his son (and supposed heir), was illegitimate, and thenceforth disinherited and disowned. He enlisted and went to India, and never saw my aunt again. Mrs. Arkwright went home to Stoke, to the lovely house and gardens in the Peak of Derbyshire, to prosperity and wealth, to ease and luxury, and to the love of husband and children. Later in life she enjoyed, in her fine mansion of Sutton, the cordial intimacy of the two great county magnates, her neighbors, the Dukes of Rutland and Devonshire, the latter of whom was her admiring and devoted friend till her death. In the society of the high-born and gay and gifted with whom she now mixed, and among whom her singular gifts made her remarkable, the enthusiasm she excited never impaired the transparent and childlike simplicity and sincerity of her nature. There was something very peculiar about the single-minded, simple-hearted genuineness of Mrs. Arkwright which gave an unusual charm of unconventionality and fervid earnestness to her manner and conversation. I remember her telling me, with the most absolute conviction, that she thought wives were bound implicitly to obey their husbands, for she believed that at the day of judgment husbands would be answerable for their wives' souls.

It was in the midst of a life full of all the most coveted elements of worldly enjoyment, and when she was still beautiful and charming, though no longer young, that I first knew her. Her face and voice were heavenly sweet, and very sad; I do not know why she made so profoundly melancholy an impression upon me, but she was so unlike all that surrounded her, that she constantly suggested to me the one live drop of water in the middle of a globe of ice. The loss of her favorite son affected her with irrecoverable sorrow, and she passed a great portion of the last years of her life at a place called Cullercoats, a little fishing village on the north coast, to which when a young girl she used to accompany her father and mother for rest and refreshment, when the hard life from which her marriage released her allowed them a few days' respite by the rocks and sands and breakers of the Northumberland shore. The Duke of Devonshire, whose infirmity of deafness did not interfere with his enjoyment of music, was an enthusiastic admirer of Mrs. Arkwright, and her constant and affectionate friend. Their proximity of residence in Derbyshire made their opportunities of meeting very frequent, and when the Arkwrights visited London, Devonshire House was, if they chose it, their hotel. His attachment to her induced him, towards the end of his life, to take a residence in the poor little village of Cullercoats, whither she loved to resort, and where she died. I possess a copy of a beautiful drawing of a head of Mrs. Arkwright, given to me by the duke, for whom the original was executed. It is only a head, with the eyes raised to heaven, and the lips parted, as in the act of singing; and the angelic sweetness of the countenance may perhaps suggest, to those who never heard her, the voice that seemed like that face turned to sound.

So Fanny Kemble married, and Adelaide Decamp came and lived with us, and was the good angel of our home. All intercourse between the two (till then inseparable companions) ceased for many years, and my aunt began her new life with a bitter bankruptcy of love and friendship, happiness and hope, that would have dried the sap of every sweet affection, and made even goodness barren, in many a woman's heart for ever.

Without any home but my father's house, without means of subsistence but the small pittance which he was able to give her, in most grateful acknowledgment of her unremitting care of us, without any joys or hopes but those of others, without pleasure in the present or expectation in the future, apparently without memory of the past, she spent her whole life in the service of my parents and their children, and lived and moved and had her being in a serene, unclouded, unvarying atmosphere of cheerful, self-forgetful content that was heroic in its absolute unconsciousness. She is the only person I can think of who appeared to me to have fulfilled Wordsworth's conception of

> "Those blessed ones who do God's will and know it not."

I have never seen either man or woman like her, in her humble excellence, and I am thankful that, knowing what the circumstances of her whole life were, she yet seems to me the happiest human being I have known. She died, as she had lived, in the service of others. When I went with my father to America, my mother remained in England, and my aunt came with us, to take care of me. She died in consequence of the overturning of a carriage (in

which we were travelling), from which she received a concussion of the spine; and her last words to me, after a night of angelic endurance of restless fever and suffering, were, "Open the window; let in the blessed light"—almost the same as Goethe's, with a characteristic difference. It was with the hope of giving her the proceeds of its publication, as a token of my affectionate gratitude, that I printed my American journal; that hope being defeated by her death, I gave them, for her sake, to her younger sister, my aunt Victoire Decamp. This sister of my mother's was, when we were living in Covent Garden Chambers, a governess in a school at Lea, near Blackheath.

The school was kept by ladies of the name of Guinani, sisters to the wife of Charles Young—the Julia so early lost, so long loved and lamented by him. I was a frequent and much-petted visitor to their house, which never fulfilled the austere purpose implied in its name to me, for all my days there were holidays; and I remember hours of special delight passed in a large drawing-room where two fine cedars of Lebanon threw grateful gloom into the windows, and great tall china jars of pot-pourri filled the air with a mixed fragrance of roses and (as it seemed to me) plum-pudding, and where hung a picture, the contemplation of which more than once moved me to tears, after I had been given to understand that the princely personage and fair-headed baby in a boat in the midst of a hideous black sea, overhung by a hideous black sky, were Prospero, the good Duke of Milan, and his poor little princess daughter, Miranda, cast forth by wicked relations to be drowned.

It was while we were still living in Covent Garden

Chambers that Talma, the great French actor, came to London. He knew both my uncle and my father, and was highly esteemed and greatly admired by both of them. He called one day upon my father, when nobody was at home, and the servant who opened the door holding me by the hand, the famous French actor, who spoke very good English, though not without the "pure Parisian accent," took some kind of notice of me, desiring me to be sure and remember his name, and tell my father that Mr. Talma, the great French tragedian, had called. I replied that I would do so, and then added, with noble emulation, that my father was also a great tragedian, and my uncle was also a great tragedian, and that we had a baby in the nursery who I thought must be a great tragedian too, for she did nothing but cry, and what was that if not tragedy?—which edifying discourse found its way back to my mother, to whom Talma laughingly repeated it. I have heard my father say that on the occasion of this visit of Talma's to London, he consulted my uncle on the subject of acting in English. Hamlet was one of his great parts, and he made as fine a thing of Ducis' cold, and stiff, and formal adaptation of Shakespeare's noble work as his meagre material allowed; but, as I have said before, he spoke English well, and thought it not impossible to undertake the part in the original language. My uncle, however, strongly dissuaded him from it, thinking the decided French accent an insuperable obstacle to his success, and being very unwilling that he should risk by a failure in the attempt his deservedly high reputation. A friend of mine, at a dinner party, being asked if she had seen Mr. Fechter in Hamlet, replied in the negative, adding that she did not think she should relish Shakespeare declaimed with a foreign accent.

The gentleman who had questioned her said, "Ah, very true indeed—perhaps not;" then, looking attentively at his plate, from which I suppose he drew the inspiration of what followed, he added, "And yet—after all, you know, Hamlet was a foreigner." This view of the case had probably not suggested itself to John Kemble, and so he dissuaded Talma from the experiment. While referring to Mr. Fechter's personification of Hamlet, and the great success which it obtained in the fashionable world, I wish to preserve a charming instance of naïve ignorance in a young guardsman, seduced by the enthusiasm of the gay society of London into going, for once, to see a play of Shakespeare's. After sitting dutifully through some scenes in silence, he turned to a fellow-guardsman, who was painfully looking and listening by his side, with the grave remark, "I say, George, *dooced* odd play this; its all full of quotations." The young military gentleman had occasionally, it seems, heard Shakespeare quoted, and remembered it.

To return to my story. About this time it was determined that I should be sent to school in France. My father was extremely anxious to give me every advantage that he could, and Boulogne, which was not then the British Alsatia it afterwards became, and where there was a girl's school of some reputation, was chosen as not too far from home to send a mite seven years old, to acquire the French language and begin her education. And so to Boulogne I went, to a school in the oddly named "Rue tant perd tant paie," in the old town, kept by a rather sallow and grim, but still vivacious old Madame Faudier, with the assistance of her daughter, Mademoiselle Flore, a bouncing, blooming beauty of a discreet age, whose florid complexion, prominent black eyes, plaited and

profusely pomatumed black hair, and full, commanding figure, attired for fête days, in salmon-colored merino, have remained vividly impressed upon my memory. What I learned here except French (which I could not help learning), I know not. I was taught music, dancing, and Italian, the latter by a Signor Mazzochetti, an object of special detestation to me, whose union with Mademoiselle Flore caused a temporary fit of rejoicing in the school. The small seven-year-old beginnings of such particular humanities I mastered with tolerable success, but if I may judge from the frequency of my *penitences*, humanity in general was not instilled into me without considerable trouble. I was a sore torment, no doubt, to poor Madame Faudier, who, on being once informed by some alarmed passers in the street that one of her "demoiselles" was perambulating the house roof, is reported to have exclaimed, in a paroxysm of rage and terror, "Ah, ce ne peut etre que cette *diable* de Kemble!" and sure enough it was I. Having committed I know not what crime, I had been thrust for chastisement into a lonely garret, where, having nothing earthly to do but look about me, I discovered (like a prince in the Arabian Nights) a ladder leading to a trap-door, and presently was out on a sort of stone coping, which ran round the steep roof of the high, old-fashioned house, surveying with serene satisfaction the extensive prospect landward and seaward, unconscious that I was at the same time an object of terror to the beholders in the street below. Snatched from the perilous delight of this bad eminence, I was (again, I think, rather like the Arabian prince) forthwith plunged into the cellar; where I curled myself up on the upper step, close to the heavy door that had been locked upon me, partly for the comfort of the crack

of light that squeezed itself through it, and partly, I suppose, from some vague idea that there was no bottom to the steps, derived from my own terror rather than from any precise historical knowledge of oubliettes and donjons, with the execrable treachery of stairs suddenly ending in mid-darkness over an abyss. I suppose I suffered a martyrdom of fear, for I remember upwards of thirty years afterwards having this very cellar, and my misery in it, brought before my mind suddenly, with intense vividness, while reading, in Victor Hugo's Notre Dame, poor Esmeralda's piteous entreaties for deliverance from her underground prison: "Oh laissez moi sortir! j'ai froid! j'ai peur! et des bêtes me montent le long du corps." The latter hideous detail certainly completes the exquisite misery of the picture. Less justifiable than banishment to lonely garrets, whence egress was to be found only by the roof, or dark incarceration in cellars whence was no egress at all, was another device, adopted to impress me with the evil of my ways, and one which seems to me so foolish in its cruelty, that the only amazement is, how anybody entrusted with the care of children could dream of any good result from such a method of impressing a little girl not eight years old. There was to be an execution in the town of some wretched malefactor, who was condemned to be guillotined, and I was told that I should be taken to see this supreme act of legal retribution, in order that I might know to what end evil courses conducted people. We all remember the impressive fable of "Don't Care," who came to be hanged, but I much doubt if any of the thousands of young Britons whose bosoms have been made to thrill with salutary terror at his untimely end were ever taken by their parents and guardians to see a hanging, by way of enforcing the

lesson. Whether it was ever intended that I should witness the ghastly spectacle of this execution, or whether it was expressly contrived that I should come too late, I know not; it is to be hoped that my doing so was not accidental, but mercifully intentional. Certain it is, that when I was taken to the Grande Place the slaughter was over; but I saw the guillotine, and certain gutters running red with what I was told (whether truly or not) was blood, and a sad-looking man, busied about the terrible machine, who, it was said, was the executioner's son; all which lugubrious objects, no doubt, had their due effect upon my poor childish imagination and nervous system, with a benefit to my moral nature which I should think highly problematical.

The experiments tried upon the minds and souls of children by those who undertake to train them, are certainly among the most mysterious of Heaven-permitted evils. The coarse and cruel handling of these wonderfully complex and delicate machines by ignorant servants, ignorant teachers, and ignorant parents, fills one with pity and with amazement that the results of such processes should not be even more disastrous than they are.

In the nature of many children exists a capacity of terror equalled in its intensity only by the reticence which conceals it. The fear of ridicule is strong in these sensitive small souls, but even that is inadequate to account for the silent agony with which they hug the secret of their fear. Nursery and schoolroom authorities, fonder of power than of principle, find their account in both these tendencies, and it is marvellous to what a point tyranny may be exercised by means of their double influence over children, the sufferers never having recourse to the

higher parental authority by which they would be delivered from the nightmare of silent terror imposed upon them.

The objects that excite the fears of children are often as curious and unaccountable as their secret intensity. A child four years of age, who was accustomed to be put to bed in a dressing-room opening into her mother's room, and near her nursery, and was left to go to sleep alone, from a desire that she should not be watched and lighted to sleep (or in fact kept awake, after a very common nursery practice), endured this discipline without remonstrance, and only years afterwards informed her mother that she never was so left in her little bed, alone in the darkness, without a full conviction that a large black dog was lying under it, which terrible imagination she never so much as hinted at, or besought for light or companionship to dispel. Miss Martineau told me once, that a special object of horror to her, when she was a child, were the colors of the prism, a thing in itself so beautiful, that it is difficult to conceive how any imagination could be painfully impressed by it; but her terror of these magical colors was such, that she used to rush past the room, even when the door was closed, where she had seen them reflected from the chandelier, by the sunlight, on the wall.

The most singular instance I ever knew, however, of unaccountable terror produced in a child's mind by the pure action of its imagination, was that of a little boy who overheard a conversation between his mother and a friend upon the subject of the purchase of some stuff, which she had not bought, "because," said she, "it was ell wide." The words "ell wide," perfectly incomprehensible to the child, seized upon

his fancy, and produced some image of terror by which for a long time his poor little mind was haunted. Certainly this is a powerful instance, among innumerable and striking ones, of the fact that the fears of children are by no means the result of the objects of alarm suggested to them by the ghost-stories, bogeys, etc., of foolish servants and companions; they quite as often select or create their terrors for themselves, from sources so inconceivably strange, that all precaution proves ineffectual to protect them from this innate tendency of the imaginative faculty. This "ell wide" horror is like something in a German story. The strange aversion, coupled with a sort of mysterious terror, for beautiful and agreeable or even quite commonplace objects, is one of the secrets of the profound impression which the German writers of fiction produce. It belongs peculiarly to their national genius, some of whose most striking and thrilling conceptions are pervaded with this peculiar form of the sentiment of fear. Hoffman and Tieck are especially powerful in their use of it, and contrive to give a character of vague mystery to simple details of prosaic events and objects, to be found in no other works of fiction. The terrible conception of the *Doppelgänger*, which exists in a modified form as the wraith of Scottish legendary superstition, is rendered infinitely more appalling by being taken out of its misty highland half-light of visionary indefiniteness, and produced in frock-coat and trousers, in all the shocking distinctness of commonplace, everyday, contemporary life. The Germans are the only people whose imaginative faculty can cope with the homeliest forms of reality, and infuse into them *vagueness*, that element of terror most alien from familiar things. That they may be tragic enough we

know, but that they have in them a mysterious element of terror of quite indefinite depth, German writers alone know how to make us feel.

I do not think that in my own instance the natural cowardice with which I was femininely endowed was unusually or unduly cultivated in childhood; but with a highly susceptible and excitable nervous temperament and ill-regulated imagination, I have suffered from every conceivable form of terror; and though, for some inexplicable reason, I have always had the reputation of being fearless, have really, all my life, been extremely deficient in courage.

Very impetuous, and liable to be carried away by any strong emotion, my entire want of self-control and prudence, I suppose, conveyed the impression that I was equally without fear; but the truth is that, as a wise friend once said to me, I have always been "as rash and as cowardly as a child;" and none of my sex ever had a better right to apply to herself Shakespeare's line—

> "A woman, naturally born to fears."

The only agreeable impression I retain of my school-days at Boulogne is that of the long half-holiday walks we were allowed to indulge in. Not the two-and-two, dull, dreary, daily procession round the ramparts, but the disbanded freedom of the sunny afternoon, spent in gathering wild-flowers along the pretty, secluded valley of the Liane, through which no iron road then bore its thundering freight. Or, better still, clambering, straying, playing hide-and-seek, or sitting telling and hearing fairy tales among the great carved blocks of stone, which lay, in ignominious purposelessness, around the site on the

high, grassy cliff where Napoleon the First—the Only—had decreed that his triumphal pillar should point its finger of scorn at our conquered, "pale-faced shores." Best of all, however, was the distant wandering, far out along the sandy dunes, to what used to be called "La Gárenne;" I suppose because of the wild rabbits that haunted it, who—hunted and rummaged from their burrows in the hillocks of coarse grass by a pitiless pack of school-girls—must surely have wondered after our departure, when they came together stealthily, with twitching noses, ears, and tails, what manner of fiendish visitation had suddenly come and gone, scaring their peaceful settlement on the silent, solitary sea-shore.

Before I left Boulogne, the yearly solemnity of the distribution of prizes took place. This was, at Madame Faudier's, as at all French schools of that day, a most exciting event. Special examinations preceded it, for which the pupils prepared themselves with diligent emulation. The prefect, the sub-prefect, the mayor, the bishop, all the principal civil and religious authorities of the place, were invited to honor the ceremony with their presence. The courtyard of the house was partly inclosed, and covered over with scaffoldings, awnings, and draperies, under which a stage was erected, and this, together with the steps that led to it, was carpeted with crimson, and adorned with a profusion of flowers. One of the dignified personages, seated around a table on which the books designed for prizes were exhibited, pronounced a discourse commendatory of past efforts and hortatory to future ones, and the pupils, all *en grande toilette*, and seated on benches facing the stage, were summoned through the rows of admiring parents, friends, acquaintances, and other invited guests, to receive

the prizes awarded for excellence in the various branches of our small curriculum. I was the youngest girl in the school, but I was a quick, clever child, and a lady, a friend of my family, who was present, told me many years after, how well she remembered the frequent summons to the dais received by a small, black-eyed damsel, the *cadette* of the establishment. I have considerable doubt that any good purpose could be answered by this public appeal to the emulation of a parcel of school-girls; but I have no doubt at all that abundant seeds of vanity, self-love, and love of display, were sown by it, which bore their bad harvest many a long year after.

I left Boulogne when I was almost nine years old, and returned home, where I remained upwards of two years before being again sent to school. During this time we lived chiefly at a place called Craven Hill, Bayswater, where we occupied at different periods three different houses.

My mother always had a detestation of London, which I have cordially inherited. The dense, heavy atmosphere, compounded of smoke and fog, painfully affected her breathing and oppressed her spirits; and the deafening clangor of its ceaseless uproar irritated her nerves and distressed her in a manner which I invariably experience whenever I am compelled to pass any time in that huge Hubbub. She perpetually yearned for the fresh air and the quiet of the country. Occupied as my father was, however, this was an impossible luxury; and my poor mother escaped as far as her circumstances would allow from London, and towards the country, by fixing her home at the place I have mentioned. In those days Tyburnia did not exist; nor all the vast region of Paddingtonian London. Tyburn turnpike, of nefarious

memory, still stood at the junction of Oxford Road and the Edgeware Road, and between the latter and Bayswater open fields traversed by the canal, with here and there an isolated cottage dotted about them, stretched on one side of the high-road; and on the other, the untidy, shaggy, ravelled-looking selvage of Hyde Park; not trimmed with shady walks and flower borders and smooth grass and bright iron railing as now, but as forbidding in its neglected aspect as the desolate stretch of uninclosed waste on the opposite side.

About a mile from Tyburn Gate a lane turned off on the right, following which one came to a meadow, with a path across its gentle rise which led to the row of houses called Craven Hill. I do not think there were twenty in all, and some of them, such as Lord Ferrar's and the Harley House, were dwellings of some pretension. Even the most modest of them had pretty gardens in front and behind, and verandas and balconies with flowering creepers and shrubberies, and a general air of semi-rurality that cheated my poor mother with a make-believe effect of being, if not in the country, at any rate out of town. And infinite were the devices of her love of elegance and comfort produced from the most unpromising materials, but making these dwellings of ours pretty and pleasant beyond what could have been thought possible. She had a peculiar taste and talent for furnishing and fitting up; and her means being always very limited, her zeal was great for frequenting sales, where she picked up at reasonable prices quaint pieces of old furniture, which she brought with great triumph to the assistance of the commonplace upholstery of our ready-furnished dwellings. Nobody ever had such an eye for the disposal of every article in a room, at once for

greatest convenience and best appearance; and I never yet saw the apartment into which by her excellent arrangement she did not introduce an element of comfort and elegance—a liveable look, which the rooms of people unendowed with that special faculty never acquire, and never retain, however handsome or finely fitted up they may be. I am sorry to be obliged to add, however, that she had a rage for moving her furniture from one place to another, which never allowed her to let well alone; and not unfrequently her mere desire for change destroyed the very best results of her own good taste. We never knew when we might find the rooms a perfect chaos of disorder, with every chair, table, and sofa "dancing the hayes" in horrid confusion; while my mother, crimson and dishevelled with pulling and pushing them hither and thither, was breathlessly organizing new combinations. Nor could anything be more ludicrous than my father's piteous aspect, on arriving in the midst of this *remue-ménage*, or the poor woman's profound mortification when, finding everything moved from its last position (for the twentieth time), he would look around, and, instead of all the commendation she expected, exclaim in dismay, "Why, bless my soul! what has happened to the room, *again*!" Our furniture played an everlasting game of puss in the corner; and I am thankful that I have inherited some of my mother's faculty of arranging, without any of her curious passion for changing the aspect of her rooms.

A pretty, clever, and rather silly and affected woman, Mrs. Charles M——, who had a great passion for dress, was saying one day to my mother, with a lackadaisical drawl she habitually made use of, "What do you do when you have a headache, or are bilious, or cross, or nervous, or out of spirits? I

always change my dress; it does me so much good!" "Oh," said my mother, briskly, "I change the furniture." I think she must have regarded it as a panacea for all the ills of life. Mrs. Charles M—— was the half-sister of that amiable woman and admirable actress, Miss Kelly.

To return to Craven Hill. A row of very fine elm trees was separated only by the carriage-road from the houses, whose front windows looked through their branches upon a large, quiet, green meadow, and beyond that to an extensive nursery garden of enchanting memory, where our weekly allowances were expended in pots of violets and flower-seeds and roots of future fragrance, for our small gardens: this pleasant foreground divided us from the Bayswater Road and Kensington Gardens. At the back of the houses and their grounds stretched a complete open of meadow land, with hedgerows and elm trees, and hardly any building in sight in any direction. Certainly this was better than the smoke and din of London. To my father, however, the distance was a heavy increase of his almost nightly labor at the theatre. Omnibuses were no part of London existence then; a hackney coach (there were no cabs, either four-wheelers or hansoms) was a luxury to be thought of only occasionally, and for part of the way; and so he generally wound up his hard evening's work with a five miles' walk from Covent Garden to Craven Hill.

It was perhaps the inconvenience of this process that led to our taking, in addition to our "rural" residence, a lodging in Gerard Street, Soho. The house immediately fronts Anne Street, and is now a large establishment for the sale of lamps. It was a handsome old house, and at one time belonged to

the "wicked" Lord Lyttleton. At the time I speak of, we occupied only a part of it, the rest remaining in the possession of the proprietor, who was a picture-dealer, and his collection of dusky *chefs-d'œuvre* covered the walls of the passages and staircases with dark canvas, over whose varnished surface ill-defined figures and ill-discerned faces seemed to flit, as with some trepidation I ran past them. The house must have been a curious as well as a very large one; but I never saw more of it than our own apartments, which had some peculiarities that I remember. Our dining-room was a very large, lofty, ground-floor room, fitted up partially as a library with my father's books, and having at the farther end, opposite the windows, two heavy, fluted pillars, which gave it rather a dignified appearance. My mother's drawing-room, which was on the first floor and at the back of the house, was oval in shape and lighted only by a skylight; and one entrance to it was through a small anteroom or boudoir, with looking-glass doors and ceiling all incrusted with scrolls and foliage and *rococo* Louis Quinze style of ornamentation, either in plaster or carved in wood and painted white. There were back staircases and back doors without number, leading in all directions to unknown regions; and the whole house, with its remains of magnificence and curious lumber of objects of art and *vertu*, was a very appropriate frame for the traditional ill-repute of its former noble owner.

A ludicrous circumstance enough, I remember, occurred, which produced no little uproar and amusement in one of its dreariest chambers. My brother John was at this time eagerly pursuing the study of chemistry for his own amusement, and had had an out-of-the-way sort of spare bedroom abandoned to him for his various ill savored

materials and scientific processes, from which my mother suffered a chronic terror of sudden death by blowing up. There was a monkey in the house, belonging to our landlord, and generally kept confined in his part of it, whence the knowledge of his existence only reached us through anecdotes brought by the servants. One day, however, an alarm was spread that the monkey had escaped from his own legitimate quarters and was running wild over the house. Chase was given, and every hole and corner searched in vain for the mischievous ape, who was at length discovered in what my brother dignified by the title of his laboratory, where, in a frenzy of gleeful activity, he was examining first one bottle and then another; finally he betook himself, with indescribably grotesque grinnings and chatterings, to uncorking and sniffing at them, and then pouring their contents deliberately out on the (luckily carpetless) floor,—a joke which might have had serious results for himself, as well as the house, if he had not in the midst of it suffered ignoble capture and been led away to his own quarters; my mother that time, certainly, escaping imminent "blowing up."

While we were living in Gerard Street, my uncle Kemble came for a short time to London from Lausanne, where he had fixed his residence—compelled to live abroad, under penalty of seeing the private fortune he had realized by a long life of hard professional labor swept into the ruin which had fallen upon Covent Garden Theatre, of which he was part proprietor. And I always associate this my only recollection of his venerable white hair and beautiful face, full of an expression of most benign dignity, with the earliest mention I remember of that luckless property, which weighed like an incubus upon my

father all his life, and the ruinous burden of which both I and my sister successively endeavored in vain to prop.

My mother at this time gave lessons in acting to a few young women who were preparing themselves for the stage; and I recollect very well the admiration my uncle expressed for the beauty of one of them, an extremely handsome Miss Dance, who, I think, came out successfully, but soon married, and relinquished her profession.

This young lady was the daughter of a violinist and musical composer, whose name has a place in my memory from seeing it on a pretty musical setting for the voice of some remarkably beautiful verses, the author of which I have never been able to discover. I heard they had been taken out of that old-fashioned receptacle for stray poetical gems, the poet's corner of a country newspaper. I write them here as accurately as I can from memory; it is more than fifty years since I learnt them, and I have never met with any copy of them but that contained in the old music sheet of Mr. Dance's duet.

SONG OF THE SPIRIT OF MORN.

Now on their couch of rest
  Mortals are sleeping,
While in dark, dewy vest,
  Flowerets are weeping.
Ere the last star of night
  Fades in the fountain,
My finger of rosy light
  Touches the mountain.

Far on his filmy wing

Twilight is wending,
Shadows encompassing,
Terrors attending:
While my foot's fiery print,
Up my path showing,
Gleams with celestial tint.
Brilliantly glowing,

Now from my pinions fair
Freshness is streaming,
And from my yellow hair
Glories are gleaming.
Nature with pure delight
Hails my returning,
And Sol, from his chamber bright,
Crowns the young morning.

My uncle John returned to Switzerland, and I never saw him again; he had made over his share of Covent Garden to my father, and went back to live and die in peace at his Beau Site on the Lake of Geneva.

The first time that I visited Lausanne I went to his grave, and found it in the old burial-ground above the town, where I wonder the dead have patience to lie still, for the glorious beauty of the view their resting-place commands. It was one among a row of graves with broad, flat tombstones bearing English names, and surrounded with iron railings, and flowers more or less running wild.

My father received the property my uncle transferred to him with cheerful courage, and not without sanguine hopes of retrieving its fortunes: instead of which, it destroyed his and those of his family; who, had he and they been untrammelled by the fatal obligation of working for a hopelessly ruined

concern, might have turned their labors to far better personal account. Of the eighty thousand pounds which my uncle sank in building Covent Garden, and all the years of toil my father and myself and my sister sank in endeavoring to sustain it, nothing remained to us at my father's death; not even the ownership of the only thing I ever valued the property for,—the private box which belonged to us, the yearly rent of which was valued at three hundred pounds, and the possession of which procured us for several years many evenings of much enjoyment.

The only other recollection I have connected with Gerard Street is that of certain passages from "Paradise Lost," read to me by my father, the sonorous melody of which so enchanted me, that for many years of my life Milton was to me incomparably the first of English poets; though at this time of my earliest acquaintance with him, Walter Scott had precedence over him, and was undoubtedly in my opinion greatest of mortal and immortal bards. His "Marmion" and "Lay of the Last Minstrel" were already familiar to me. Of Shakespeare at this time, and for many subsequent years, I knew not a single line.

While our lodging in town was principally inhabited by my father and resorted to by my mother as a convenience, my aunt Dall, and we children, had our home at my mother's *rus in urbe*, Craven Hill, where we remained until I went again to school in France.

Our next door neighbors were, on one side, a handsome, dashing Mrs. Blackshaw, sister of George the Fourth's favorite, Beau Brummel, whose daughters were good friends of ours; and on the other Belzoni, the Egyptian traveller, and his wife,

with whom we were well acquainted. The wall that separated our gardens was upwards of six feet high,—it reached above my father's head, who was full six feet tall,—but our colossal friend, the Italian, looked down upon us over it quite easily, his large handsome face showing well above it, down to his magnificent auburn beard, which in those less hirsute days than these he seldom exhibited, except in the privacy of his own back garden, where he used occasionally to display it, to our immense delight and astonishment. Great, too, was our satisfaction in visiting Madame Belzoni, who used to receive us in rooms full of strange spoils, brought back by herself and her husband from the East; she sometimes smoked a long Turkish pipe, and generally wore a dark blue sort of caftan, with a white turban on her head. Another of our neighbors here was Latour, the musical composer, to whom, though he was personally good-natured and kind to me, I owe a grudge, for the sake of his "Music for Young Persons," and only regret that he was not our next-door neighbor, when he would have execrated his own "O Dolce Concerto," and "Sul Margine d'un Rio," and all his innumerable progeny of variations for two hands and four hands, as heartily as I did. I do not know whether it was instigated by his advice or not that my mother at this time made me take lessons of a certain Mr. Laugier, who received pupils at his own house, near Russell Square, and taught them thorough-bass and counterpoint, and the science of musical composition. I attended his classes for some time, and still possess books full of the grammar of music, as profound and difficult a study, almost, as the grammar of language. But I think I was too young to derive much benefit from so severe a science, and in spite of my books full of musical

"parsing," so to speak, declensions of chords, and conjugations of scales, I do not think I learned much from Mr. Laugier, and, never having followed up this beginning of the real study of music, my knowledge of it has been only of that empirical and contemptible sort which goes no further than the end of boarding-school young ladies' fingers, and sometimes, at any rate, amounts to tolerably skilful and accurate execution; a result I never attained, in spite of Mr. Laugier's thorough-bass and a wicked invention called a chiroplast, for which, I think, he took out a patent, and for which I suppose all luckless girls compelled to practice with it thought he ought to have taken out a halter. It was a brass rod made to screw across the keys, on which were *strung*, like beads, two brass frames for the hands, with separate little cells for the fingers, these being secured to the brass rod precisely at the part of the instrument on which certain exercises were to be executed. Another brass rod was made to pass under the wrist in order to maintain it also in its proper position, and thus incarcerated, the miserable little hands performed their daily, dreary monotony of musical exercise, with, I imagine, really no benefit at all from the irksome constraint of this horrid machine, that could not have been imparted quite as well, if not better, by a careful teacher. I had, however, no teacher at this time but my aunt Dall, and I suppose the chiroplast may have saved her some trouble, by insuring that my practising, which she could not always superintend, should not be merely a process of acquiring innumerable bad habits for the exercise of the patience of future teachers.

My aunt at this time directed all my lessons, as well as the small beginnings of my sister's education. My

brother John was at Clapham with Mr. Richardson, who was then compiling his excellent dictionary, in which labor he employed the assistance of such of his pupils as showed themselves intelligent enough for the occupation; and I have no doubt that to this beginning of philological study my brother owed his subsequent predilection for and addiction to the science of language. My youngest brother, Henry, went to a day-school in the neighborhood.

All children's amusements are more or less dramatic, and a theatre is a favorite resource in most playrooms, and, naturally enough, held an important place in ours. The printed sheets of small figures, representing all the characters of certain popular pieces, which we colored, and pasted on card-board and cut out, and then, by dint of long slips of wood with a slit at one end, into which their feet were inserted, moved on and off our small stage; the coloring of the scenery; and all the arrangement and conduct of the pieces we represented, gave us endless employment and amusement. My brother John was always manager and spokesman in these performances, and when we had fitted up our theatre with a *real* blue silk curtain that would roll up, and a *real* set of foot-lights that would burn, and when he contrived, with some resin and brimstone and salt put in a cup and set on fire, to produce a diabolical sputter and flare and bad smell, significant of the blowing up of the mill in "The Miller and his Men," great was our exultation. This piece and "Blue Beard" were our "battle horses," to which we afterwards added a lugubrious melodrama called "The Gypsy's Curse" (it had nothing whatever to do with "Guy Mannering"), of which I remember nothing but some awful doggerel, beginning with—

"May thy path be still in sorrow,
May thy dark night know no morrow,"

which used to make my blood curdle with fright.

About this time I was taken for the first time to a real play, and it was to that paradise of juvenile spectators, Astley's, where we saw a Highland horror called "Meg Murdoch, or the Mountain Hag," and a mythological after-piece called "Hyppolita, Queen of the Amazons," in which young ladies in very short and shining tunics, with burnished breastplates, helmets, spears, and shields, performed sundry warlike evolutions round her Majesty Hyppolita, who was mounted on a snow-white *live* charger: in the heat of action some of these fair warriors went so far as to die, which martial heroism left an impression on my imagination so deep and delightful as to have proved hitherto indelible.

At length we determined ourselves to enact something worthy of notice and approbation, and "Amoroso, King of Little Britain," was selected by my brother John, our guide and leader in all matters of taste, for the purpose. "Chrononhotonthologos" had been spoken of, but our youngest performer, my sister, was barely seven years old, and I doubt if any of us (but our manager) could have mastered the mere names of that famous burlesque. Moreover, I think, in the piece we chose there were only four principal characters, and we contrived to speak the words, and even sing the songs, so much to our own satisfaction, that we thought we might aspire to the honor of a hearing from our elders and betters. So we produced our play before my father and mother and some of their friends, who had good right (whatever their inclination might have been) to be

critical, for among them were Mr. and Mrs. Liston (the Amoroso and Coquetinda of the real stage), Mr. and Mrs. Mathews, and Charles Young, all intimate friends of my parents, whose children were our playmates, and coadjutors in our performance.

For Charles Matthews I have always retained a kindly regard for auld lang syne's sake, though I hardly ever met him after he went on the stage. He was well educated, and extremely clever and accomplished, and I could not help regretting that his various acquirements and many advantages for the career of an architect, for which his father destined him, should be thrown away; though it was quite evident that he followed not only the strong bent of his inclination, but the instinct of the dramatic genius which he inherited from his eccentric and most original father, when he adopted the profession of the stage, where, in his own day, he has been unrivaled in the sparkling vivacity of his performance of a whole range of parts in which nobody has approached the finish, refinement, and spirit of his acting. Moreover, his whole demeanor, carriage, and manner were so essentially those of a gentleman, that the broadest farce never betrayed him into either coarseness or vulgarity; and the comedy he acted, though often the lightest of the light, was never anything in its graceful propriety but high comedy. No member of the French theatre was ever at once a more finished and a more delightfully amusing and *natural* actor.

Liston's son went into the army when he grew up, and I lost sight of him.

With the Rev. Julian Young, son of my dear old friend Charles Young, I always remained upon the

most friendly terms, meeting him with cordial pleasure whenever my repeated returns to England brought us together, and allowed us to renew the amicable relations that always subsisted between us.

I remember another family friend of ours at this time, a worthy old merchant of the name of Mitchell, who was my brother John's godfather, and to whose sombre, handsome city house I was taken once or twice to dinner. He was at one time very rich, but lost all his fortune in some untoward speculation, and he used to come and pay us long, sad, silent visits, the friendly taciturnity of which I always compassionately attributed to that circumstance, and wished that he had not lost the use of his tongue as well as his money.

While we were living at Craven Hill, my father's sister, Mrs. Whitelock, came to live with us for some time. She was a very worthy but exceedingly ridiculous woman, in whom the strong peculiarities of her family were so exaggerated, that she really seemed like a living parody or caricature of all the Kembles.

She was a larger and taller woman than Mrs. Siddons, and had a fine, commanding figure at the time I am speaking of, when she was quite an elderly person. She was like her brother Stephen in face, with handsome features, too large and strongly marked for a woman, light gray eyes, and a light auburn wig, which, I presume, represented the color of her previous hair, and which, together with the tall cap that surmounted it, was always more or less on one side. She had the deep, sonorous voice and extremely distinct utterance of her family, and an extraordinary vehemence of gesture and expression

quite unlike their quiet dignity and reserve of manner, and which made her conversation like that of people in old plays and novels; for she would slap her thigh in emphatic enforcement of her statements (which were apt to be upon an incredibly large scale), not unfrequently prefacing them with the exclamation, "I declare to God!" or "I wish I may die!" all which seemed to us very extraordinary, and combined with her large size and loud voice used occasionally to cause us some dismay. My father used to call her Queen Bess (her name was Elizabeth), declaring that her manners were like those of that royal *un*-gentlewoman. But she was a simple-hearted, sweet-tempered woman, whose harmless peculiarities did not prevent us all being fond of her.

She had a great taste and some talent for drawing, which she cultivated with a devotion and industry unusual in so old a person. I still possess a miniature copy she made of Clarke's life-size picture of my father as Cromwell, which is not without merit.

She was extremely fond of cards, and taught us to play the (even then) old-fashioned game of quadrille, which my mother, who also liked cards, and was a very good whist player, said had more variety in it than any modern game.

Mrs. Whitelock had been for a number of years in the United States, of which (then comparatively little known) part of the world she used to tell us stories that, from her characteristic exaggeration, we always received with extreme incredulity; but my own experience, subsequent by many years to hers, has corroborated her marvelous histories of flights of birds that almost darkened the sun (*i.e.* threw a

passing shadow as of a cloud upon the ground), and roads with ruts and mud-holes into which one's carriage sank up to the axle-tree.

She used to tell us anecdotes of General Washington, to whom she had been presented and had often seen (his favorite bespeak was always "The School for Scandal"); and of Talleyrand, whom she also had often met, and invariably called Prince *Tallierande*. She was once terrified by being followed at evening, in the streets of Philadelphia, by a red Indian savage, an adventure which has many times recurred to my mind while traversing at all hours and in all directions the streets of that most peaceful Quaker city, distant now by more than a thousand miles from the nearest red Indian savage. Congress was sitting in Philadelphia at that time; it was virtually the capital of the newly made United States, and Mrs. Whitelock held an agreeable and respectable position both in private and in public. I have been assured by persons as well qualified to be critics as Judge Story, Chief-Justice Kent, and Judge Hopkinson (Moore's friend), that she was an actress of considerable ability. Perhaps she was; her Kemble name, face, figure, and voice no doubt helped her to produce a certain effect on the stage; but she must have been a very imperfectly educated woman. Nothing could be droller than to see her with Mrs. Siddons, of whom she looked like a clumsy, badly finished, fair imitation. Her vehement gestures and violent objurgations contrasted comically with her sister's majestic stillness of manner; and when occasionally Mrs. Siddons would interrupt her with, "Elizabeth, your wig is on one side," and the other replied, "Oh, is it?" and giving the offending head-gear a shove put it quite as crooked in the other direction, and proceeded with her discourse,

Melpomene herself used to have recourse to her snuff-box to hide the dawning smile on her face.

I imagine that my education must have been making but little progress during the last year of my residence at Craven Hill. I had no masters, and my aunt Dall could ill supply the want of other teachers; moreover, I was extremely troublesome and unmanageable, and had become a tragically desperate young person, as my determination to poison my sister, in revenge for some punishment which I conceived had been unjustly inflicted upon me, will sufficiently prove. I had been warned not to eat privet berries, as they were poisonous, and under the above provocation it occurred to me that if I strewed some on the ground my sister might find and eat them, which would insure her going straight to heaven, and no doubt seriously annoy my father and mother. How much of all this was a lingering desire for the distinction of a public execution of guillotine (the awful glory of which still survived in my memory), how much dregs of "Gypsy Curses" and "Mountain Hags," and how much the passionate love of exciting a sensation and producing an effect, common to children, servants, and most uneducated people, I know not. I never did poison my sister, and satisfied my desire of vengeance by myself informing my aunt of my contemplated crime, the fulfillment of which was not, I suppose, much apprehended by my family, as no measures were taken to remove myself, my sister, or the privet bush from each other's neighborhood.

CHAPTER III.

A quite unpremeditated inspiration which occurred to me upon being again offended—to run away—probably alarmed my parents more than my sororicidal projects, and I think determined them upon carrying out a plan which had been talked of for some time, of my being sent again to school; which plan ran a narrow risk of being defeated by my own attempted escape from home. One day, when my father and mother were both in London, I had started for a walk with my aunt and sister; when only a few yards from home, I made an impertinent reply to some reproof I received, and my aunt bade me turn back and go home, declining my company for the rest of the walk. She proceeded at a brisk pace on her way with my sister, nothing doubting that, when left alone, I would retrace my steps to our house; but I stood still and watched her out of sight, and then revolved in my own mind the proper course to pursue.

At first it appeared to me that it would be judicious, under such smarting injuries as mine, to throw myself into a certain pond which was in the meadow where I stood (my remedies had always rather an extreme tendency); but it was thickly coated with green slime studded with frogs' heads, and looked uninviting. After contemplating it for a moment, I changed my opinion as to the expediency of getting under that surface, and walked resolutely off towards London; not with any idea of seeking my father and mother, but simply with that goal in view, as the end of my walk.

Half-way thither, however, I became tired, and hot,

and hungry, and perhaps a little daunted by my own undertaking. I have said that between Craven Hill and Tyburn turnpike there then was only a stretch of open fields, with a few cottages scattered over them. In one of these lived a poor woman who was sometimes employed to do needlework for us, and who, I was sure, would give me a bit of bread and butter, and let me rest; so I applied to her for this assistance. Great was the worthy woman's amazement when I told her that I was alone, on my way to London; greater still, probably, when I informed her that my intention was to apply for an engagement at one of the theatres, assuring her that nobody with talent need ever want for bread. She very wisely refrained from discussing my projects, but, seeing that I was tired, persuaded me to lie down in her little bedroom and rest before pursuing my way to town. The weather was oppressively hot, and having lain down on her bed, I fell fast asleep. I know not for how long, but I was awakened by the sudden raising of the latch of the house door, and the voice of my aunt Dall inquiring of my friendly hostess if she had seen or heard anything of me.

I sat up breathless on the bed, listening, and looking round the room perceived another door than the one by which I had entered it, which would probably have given me egress to the open fields again, and secured my escape; but before I could slip down from the bed and resume my shoes, and take advantage of this exit, my aunt and poor Mrs. Taylor entered the room, and I was ignominiously captured and taken home; I expiated my offence by a week of bread and water, and daily solitary confinement in a sort of tool-house in the garden, where my only occupation was meditation, the "clear-obscure" that reigned in my prison admitting of no other.

This was not cheerful, but I endeavored to make it appear as little the reverse as possible, by invariably singing at the top of my voice whenever I heard footsteps on the gravel walk near my place of confinement.

Finally I was released, and was guilty of no further outrage before my departure for Paris, whither I went with my mother and Mrs. Charles Matthews at the end of the summer.

We travelled in the *malle poste*, and I remember but one incident connected with our journey. Some great nobleman in Paris was about to give a grand banquet, and the *conducteur* of our vehicle had been prevailed upon to bring up the fish for the occasion in large hampers on our carriage, which was then the most rapid public conveyance on the road between the coast and the capital. The heat was intense, and the smell of our "luggage" intolerable. My mother complained and remonstrated in vain; the name of the important personage who was to entertain his guests with this delectable fish was considered an all-sufficient reply. At length the contents of the baskets began literally to ooze out of them and stream down the sides of the carriage; my mother threatening an appeal to the authorities at the *bureau de poste*, and finally we got rid of our pestiferous load.

I was now placed in a school in the Rue d'Angoulême, Champs Élysées; a handsome house, formerly somebody's private hotel, with *porte cochère*, *cour d'honneur*, a small garden beyond, and large, lofty ground-floor apartments opening with glass doors upon them. The name of the lady at the head of this establishment was Rowden; she had kept a school for several years in Hans Place, London, and

among her former pupils had had the charge of Miss Mary Russell Mitford, and that clever but most eccentric personage, Lady Caroline Lamb. The former I knew slightly, years after, when she came to London and was often in friendly communication with my father, then manager of Covent Garden, upon the subject of the introduction on the stage of her tragedy of the "Foscari."

The play of "Rienzi," in which Miss Mitford achieved the manly triumph of a really successful historical tragedy, is, of course, her principal and most important claim to fame, though the pretty collection of rural sketches, redolent of country freshness and fragrance, called "Our Village," precursor, in some sort, of Mrs. Gaskell's incomparable "Cranford," is, I think, the most popular of Miss Mitford's works.

She herself has always a peculiar honor in my mind, from the exemplary devotion of her whole life to her father, for whom her dutiful and tender affection always seemed to me to fulfil the almost religious idea conveyed by the old-fashioned, half-heathen phrase of "filial piety."

Lady Caroline Lamb I never saw, but from friends of mine who were well acquainted with her I have heard manifold instances of her extraordinary character and conduct. I remember my friend Mr. Harness telling me that, dancing with him one night at a great ball, she had suddenly amazed him by the challenge: "Gueth how many pairth of thtockingth I have on." (Her ladyship lisped, and her particular graciousness to Mr. Harness was the result of Lord Byron's school intimacy with and regard for him.) Finding her partner quite unequal to the piece of divination proposed to him, she put forth a very

pretty little foot, from which she lifted the petticoat ankle high, lisping out, "Thixth."

I remember my mother telling me of my father and herself meeting Mr. and Lady Caroline Lamb at a dinner at Lord Holland's, in Paris, when accidentally the expected arrival of Lord Byron was mentioned. Mr. Lamb had just named the next day as the one fixed for their departure; but Lady Caroline immediately announced her intention of prolonging her stay, which created what would be called in the French chambers "sensation."

When the party broke up, my father and mother, who occupied apartments in the same hotel as the Lambs,—Meurice's,—were driven into the court-yard just as Lady Caroline's carriage had drawn up before the staircase leading to her rooms, which were immediately opposite those of my father and mother. A *ruisseau* or gutter ran round the court-yard, and intervened between the carriage step and the door of the vestibule, and Mr. Lamb, taking Lady Caroline, as she alighted, in his arms (she had a very pretty, slight, graceful figure), gallantly lifted her over the wet stones; which act of conjugal courtesy elicited admiring approval from my mother, and from my father a growl to the effect, "If you were *my* wife I'd put your ladyship *in* the gutter," justified perhaps by their observation of what followed. My mother's sitting-room faced that of Lady Caroline, and before lights were brought into it she and my father had the full benefit of a curious scene in the room of their opposite neighbors, who seemed quite unmindful that their apartment being lighted and the curtains not drawn, they were, as regarded the opposite wing of the building, a spectacle for gods and men.

Mr. Lamb on entering the room sat down on the sofa, and his wife perched herself on the elbow of it with her arm round his neck, which engaging attitude she presently exchanged for a still more persuasive one, by kneeling at his feet; but upon his getting up, the lively lady did so also, and in a moment began flying round the room, seizing and flinging on the floor cups, saucers, plates,—the whole *cabaret*,—vases, candlesticks, her poor husband pursuing and attempting to restrain his mad moiety, in the midst of which extraordinary scene the curtains were abruptly closed, and the domestic drama finished behind them, leaving no doubt, however, in my father's and mother's minds that the question of Lady Caroline's prolonged stay till Lord Byron's arrival in Paris had caused the disturbance they had witnessed.

I never read "Glenarvon," in which, I believe, Lady Caroline is supposed to have intended to represent her idol, Lord Byron, and the only composition of hers with which I am acquainted is the pretty song of "Waters of Elle," of which I think she also wrote the air. She was undoubtedly very clever, in spite of her silliness, and possessed that sort of attraction, often as powerful as unaccountable, which belongs sometimes to women so little distinguished by great personal beauty, that they have suggested the French observation that "ce sont les femmes laides qui font les grandes passions." The European women fascinating *par excellence* are the Poles; and a celebrated enchantress of that charming and fantastic race of sirens, the Countess Delphine Potocka, always reminded me of Lady Caroline Lamb, in the descriptions given of her by her adorers.

With Mr. Lamb I never was acquainted till long after Lady Caroline's death—after I came out on the stage,

when he was Lord Melbourne, and Prime Minister of England. I was a very young person, and though I often met him in society, and he took amiable and kindly notice of me, our intercourse was, of course, a mere occasional condescension on his part.

He was exceedingly handsome, with a fine person, verging towards the portly, and a sweet countenance, more expressive of refined, easy, careless good-humor, than almost any face I ever saw. His beauty was of too well born and well bred a type to be unpleasantly sensual; but his whole face, person, expression, and manner conveyed the idea of a pleasure-loving nature, habitually self-indulgent, and indulgent to others. He was my *beau ideal* of an Epicurean philosopher (supposing it possible that an Epicurean philosopher could have consented to be Prime Minister of England), and I confess to having read with unbounded astonishment the statement in the "Greville Memoirs," that this apparent prince of *poco curanti* had taken the pains to make himself a profound Hebrew scholar.

I retain one very vivid impression of that most charming of debonair noblemen, Lord Melbourne. I had the honor of dining at his house once, with the beautiful, highly gifted, and unfortunate woman with whom his relations afterwards became subject of such cruel public scandal; and after dinner I sat for some time opposite a large, crimson-covered ottoman, on which Lord Melbourne reclined, surrounded by those three enchanting Sheridan sisters, Mrs. Norton, Mrs. Blackwood (afterwards Lady Dufferin), and Lady St. Maur (afterwards Duchess of Somerset, and always Queen of Beauty). A more remarkable collection of comely creatures, I think, could hardly be seen, and taking into

consideration the high rank, eminent position, and intellectual distinction of the four persons who formed that beautiful group, it certainly was a picture to remain impressed upon one's memory.

To return to my school-mistress, Mrs. Rowden; she was herself an authoress, and had published a poem dedicated to Lady Bessborough (Lady Caroline Lamb's mother), the title of which was "The pleasures of friendship" (hope, memory, and imagination were all bespoken), of which I remember only the two opening lines—

> "Visions of early youth, ere yet ye fade,
> Let my light pen arrest your fleeting
> shade."

Mrs. Rowden, during the period of her school-keeping in London, was an ardent admirer of the stage in general and of my uncle John in particular, of whom the mezzotint engraving as Coriolanus, from Lawrence's picture, adorned her drawing-room in the Rue d'Angoulême, where, however, the nature and objects of her enthusiasm had undergone a considerable change: for when I was placed under her charge, theatres and things theatrical had given place in her esteem to churches and things clerical; her excitements and entertainments were Bible-meetings, prayer-meetings, and private preachings and teachings of religion. She was what was then termed Methodistical, what would now be designated as very Low Church. We were taken every Sunday either to the chapel of the embassy or to the Église de l'Oratoire (French Protestant worship), to two and sometimes to three services; and certainly Sunday was no day of rest to us, as we were required to write down from memory the sermons we had

heard in the course of the day, and read them aloud at our evening devotional gathering. Some of us had a robust power of attention and retention, and managed these reproductions with tolerable fidelity. Others contrived to bring forth such a version of what they had heard as closely resembled the last edition of the subject-matter of a prolonged game of Russian scandal. Sometimes, upon an appeal to mercy and a solemn protest that we had paid the utmost attention and *couldn't* remember a single sentence of the Christian exhortation we had heard, we were allowed to choose a text and compose an original sermon of our own; and I think a good-sized volume might have been made of homilies of my composition, indited under these circumstances for myself and my companions. I have always had rather an inclination for preaching, of which these exercises were perhaps the origin, and it is but a few years ago that I received at Saint Leonard's a visit from a tottering, feeble old lady of near seventy, whose name, unheard since, carried me back to my Paris school-days, and who, among other memories evoked to recall herself to my recollection, said, "Oh, don't you remember how good-natured you were in writing such nice sermons for me when I never could write down what I had heard at church?" Her particular share in these intellectual benefits conferred by me I did not remember, but I remembered well and gratefully the sweet, silver-toned voice of her sister, refreshing the arid atmosphere of our dreary Sunday evenings with Handel's holy music. "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and "He shall feed his Flock," which I heard for the first time from that gentle schoolmate of mine, recall her meek, tranquil face and, liquid thread of delicate soprano voice, even through the

glorious associations of Jenny Lind's inspired utterance of those divine songs. These ladies were daughters of a high dignitary of the English Church, which made my sermon-writing for their succor rather comical. Besides these Sunday exercises, we were frequently taken to week-day services at the Oratoire to hear some special preacher of celebrity, on which occasions of devout dissipation Mrs. Rowden always appeared in the highest state of elation, and generally received distinguished notice from the clerical hero of the evening.

I remember accompanying her to hear Mr. Lewis Wade, a celebrated missionary preacher, who had been to Syria and the Holy Land, and brought thence observations on subjects sacred and profane that made his discourses peculiarly interesting and edifying.

I was also taken to hear a much more impressive preacher, Mr. César Malan, of Geneva, who addressed a small and select audience of very distinguished persons, in a magnificent *salon* in some great private house, where every body sat on satin and gilded *fauteuils* to receive his admonitions, all which produced a great effect on my mind—not, however, I think, altogether religious; but the sermon I heard, and the striking aspect of the eloquent person who delivered it, left a strong and long impression on my memory. It was the first fine preaching I ever heard, and though I was undoubtedly too young to appreciate it duly, I was, nevertheless, deeply affected by it, and it gave me my earliest experience of that dangerous thing, emotional religion, or, to speak more properly, religious excitement.

The Unitarians of the United States have in my time possessed a number of preachers of most remarkable excellence; Dr. Channing, Dr. Dewey, Dr. Bellows, my own venerable and dear pastor, Dr. Furness, Dr. Follen, William and Henry Ware, being all men of extraordinary powers of eloquence. At home I have heard Frederick Maurice and Dean Stanley, but the most impressive preaching I ever heard in England was still from a Unitarian pulpit; James Martineau, I think, surpassed all the very remarkable men I have named in the wonderful beauty and power, spirituality and solemnity, of his sacred teaching. Frederick Robertson, to my infinite loss and sorrow, I never heard, having been deterred from going to hear him by his reputation of a "fashionable preacher;" he, better than any one, would have understood my repugnance to that species of religious instructor.

Better, in my judgment, than these occasional appeals to our feelings and imaginations under Mrs. Rowden's influence, was the constant *use* of the Bible among us. I cannot call the reading and committing to memory of the Scriptures, as we performed those duties, by the serious name of study. But the Bible was learnt by heart in certain portions and recited before breakfast every morning, and read aloud before bedtime every evening by us; and though the practice may be open to some objections, I think they hardly outweigh the benefit bestowed upon young minds by early familiar acquaintance with the highest themes, the holiest thoughts, and the noblest words the world possesses or ever will possess. To me my intimate knowledge of the Bible has always seemed the greatest benefit I derived from my school training.

Of the secular portion of the education we received, the French lady who was Mrs. Rowden's partner directed the principal part. Our lessons of geography, grammar, history, arithmetic, and mythology (of which latter subject I suspect we had a much more thorough knowledge than is at all usual with young English girls) were conducted by her.

These studies were all pursued in French, already familiar to me as the vehicle of my elementary acquirements at Boulogne; and this soon became the language in which I habitually wrote, spoke, and thought, to the almost entire neglect of my native tongue, of which I never thoroughly studied the grammar till I was between fifteen and sixteen, when, on my presenting, in a glow of vanity, some verses of mine to my father, he said, with his blandest smile, after reading them, "Very well, very pretty indeed! My dear, don't you think, before you write poetry, you had better learn grammar?" a suggestion which sent me crestfallen to a diligent study of Lindley Murray. But grammar is perfectly uncongenial matter to me, which my mind absolutely refuses to assimilate. I have learned Latin, English, French, Italian, and German grammar, and do not know a single rule of the construction of any language whatever. More over, to the present day, my early familiar use of French produces uncertainty in my mind as to the spelling of all words that take a double consonant in French and only one in English, as apartment, enemy, etc.

The men of my family—that is, my uncle John, my father, and my eldest brother—were all philologists, and extremely fond of the study of language. Grammar was favorite light reading, and the philosophy which lies at the root of human speech a

frequent subject of discussion and research with them; but they none of them spoke foreign languages with ease or fluency. My uncle was a good Latin scholar, and read French, Italian, and Spanish, but spoke none of them; not even the first, in spite of his long residence in French Switzerland. The same was the case with my father, whose delight in the dry bones of language was such that at near seventy he took the greatest pleasure in assiduously studying the Greek grammar. My brother John, who was a learned linguist, and familiar with the modern European languages, spoke none of them well, not even German, though he resided for many years at Hanover, where he was curator of the royal museum and had married a German wife, and had among his most intimate friends and correspondents both the Grimms, Gervinus, and many of the principal literary men of Germany. My sister and myself, on the contrary, had remarkable facility in speaking foreign languages with the accent and tune (if I may use the expression) peculiar to each; a faculty which seems to me less the result of early training and habit, than of some particular construction of ear and throat favorable for receiving and repeating mere sounds; a musical organization and mimetic faculty; a sort of mocking-bird specialty, which I have known possessed in great perfection by persons with whom it was in no way connected with the study, but only with the use of the languages they spoke with such idiomatic ease and grace. Moreover, in my own case, both in Italian and German, though I understand for the most part what I read and what is said in these languages, I have had but little exercise in speaking them, and have been amused to find myself, while travelling, taken for an Italian as well as for a German, simply by dint of the facility with which I

imitated the accent of the people I was among, while intrepidly confounding my moods, tenses, genders, and cases in the determination to speak and make myself understood in the language of whatever country I was passing through.

Mademoiselle Descuillès, Mrs. Rowden's partner, was a handsome woman of about thirty, with a full, graceful figure, a pleasant countenance, a great deal of playful vivacity of manner, and very determined and strict notions of discipline. Active, energetic, intelligent, and good-tempered, she was of a capital composition for a governess, the sort of person to manage successfully all her pupils, and become an object of enthusiastic devotion to the elder ones whom she admitted to her companionship.

She almost always accompanied us when we walked, invariably presided in the schoolroom, and very generally her eager figure and pleasant, bright eyes were to be discovered in some corner of the playground, where, from a semi-retirement, seated in her fauteuil with book or needlework in hand, she exercised a quiet but effectual surveillance over her young subjects.

She was the active and efficient partner in the concern, Mrs. Rowden the dignified and representative one. The whole of our course of study and mode of life, with the exception of our religious training, of which I have spoken before, was followed under her direction, and according to the routine of most French schools.

The monastic rule of loud-reading during meals was observed, and l'Abbé Millot's "Universal History," of blessed boring memory, was the dry daily sauce to our diet. On Saturday we always had a half-holiday

in the afternoon, and the morning occupations were feminine rather than academic.

Every girl brought into the schoolroom whatever useful needlework, mending or making, her clothes required; and while one read aloud, the others repaired or replenished their wardrobes.

Great was our satisfaction if we could prevail upon Mademoiselle Descuillès herself to take the book in hand and become the "lectrice" of the morning; greater still when we could persuade her, while intent upon her own stitching, to sing to us, which she sometimes did, old-fashioned French songs and ballads, of which I learnt from her and still remember some that I have never since heard, that must have long ago died out of the musical world and left no echo but in my memory. Of two of these I think the words pretty enough to be worth preserving, the one for its naïve simplicity, and the other for the covert irony of its reflection upon female constancy, to which Mademoiselle Descuillès' delivery, with her final melancholy shrug of the shoulders, gave great effect.

LE TROUBADOUR

Un gentil Troubadour
Qui chante et fait la guerre,
Revenait chez son père,
Rêvant à son amour.

Gages de sa valeur,
Suspendus à son écharpe,
Son épée, et sa harpe,
Se croisaient sur son cœur.

Il rencontre en chemin

Pelerine jolie,
Qui voyage, et qui prie,
Un rosaire à la main.

Colerette, à long plis,
Cachait sa fine taille,
Un grand chapeau de paille,
Ombrait son teint de lys.

"O gentil Troubadour,
Si tu reviens fidèle,
Chante un couplet pour celle
Qui bénit ton retour."

"Pardonne à mon refus
Pelerine jolie!
Sans avoir vu ma mie,
Je ne chanterai plus."

"Et ne la vois-tu pas?
O Troubadour fidèle!
Regarde moi—c'est elle!
Ouvre lui donc tes bras!

"Craignant pour notre amour,
J'allais en pelerine,
A la Vierge divine
Prier pour ton retour!"

Près des tendres amans
S'élève une chapelle,
L'Ermite qu'on appelle,
Bénit leurs doux sermens

Venez en ce saint lieu,
Amans du voisinage,
Faire un pelerinage

A la Mère de Dieu!

The other ballad, though equally an illustration of the days of chivalry, was written in a spirit of caustic contempt for the fair sex, which suggests the bitterness of the bard's personal experience:—

LE CHEVALIER ERRANT.

Dans un vieux château de l'Andalousie,
Au temps où l'amour se montrait constant,
Où Beauté, Valeur, et Galanterie
Guidait aux combats un fidèle amant,
Un beau chevalier un soir se présente,
Visière baissée, et la lance en main;
Il vient demander si sa douce amante
N'est pas (par hasard) chez le châtelain.

"Noble chevalier! quelle est votre amie?"
Demande à son tour le vieux châtelain.
"Ah! de fleurs d'amour c'est la plus jolie
Elle a teint de rose, et peau de satin,
Elle a de beaux yeux, dont le doux langage
Porte en votre cœur vif enchantment,
Elle a tout enfin—elle est belle,—et sage!"
"Pauvre chevalier! chercherez longtemps!

"Guidez de mes pas l'ardeur incertain,
Où dois-je chercher ce que j'ai perdu?"
"Mon fils, votre soit, hélas! s'en fait peine,
Ce que vous cherchez ne se trouve plus."
"Poursuivez, pourtant, votre long voyage,
Et si vouz trouvez un pareil trésor—
Ne le perdez plus! Adieu, bon voyage!"
L'amant repartit—mais, il cherche encore.

The air of the first of these songs was a very simple and charming little melody, which my sister, having learnt it from me, adapted to some English words. The other was an extremely favorite *vaudeville* air, repeated constantly in the half-singing dialogue of some of those popular pieces.

Our Saturday sewing class was a capital institution, which made most of us expert needle-women, developed in some the peculiarly lady-like accomplishment of working exquisitely, and gave to all the useful knowledge of how to make and mend our own clothes. When I left school I could make my own dresses, and was a proficient in marking and darning.

My school-fellows were almost all English, and, I suppose, with one exception, were young girls of average character and capacity. Elizabeth P——, a young person from the west of England, was the only remarkable one among them. She was strikingly handsome, both in face and figure, and endowed with very uncommon abilities. She was several years older than myself, and an object of my unbounded school-girl heroine worship. A daughter of Kiallmark, the musical composer, was also eminent among us for her great beauty, and always seemed to my girlish fancy what Mary Queen of Scots must have looked like in her youth.

Besides pupils, Mrs. Rowden received a small number of parlor boarders, who joined only in some of the lessons; indeed, some of them appeared to fulfil no purpose of education whatever by their residence with her. There were a Madame and Mademoiselle de ——, the latter of whom was supposed, I believe, to imbibe English in our atmosphere. She bore a well-known noble French name, and was once visited, to the immense excitement of all "ces demoiselles," by a brother, in the uniform of the Royal Gardes du Corps, whose looks were reported (I think rather mythologically) to be as superb as his attire. In which case he must have been strikingly unlike his sister, who was one of

the ugliest women I ever saw; with a disproportionately large and ill-shaped nose and mouth, and a terrible eruption all over her face. She had, however, an extremely beautiful figure, exquisite hands and feet, skin as white as snow, and magnificent hair and eyes; in spite of which numerous advantages, she was almost repulsively plain: it really seemed as if she had been the victim of a spell, to have so beautiful a body, and so all but hideous a face. Besides these French ladies, there was a Miss McC——, a very delicate, elegant-looking Irishwoman, and a Miss ——, who, in spite of her noble name, was a coarse and inelegant, but very handsome Englishwoman. In general, these ladies had nothing to do with us; they had privileged places at table, formed Mrs. Rowden's evening circle in the drawing-room, and led (except at meals) a life of dignified separation from the scholars.

I remember but two French girls in our whole company: the one was a Mademoiselle Adèle de ——, whose father, a fanatical Anglomane, wrote a ridiculous book about England.

The other French pupil I ought not to have called a companion, or said that I remembered, for in truth I remember nothing but her funeral. She died soon after I joined the school, and was buried in the cemetery of Père la Chaise, near the tomb of Abelard and Eloïse, with rather a theatrical sort of ceremony. She was followed to her grave by the whole school, dressed in white, and wearing long white veils fastened round our heads with white fillets. On each side of the bier walked three young girls, pall-bearers, in the same maiden mourning, holding in one hand long streamers of broad white ribbon attached to the bier, and in the other several white

narcissus blossoms.

The ghostly train and the picturesque mediæval monument, close to which we paused and clustered to deposit the dead girl in her early resting-place, formed a striking picture that haunted me for a long time, and which the smell and sight of the chalk-white narcissus blossom invariably recalls to me.

Meantime, the poetical studies, or rather indulgencies of home, had ceased. No sonorous sounds of Milton's mighty music ever delighted my ears, and for my almost daily bread of Scott's romantic epics I hungered and thirsted in vain, with such intense desire, that I at length undertook to write out "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" and "Marmion" from memory, so as not absolutely to lose my possession of them. This task I achieved to a very considerable extent, and found the stirring, chivalrous stories, and spirited, picturesque verse, a treasure of refreshment, when all my poetical diet consisted of "L'Anthologie française à l'Usage des Demoiselles," and Voltaire's "Henriade," which I was compelled to learn by heart, and with the opening lines of which I more than once startled the whole dormitory at midnight, sitting suddenly up in my bed, and from the midst of perpetual slumbers loudly proclaiming—

> "Je chante ce héros qui regna sur la
> France,
> Et par droit de conquête, et par droit de
> naissance."

More exciting reading was Madame Cottin's "Mathilde," of which I now got hold for the first time, and devoured with delight, finishing it one evening

just before we were called to prayers, so that I wept bitterly during my devotions, partly for the Norman princess and her Saracen lover, and partly from remorse at my own sinfulness in not being able to banish them from my thoughts while on my knees and saying my prayers.

But, to be sure, that baptism in the desert, with the only drop of water they had to drink, seemed to me the very acme of religious fervor and sacred self-sacrifice. I wonder what I should think of the book were I to read it now, which Heaven forefend! The really powerful impression made upon my imagination and feelings at this period, however, was by my first reading of Lord Byron's poetry. The day on which I received that revelation of the power of thought and language remained memorable to me for many a day after.

I had occasionally received invitations from Mrs. Rowden to take tea in the drawing-room with the lady parlor boarders, when my week's report for "bonne conduite" had been tolerably satisfactory. One evening when I had received this honorable distinction, and was sitting in sleepy solemnity on the sofa, opposite my uncle John's black figure in "Coriolanus," which seemed to grow alternately smaller and larger as my eyelids slowly drew themselves together and suddenly opened wide, with a startled consciousness of unworthy drowsiness, Miss H——, who was sitting beside me, reading, leaned back and put her book before my face, pointing with her finger to the lines—

> "It is the hour when from the boughs
> The nightingale's high note is heard."

It would be impossible to describe the emotion I experienced. I was instantly wide awake, and, quivering with excitement, fastened a grip like steel upon the book, imploring to be allowed to read on. The fear, probably, of some altercation loud enough to excite attention to the subject of her studies (which I rather think would not have been approved of, even for a "parlor boarder") prevented Miss H—— from making the resistance she should have made to my entreaties, and I was allowed to leave the room, carrying with me the dangerous prize, which, however, I did not profit by.

It was bedtime, and the dormitory light burned but while we performed our night toilet, under supervision. The under teacher and the lamp departed together, and I confided to the companion whose bed was next to mine that I had a volume of Lord Byron under my pillow. The emphatic whispered warnings of terror and dismay with which she received this information, her horror at the wickedness of the book (of which of course she knew nothing), her dread of the result of detection for me, and her entreaties, enforced with tears, that I would not keep the terrible volume where it was, at length, combined with my own nervous excitement about it, affected me with such a sympathy of fear that I jumped out of bed and thrust the fatal poems into the bowels of a straw *paillasse* on an empty bed, and returned to my own to remain awake nearly all night. My study of Byron went no further then: the next morning I found it impossible to rescue the book unobserved from its hiding-place, and Miss H ——, to whom I confided the secret of it, I suppose took her own time for withdrawing it, and so I then read no more of that wonderful poetry, which, in my after days of familiar acquaintance with it, always

affected me like an evil potion taken into my blood. The small, sweet draught which I sipped in that sleepy school-salon atmosphere remained indelibly impressed upon my memory, insomuch that when, during the last year of my stay in Paris, the news of my uncle John's death at Lausanne, and that of Lord Byron at Missolonghi, was communicated to me, my passionate regret was for the great poet, of whose writings I knew but twenty lines, and not for my own celebrated relation, of whom, indeed, I knew but little.

It was undoubtedly well that this dangerous source of excitement should be sealed to me as long as possible; but I do not think that the works of imagination to which I was allowed free access were of a specially wholesome or even harmless tendency. The false morality and attitudinizing sentiment of such books as "Les Contes à ma Fille," and Madame de Genlis' "Veillées du Château," and "Adèle et Théodore," were rubbish, if not poison. The novels of Florian were genuine and simple romances, less mischievous, I incline to think, upon the whole, than the educational Countess's mock moral sentimentality; but Chateaubriand's "Atala et Chactas," with its picturesque pathos, and his powerful classical novel of "Les Martyrs," were certainly unfit reading for young girls of excitable feelings and wild imaginations, in spite of the religious element which I supposed was considered their recommendation.

One great intellectual good fortune befell me at this time, and that was reading "Guy Mannering;" the first of Walter Scott's novels that I ever read—the *dearest*, therefore. I use the word advisedly, for I know no other than one of affection to apply to those

enchanting and admirable works, that deserve nothing less than love in return for the healthful delight they have bestowed. To all who ever read them, the first must surely be the best; the beginning of what a series of pure enjoyments, what a prolonged, various, exquisite succession of intellectual surprises and pleasures, amounting for the time almost to happiness.

Scott, like Shakespeare, has given us, for intimate acquaintance, companions, and friends, men and women of such peculiar individual nobleness, grace, wit, wisdom, and humor, that they people our minds and recur to our thoughts with a vividness which makes them seem rather to belong to the past realities of the memory, than to the shadowy visions of the imagination.

It was not long before all this imaginative stimulus bore its legitimate fruit in a premature harvest of crude compositions which I dignified with the name of poetry. Rhymes I wrote without stint or stopping —a perfect deluge of doggerel; what became of it all I know not, but I have an idea that a manuscript volume was sent to my poor parents, as a sample of the poetical promise supposed to be contained in these unripe productions.

Besides the studies pursued by the whole school under the tuition of Mademoiselle Descuillès, we had special masters from whom we took lessons in special branches of knowledge. Of these, by far the most interesting to me, both in himself and in the subject of his teachings, was my Italian master, Biagioli.

He was a political exile, of about the same date as his remarkable contemporary, Ugo Foscolo; his high

forehead, from which his hair fell back in a long grizzled curtain, his wild, melancholy eyes, and the severe and sad expression of his face, impressed me with some awe and much pity. He was at that time one of the latest of the long tribe of commentators on Dante's "Divina Commedia." I do not believe his commentary ranks high among the innumerable similar works on the great Italian poem; but in violence of abuse, and scornful contempt of all but his own glosses, he yields to none of his fellow-laborers in that vast and tangled poetical, historical, biographical, philosophical, theological, and metaphysical jungle.

Dante was his spiritual consolation, his intellectual delight, and indeed his daily bread; for out of that tremendous horn-book he taught me to stammer the divine Italian language, and illustrated every lesson, from the simplest rule of its syntax to its exceedingly complex and artificially constructed prosody, out of the pages of that sublime, grotesque, and altogether wonderful poem. My mother has told me that she attributed her incapacity for relishing Milton to the fact of "Paradise Lost" having been used as a lesson-book out of which she was made to learn English—a circumstance which had made it for ever "Paradise *Lost*" to her. I do not know why or how I escaped a similar misfortune in my school-girl study of Dante, but luckily I did so, probably being carried over the steep and stony way with comparative ease by the help of my teacher's vivid enthusiasm. I have forgotten my Italian grammar, rules of syntax and rules of prosody alike, but I read and re-read the "Divina Commedia" with ever-increasing amazement and admiration. Setting aside all its weightier claims to the high place it holds among the finest achievements of human genius, I know of no poem in

any language in which so many single lines and detached passages can be found of equally descriptive force, picturesque beauty, and delightful melody of sound; the latter virtue may lie, perhaps, as much in the instrument itself as in the master hand that touched it—the Italian tongue, the resonance and vibrating power of which is quite as peculiar as its liquid softness.

While the stern face and forlorn figure of poor Biagioli seemed an appropriate accompaniment to my Dantesque studies, nothing could exceed the contrast he presented to another Italian who visited us on alternate days and gave us singing lessons. Blangini, whose extreme popularity as a composer and teacher led him to the dignity of *maestro di capella* to some royal personage, survives only in the recollection of certain elderly drawing-room nightingales who warbled fifty summers ago, and who will still hum bits of his pretty Canzoni and Notturni, "Care pupille," "Per valli per boschi," etc.

Blangini was a *petit maître* as well as a singing master; always attired in the height of the fashion, and in manner and appearance much more of a Frenchman than an Italian. He was mercilessly satirical on the failures of his pupils, to whom (having reduced them, by the most ridiculous imitation of their unfortunate vocal attempts, to an almost inaudible utterance of *pianissimo* pipings) he would exclaim, "Ma per carità! aprite la bocca! che cantate come uccelli che dormano!"

My music master, as distinguished from my singing master, was a worthy old Englishman of the name of Shaw, who played on the violin, and had been at one time leader of the orchestra at Covent Garden

Theatre. Indeed, it was to him that John Kemble addressed the joke (famous, because in his mouth unique) upon the subject of a song in the piece of "Richard Cœur de Lion"—I presume an English version of Gietry's popular romance, "O Richard, O mon Roi!" This Mr. Shaw was painfully endeavoring to teach my uncle, who was entirely without musical ear, and whose all but insuperable difficulty consisted in repeating a few bars of the melody supposed to be sung under his prison window by his faithful minstrel, Blondel. "Mr. Kemble, Mr. Kemble, you are murdering the time, sir!" cried the exasperated musician; to which my uncle replied, "Very well, sir, and you are forever beating it!" I do not know whether Mrs. Rowden knew this anecdote, and engaged Mr. Shaw because he had elicited this solitary sally from her quondam idol, John Kemble. The choice, whatever its motive, was not a happy one. The old leader of the theatrical orchestra was himself no piano-forte player, could no longer see very well nor hear very well, and his principal attention was directed to his own share of the double performance, which he led much after the careless, slap-bang style in which overtures that nobody listened to were performed in his day. It is a very great mistake to let learners play with violin accompaniment until they have thoroughly mastered the piano-forte without it. Fingering, the first of fundamental acquirements, is almost sure to be overlooked by the master, whose attention is not on the hands of his pupil but on his own bow; and the pupil, anxious to keep up with the violin, slurs over rapid passages, scrambles through difficult ones, and acquires a general habit of merely following the violin in time and tune, to the utter disregard of steady, accurate execution. As for me, I derived but

one benefit from my old violin accompanier, that of becoming a good timist; in every other respect I received nothing but injury from our joint performances, getting into incorrigible habits of bad fingering, and of making up my bass with unscrupulous simplifications of the harmony, quite content if I came in with my final chords well thumped in time and tune with the emphatic scrape of the violin that ended our lesson. The music my master gave me, too, was more in accordance with his previous practice as leader of a theatrical orchestra, than calculated to make me a steady and scrupulous executant.

We had another master for French and Latin—a clever, ugly, impudent, snuffy, dirty little man, who wrote vaudevilles for the minor theaters, and made love to his pupils. Both these gentlemen were superseded in their offices by other professors before I left school: poor old Pshaw Pshaw, as we used to call him, by the French composer, Adam, unluckily too near the time of my departure for me to profit by his strict and excellent method of instruction; and our vaudevillist was replaced by a gentleman of irreproachable manners, and I should think morals, who always came to our lessons *en toilette*—black frock-coat and immaculate white waistcoat, unexceptionable boots and gloves—by dint of all which he ended by marrying our dear Mademoiselle Descuillès (who, poor thing, was but a woman after all, liable to charming by such methods), and turning her into Madame Champy, under which name she continued to preside over the school after I left it; and Mrs. Rowden relinquished her share in the concern—herself marrying, and becoming Mrs. St. Quintin.

I have spoken of my learning Latin: Elizabeth P——, the object in all things of my emulous admiration, studied it, and I forthwith begged permission to do so likewise; and while this dead-language ambition possessed me, I went so far as to acquire the Greek alphabet; which, however, I used only as a cipher for "my secrets," and abandoned my Latin lore, just as I had exchanged my Phædrus for Cornelius Nepos, not even attaining to the "Arma virumque cano."

Nobody but Miss P—— and myself dabbled in these classical depths, but nearly the whole school took dancing lessons, which were given us by two masters, an old and young Mr. Guillet, father and son: the former, a little dapper, dried-up, wizen-faced, beak-nosed old man, with a brown wig that fitted his head and face like a Welsh night-cap; who played the violin and stamped in time, and scolded and made faces at us when we were clumsy and awkward; the latter, a highly colored, beak-nosed young gentleman who squinted fearfully with magnificent black eyes, and had one shining, oily wave of blue-black hair, which, departing from above one ear, traversed his forehead in a smooth sweep, and ended in a frizzly breaker above the other. This gentleman showed us our steps, and gave us the examples of graceful ability of which his father was no longer capable. I remember a very comical scene at one of our dancing lessons, occasioned by the first appearance of a certain Miss ——, who entered the room, to the general amazement, in full evening costume—a practice common, I believe, in some English schools where "dressing for dancing" prevails. We only put on light prunella slippers instead of our heavier morning shoes or boots, and a pair of gloves, as adequate preparation. Moreover, the French fashion for full

dress, of that day, did not sanction the uncovering of the person usual in English evening attire.

CHAPTER IV.

Great was the general surprise of the dancing class when this large, tall, handsome English girl, of about eighteen, entered the room in a rose-colored silk dress, with very low neck and very short sleeves, white satin shoes, and white kid gloves; her long auburn ringlets and ivory shoulders glancing in the ten o'clock morning sunlight with a sort of incongruous splendor, and her whole demeanor that of the most innocent and modest tranquillity.

Mademoiselle Descuillès shut her book to with a snap, and sat bolt upright and immovable, with eyes and mouth wide open. Young Mr. Guillet blushed purple, and old Mr. Guillet scraped a few interjections on his fiddle, and then, putting it down, took a resonant pinch of snuff, by way of restoring his scattered senses.

No observation was made, however, and the lesson proceeded, young Mr. Guillet turning scarlet each time either of his divergent orbs of vision encountered his serenely unconscious, full-dressed pupil; which certainly, considering that he was a member of the Grand Opera *corps de ballet*, was a curious instance of the purely conventional ideas of decency which custom makes one accept.

Whatever want of assiduity I may have betrayed in

my other studies, there was no lack of zeal for my dancing lessons. I had a perfect passion for dancing, which long survived my school-days, and I am persuaded that my natural vocation was that of an opera dancer. Far into middle life I never saw beautiful dancing without a rapture of enthusiasm, and used to repeat from memory whole dances after seeing Duvernay or Ellsler, as persons with a good musical ear can repeat the airs of the opera first heard the night before. And I remember, during Ellsler's visit to America, when I had long left off dancing in society, being so transported with her execution of a Spanish dance called "El Jaleo de Xerxes," that I was detected by my cook, who came suddenly upon me in my store-room, in the midst of sugar, rice, tea, coffee, flour, etc., standing on the tips of my toes, with my arms above my head, in one of the attitudes I had most admired in that striking and picturesque performance. The woman withdrew in speechless amazement, and I alighted on my heels, feeling wonderfully foolish. How I thought I never should be able to leave off dancing! And so I thought of riding! and so I thought of singing! and could not imagine what life would be like when I could no more do these things. I was not wrong, perhaps, in thinking it would be difficult to leave them off: I had no conception how easily they would leave me off.

Varying our processions in the Champs Élysées were less formal excursions in the Jardin de Luxembourg; and as the picture-gallery in the palace was opened gratuitously on certain days of the week, we were allowed to wander through it, and form our taste for art among the samples of the modern French school of painting there collected: the pictures of David, Gérard, Girodet, etc., the Dido and Æneas, the Romulus and Tatius with the Sabine women

interposing between them, Hippolytus before Theseus and Phædra, Atala being laid in her grave by her lover—compositions with which innumerable engravings have made England familiar—the theatrical conception and hard coloring and execution of which (compensated by masterly grouping and incomparable drawing) did not prevent their striking our uncritical eyes with delighted admiration, and making this expedition to the Luxembourg one of my favorite afternoon recreations. These pictures are now all in the gallery of the Louvre, illustrating the school of art of the consulate and early empire of Bonaparte.

Another favorite promenade of ours, and the one that I preferred even to the hero-worship of the Luxembourg, was the Parc Monceaux. This estate, the private property of the Orleans family, confiscated by Louis Napoleon, and converted into a whole new *quartier* of his new Paris, with splendid streets and houses, and an exquisite public flower-garden in the midst of them, was then a solitary and rather neglected Jardin Anglais (so called) or park, surrounded by high walls and entered by a small wicket, the porter of which required a permit of admission before allowing ingress to the domain. I never remember seeing a single creature but ourselves in the complete seclusion of this deserted pleasaunce. It had grass and fine trees and winding walks, and little brooks fed by springs that glimmered in cradles of moss-grown, antiquated rock-work; no flowers or semblance of cultivation, but a general air of solitude and wildness that recommended it especially to me, and recalled as little as possible the great, gay city which surrounded it.

My real holidays, however (for I did not go home during the three years I spent in Paris), were the rare and short visits my father paid me while I was at school. At all other seasons Paris might have been Patagonia for any thing I saw or heard or knew of its brilliant gayety and splendid variety. But during those holidays of his and mine, my enjoyment and his were equal, I verily believe, though probably not (as I then imagined) perfect. Pleasant days of joyous *camaraderie* and *flanerie*!—in which every thing, from being new to me, was almost as good as new to my indulgent companion: the Rue de Rivoli, the Tuileries, the Boulevard, the Palais Royal, the *déjeuner à la fourchette* at the Café Riche, the dinner in the small *cabinet* at the Trois Frères, or the Cadran Bleu, and the evening climax of the theater on the Boulevard, where Philippe, or Léontine Fay, or Poitier and Brunet, made a school of dramatic art of the small stages of the Porte St. Martin, the Variétés, and the Vaudeville.

My father's days in Paris, in which he escaped from the hard labor and heavy anxiety of his theatrical life of actor, manager, and proprietor, and I from the dull routine of school-room studies and school-ground recreations, were pleasant days to him, and golden ones in my girlish calendar. I remember seeing, with him, a piece called "Les deux Sergens," a sort of modern Damon and Pythias, in which the heroic friends are two French soldiers, and in which a celebrated actor of the name of Philippe performed the principal part. He was the predecessor and model of Frédéric Lemaître, who (himself infinitely superior to his pupil and copyist, Mr. Fechter, who, by a very feeble imitation of Lemaître's most remarkable parts, has achieved so much reputation) was not to be compared with Philippe in the sort of sentimental

melodrama of which "Les deux Sergens" was a specimen.

This M. Philippe was a remarkable man, not only immensely popular for his great professional merit, but so much respected for an order of merit not apt to be enthusiastically admired by Parisians—that of a moral character and decent life—that at his funeral a very serious riot occurred, in consequence of the Archbishop of Paris, according to the received opinion and custom of the day, refusing to allow him to be buried in consecrated ground; the profane player's calling, in the year of grace 1823, or thereabouts, being still one which disqualified its followers for receiving the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church, and therefore, of course, for claiming Christian burial. The general feeling of the Parisian public, however, was in this case too strong for the ancient anathema of the Church. The Archbishop of Paris was obliged to give way, and the dead body of the worthy actor was laid in the sacred soil of Père la Chaise. I believe that since that time the question has never again been debated, nor am I aware that there is any one more peculiarly theatrical cemetery than another in Paris.

In a letter of Talma's to Charles Young upon my uncle John's death, he begs to be numbered among the subscribers to the monument about to be erected to Mr. Kemble in Westminster Abbey; adding the touching remark: "Pour moi, je serai heureux si les prêtres me laissent enterrer dans un coin de mon jardin."

The excellent moral effect of this species of class prejudice is admirably illustrated by an anecdote I have heard my mother tell. One evening, when she

had gone to the Grand Opera with M. Jouy, the wise and witty Hermite de la Chaussée d'Antin, talking with him of the career and circumstances of the young ballet women (she had herself, when very young, been a dancer on the English stage), she wound up her various questions with this: "Et y en a-t-il qui sont filles de bonne conduite? qui sont sages?" "Ma foi!" replied the Hermite, shrugging his shoulders, "elles auraient grand tort; personne n'y croirait."

A charming vaudeville called "Michel et Christine," with that charming actress, Madame Alan Dorval, for its heroine, was another extremely popular piece at that time, which I went to see with my father. The time of year at which he was able to come to Paris was unluckily the season at which all the large theaters were closed. Nevertheless, by some happy chance, I saw one performance at the Grand Opera of that great dancer and actress, Bigottini, in the ballet of the "Folle par Amour;" and I shall never forget the wonderful pathos of her acting and the grace and dignity of her dancing. Several years after, I saw Madame Pasta in Paesiello's pretty opera of the "Nina Pazza," on the same subject, and hardly know to which of the two great artists to assign the palm in their different expression of the love-crazed girl's despair.

I also saw several times, at this period of his celebrity, the inimitable comic actor, Poitier, in a farce called "Les Danaïdes" that was making a furor—a burlesque upon a magnificent mythological ballet, produced with extraordinary splendor of decoration, at the Académie Royale de Musique, and of which this travesty drew all Paris in crowds; and certainly any thing more ludicrous than Poitier, as the wicked

old King Danaus, with his fifty daughters, it is impossible to imagine.

The piece was the broadest and most grotesque quiz of the "grand genre classique et héroïque," and was almost the first of an order of entertainments which have gone on increasing in favor up to the present day of universally triumphant parody and burlesque, by no means as laughable and by no means as unobjectionable. Indeed, farcical to the broadest point as was that mythological travesty of "The Danaïdes," it was the essence of decency and propriety compared with "La grande Duchesse," "La belle Hélène," "Orphée aux Enfers," "La Biche au Bois," "Le petit Faust," and all the vile succession of indecencies and immoralities that the female good society of England in these latter years has delighted in witnessing, without the help of the mask which enabled their great-grandmothers to sit out the plays of Wycherley, Congreve, and Farquhar, chaste and decorous in their crude coarseness compared with the French operatic burlesques of the present day.

But by far the most amusing piece in which I recollect seeing Poitier, was one in which he acted with the equally celebrated Brunet, and in which they both represented English *women*—"Les Anglaises pour Rire."

The Continent was then just beginning to make acquaintance with the traveling English, to whom the downfall of Bonaparte had opened the gates of Europe, and who then began, as they have since continued, in ever-increasing numbers, to carry amazement and amusement from the shores of the Channel to those of the Mediterranean, by their wealth, insolence, ignorance, and cleanliness.

"Les Anglaises pour Rire" was a caricature (if such a thing were possible) of the English female traveler of that period. Coal-scuttle poke bonnets, short and scanty skirts, huge splay feet arrayed in indescribable shoes and boots, short-waisted tight-fitting spencers, colors which not only swore at each other, but caused all beholders to swear at them—these were the outward and visible signs of the British fair of that day. To these were added, in this representation of them by these French appreciators of their attractions, a mode of speech in which the most ludicrous French, in the most barbarous accent, was uttered in alternate bursts of loud abruptness and languishing drawl. Sudden, grotesque playfulness was succeeded by equally sudden and grotesque bashfulness; now an eager intrepidity of wild enthusiasm, defying all decorum, and then a sour, severe reserve, full of angry and terrified suspicion of imaginary improprieties. Tittering shyness, all giggle-goggle and blush; stony and stolid stupidity, impenetrable to a ray of perception; awkward, angular postures and gestures, and jerking saltatory motions; Brobdingnag strides and straddles, and kittenish frolics and friskings; sharp, shrill little whinnying squeals and squeaks, followed by lengthened, sepulchral "O-h's"—all formed together such an irresistibly ludicrous picture as made "Les Anglaises pour Rire" of Poitier and Brunet one of the most comical pieces of acting I have seen in all my life.

Mrs. Rowden's establishment in Hans Place had been famous for occasional dramatic representations by the pupils; and though she had become in her Paris days what in the religious jargon of that day was called serious, or even methodistical, she winked at, if she did not absolutely encourage, sundry attempts

of a similar sort which her Paris pupils got up.

Once it was a vaudeville composed expressly in honor of her birthday by the French master, in which I had to sing, with reference to her, the following touching tribute, to a well-known vaudeville tune:

"C'est une mère!
Qui a les premiers droits sur nos cœurs?
Qui partage, d'une ardeur sincère,
Et nos plaisirs et nos douleurs?
C'est une mère!"

I suppose this trumpery was stamped upon my brain by the infinite difficulty I had in delivering it gracefully, with all the point and all the pathos the author assured me it contained, at Mrs. Rowden, surrounded by her friends and guests, and not suggesting to me the remotest idea of *my* mother or any body else's mother.

After this we got up Madame de Genlis' little piece of "L' Isle Heureuse," in which I acted the accomplished and conceited princess who is so judiciously rejected by the wise and ancient men of the island, in spite of the several foreign tongues she speaks fluently, in favor of the tender-hearted young lady who, in defiance of all sound systems of political and social economy, always walks about attended by the poor of the island in a body, to whom she distributes food and clothes in a perpetual stream of charity, and whose prayers and blessings lift her very properly to the throne, while the other young woman is left talking to all the ambassadors in all their different languages at once.

Our next dramatic attempt came to a disastrous and premature end. I do not know who suggested to us

the witty and clever little play of "Roxelane;" the versification of the piece is extremely easy and graceful, and the preponderance of female characters and convenient Turkish costume, of turbans and caftans, and loose voluminous trousers, had appeared to us to combine various advantages for our purpose. Mademoiselle Descuillès had consented to fill the part of Solyman, the magnificent and charming Sultan, and I was to be the saucy French heroine, "dont le nez en l'air semble narguer l'amour," the *sémillante* Roxelane. We had already made good progress in the only difficulty our simple appreciation of matters dramatic presented to our imagination, the committing the words of our parts to memory, when Mrs. Rowden, from whom all our preparations on such occasions were kept sacredly secret, lighted upon the copy of the play, with all the MS. marks and directions for our better guidance in the performance; and great were our consternation, dismay, and disappointment when, with the offending pamphlet in her hand, she appeared in our midst and indignantly forbade the representation of any such piece, after the following ejaculatory fashion, and with an accent difficult to express by written signs: "May, commang! may*de*mosels, je suis atonnay! May! commang! May*de*mosel Descuillès, je suis surprise! Kesse ke say! vous per*ma*ttay may*de*mosels être lay filles d'ung seraglio! je ne vou pau! je vous defang! je suis biang atonnay!" And so she departed, with our prompter's copy, leaving us rather surprised, ourselves, at the unsuspected horror we had been about to perpetrate, and Mademoiselle Descuillès shrugging her shoulders and smiling, and not probably quite convinced of the criminality of a piece of which the heroine, a pretty Frenchwoman, revolutionizes the Ottoman Empire by inducing her

Mohammedan lover to dismiss his harem and confine his affections to her, whom he is supposed to marry after the most orthodox fashion possible in those parts.

Our dramatic ardor was considerably damped by this event, and when next it revived our choice could not be accused of levity. Our aim was infinitely more ambitious, and our task more arduous. Racine's "Andromaque" was selected for our next essay in acting, and was, I suppose, pronounced unobjectionable by the higher authorities. Here, however, our mainstay and support, Mademoiselle Descuillès, interposed a very peculiar difficulty. She had very good-naturedly learned the part of Solyman, in the other piece, for us, and whether she resented the useless trouble she had had on that occasion, or disliked that of committing several hundred of Racine's majestic verses to memory, I know not; but she declared that she would only act the part of Pyrrhus, which we wished her to fill, if we would read it aloud to her till she knew it, while she worked at her needle. Of course we had to accept any condition she chose to impose upon us, and so we all took it by turns, whenever we saw her industrious fingers flying through their never-ending task, to seize up Racine and begin pouring her part into her ears. She actually learned it so, and our principal difficulty after so teaching her was to avoid mixing up the part of Pyrrhus, which we had acquired by the same process, with every other part in the play.

The dressing of this classical play was even more convenient than our contemplated Turkish costume could have been. A long white skirt drawn round the waist, a shorter one, with slits in it for armholes,

drawn round the neck by way of tunic, with dark blue or scarlet Greek pattern border, and ribbon of the same color for girdle, and sandals, formed a costume that might have made Rachel or Ristori smile, but which satisfied all our conceptions of antique simplicity and grace; and so we played our play.

Mademoiselle Descuillès was Pyrrhus; a tall blonde, with an insipid face and good figure, Andromaque; Elizabeth P——, my admired and emulated superior in all things, Oreste (not superior, however, in acting; she had not the questionable advantage of dramatic blood in her veins); and myself, Hermione (in the performance of which I very presently gave token of mine). We had an imposing audience, and were all duly terrified, became hoarse with nervousness, swallowed raw eggs to clear our throats, and only made ourselves sick with them as well as with fright. But at length it was all over; the tragedy was ended, and I had electrified the audience, my companions, and, still more, myself; and so, to avert any ill effects from this general electrification, Mrs. Rowden thought it wise and well to say to me, as she bade me good-night, "Ah, my dear, I don't think your parents need ever anticipate your going on the stage; you would make but a poor actress." And she was right enough. I did make but a poor actress, certainly, though that was not for want of natural talent for the purpose, but for want of cultivating it with due care and industry. At the time she made that comment upon my acting I felt very well convinced, and have since had good reason to know, that my school-mistress thought my performance a threat, or promise (I know not which to call it) of decided dramatic power, as I believe it was.

With this performance of "Andromaque," however, all such taste, if it ever existed, evaporated, and though a few years afterward the stage became my profession, it was the very reverse of my inclination. I adopted the career of an actress with as strong a dislike to it as was compatible with my exercising it at all.

I now became acquainted with all Racine's and Corneille's plays, from which we were made to commit to memory the most remarkable passages; and I have always congratulated myself upon having become familiar with all these fine compositions before I had any knowledge whatever of Shakespeare. Acquaintance with his works might, and I suppose certainly would, have impaired my relish for the great French dramatists, whose tragedies, noble and pathetic in spite of the stiff formality of their construction, the bald rigidity of their adherence to the classic unities, and the artificial monotony of the French heroic rhymed verse, would have failed to receive their due appreciation from a taste and imagination already familiar with the glorious freedom of Shakespeare's genius. As it was, I learned to delight extremely in the dignified pathos and stately tragic power of Racine and Corneille, in the tenderness, refinement, and majestic vigorous simplicity of their fine creations, and possessed a treasure of intellectual enjoyment in their plays before opening the first page of that wonderful volume which contains at once the history of human nature and human existence.

After I had been about a year and a half at school, Mrs. Rowden left her house in the Rue d'Angoulême, and moved to a much finer one, at the very top of

the Champs Élysées, a large, substantial stone mansion, within lofty iron gates and high walls of inclosure. It was the last house on the left-hand side within the Barrière de l'Étoile, and stood on a slight eminence and back from the Avenue des Champs Élysées by some hundred yards. For many years after I had left school, on my repeated visits to Paris, the old stone house bore on its gray front the large "Institution de jeunes Demoiselles," which betokened the unchanged tenor of its existence. But the rising tide of improvement has at length swept it away, and modern Paris has rolled over it, and its place remembers it no more. It was a fine old house, roomy, airy, bright, sunny, cheerful, with large apartments and a capital play-ground, formed by that old-fashioned device, a quincunx of linden trees, under whose shade we carried on very Amazonian exercises, fighting having become one of our favorite recreations.

This house was said to have belonged to Robespierre at one time, and a very large and deep well in one corner of the play-ground was invested with a horrid interest in our imaginations by tales of *noyades* on a small scale supposed to have been perpetrated in its depths by his orders. This charm of terror was, I think, rather a gratuitous addition to the attractions of this uncommonly fine well; but undoubtedly it added much to the fascination of one of our favorite amusements, which was throwing into it the heaviest stones we could lift, and rushing to the farthest end of the play-ground, which we sometimes reached before the resounding *bumps* from side to side ended in a sullen splash into the water at the bottom. With our removal to the Barrière de l'Étoile, the direction of our walks altered, and our visits to the Luxembourg Gardens and the Parc Monceaux were

exchanged for expeditions to the Bois de Boulogne, then how different from the charming pleasure-ground of Paris which it became under the reforming taste and judgment of Louis Napoleon!

Between the back of our play-ground and the village suburb of Chaillot scarcely a decent street or even house then existed; there was no splendid Avenue de l'Impératrice, with bright villas standing on vivid carpets of flowers and turf. Our way to the "wood" was along the dreariest of dusty high-roads, bordered with mean houses and disreputable-looking *estaminets*; and the Bois de Boulogne itself, then undivided from Paris by the fortifications which subsequently encircled the city, was a dismal network of sandy avenues and *carrefours*, traversed in every direction by straight, narrow, gloomy paths, a dreary wilderness of low thickets and tangled copsewood.

I have said that I never returned home during my three years' school life in Paris; but portions of my holidays were spent with a French family, kind friends of my parents, who received me as an *enfant de la maison* among them. They belonged to the *petite bourgeoisie* of Paris. Mr. A—— had been in some business, I believe, but when I visited him he was living as a small *rentier*, in a pretty little house on the main road from Paris to Versailles.

It was just such a residence as Balzac describes with such minute finish in his scenes of Parisian and provincial life: a sunny little *maisonnette*, with green *jalousies*, a row of fine linden trees clipped into arches in front of it, and behind, the trim garden with its wonderfully productive dwarf *espaliers*, full of delicious pears and Reine Claudes (that queen of

amber-tinted, crimson-freckled greengages), its apricots, as fragrant as flowers, and its glorious, spice-breathing carnations.

The mode of life and manners of these worthy people were not refined or elegant, but essentially hospitable and kind; and I enjoyed the sunny freedom of my holiday visits to them extremely. The marriage of their daughter opened to me a second Parisian home of the same class, but with greater pretensions to social advantages, derived from the great city in the center of which it stood.

I was present at the celebration of Caroline A——'s marriage to one of the head-masters of a first-class boarding-school for boys, of which he subsequently became the principal director. It was in the Rue de Clichy, and thither the bride departed, after a jolly, rollicking, noisy wedding, beginning with the religious solemnization at church and procession to the *mairie* for due sanction of the civil authorities, and ending with a bountiful, merry, early afternoon dinner, and the not over-refined ancient custom of the distribution of the *jarretière de la mariée*. The jarretière was a white satin ribbon, tied at a discreet height above the bride's ankle, and removed thence by the best man and cut into pieces, for which an animated scramble took place among the male guests, each one who obtained a piece of the white favor immediately fastening it in his button-hole. Doubtless, in earlier and coarser times, it was the bride's real garter that was thus distributed, and our elegant white and silver rosettes are the modern representatives of this primitive wedding "favor," which is a relic of ages when both in England and in France usages obtained at the noblest marriages which would be tolerated by no class in either

country now;

> "When bluff King Hal the stocking threw,
> And Katharine's hand the curtain drew."

I have a distinct recollection of the merry uproar caused by this ceremony, and of the sad silence that fell upon the little sunny dwelling when the new-married pair and all the guests had returned to Paris, and I helped poor Madame A—— and her old *cuisinière* and *femme de charge*, both with tearful eyes, to replace the yellow *velours d'Utrecht* furniture in its accustomed position on the shiny *parquet* of the best *salon*, with the slippery little bits of foot-rugs before the empty *bergères* and *canapés*.

My holidays after this time were spent with M. and Madame R——, in whose society I remember frequently seeing a literary man of the name of Pélissier, a clever writer, a most amusing talker, and an admirable singer of Béranger's songs.

Another visitor of their house was M. Rio, the eminent member of the French ultramontane party, the friend of Lammenais, Lacordaire, Montalembert, the La Ferronays, the hero of the Jeune Vendée, the learned and devout historian of Christian art. I think my friend M. R—— was a Breton by birth, and that was probably the tie between himself and his remarkable Vendéan friend, whose tall, commanding figure, dark complexion, and powerful black eyes gave him more the appearance of a Neapolitan or Spaniard than of a native of the coast of ancient Armorica. M. Rio was then a young man, and probably in Paris for the first time, at the beginning of the literary career of which he has furnished so interesting a sketch in the autobiographical volumes

which form the conclusion of his "Histoire de l'Art Chrétien." Five and twenty years later, while passing my second winter in Rome, I heard of M. Rio's arrival there, and of the unbounded satisfaction he expressed at finding himself in the one place where no restless wheels beat time to, and no panting chimneys breathed forth the smoke of the vast, multiform industry of the nineteenth century; where the sacred stillness of unprogressive conservatism yet prevailed undisturbed. Gas had, indeed, been introduced in the English quarter; but M. Rio could shut his eyes when he drove through that, and there still remained darkness enough elsewhere for those who loved it better than light.

During one of my holiday visits to M. R——, a ball was given at his young gentlemen's school, to which I was taken by him and his wife. It was my very first ball, and I have a vivid recollection of my white muslin frock and magnificent *ponceau* sash. At this festival I was introduced to a lad, with whom I was destined to be much more intimately acquainted in after years as one of the best amateur actors I ever saw, and who married one of the most charming and distinguished women of European society, Pauline de la Ferronays, whose married name has obtained wide celebrity as that of the authoress of "Le Récit d'une Sœur."

I remained in Paris till I was between fifteen and sixteen years old, and then it was determined that I should return home. The departure of Elizabeth P —— had left me without competitor in my studies among my companions, and I was at an age to be better at home than at any school.

My father came to fetch me, and the only adventure I

met with on the way back was losing my bonnet, blown from my head into the sea, on board the packet, which obliged me to purchase one as soon as I reached London; and having no discreeter guide of my proceedings, I so far imposed upon my father's masculine ignorance in such matters as to make him buy for me a full-sized Leghorn flat, under the circumference of which enormous *sombrero* I seated myself by him on the outside of the Weybridge coach, and amazed the gaping population of each successive village we passed through with the vast dimensions of the thatch I had put on my head.

Weybridge was not then reached by train in half an hour from London; it was two or three hours' coach distance: a rural, rather deserted-looking, and most picturesque village, with the desolate domain of Portmore Park, its mansion falling to ruin, on one side of it, and on the other the empty house and fine park of Oatlands, the former residence of the Duke of York.

The straggling little village lay on the edge of a wild heath and common country that stretches to Guildford and Godalming and all through that part of Surrey to Tunbridge Wells, Brighton, and the Sussex coast—a region of light, sandy soil, hiding its agricultural poverty under a royal mantle of golden gorse and purple heather, and with large tracts of blue aromatic pine wood and one or two points of really fine scenery, where the wild moorland rolls itself up into ridges and rises to crests of considerable height, which command extensive and beautiful views: such as the one from the summit of Saint George's Hill, near Weybridge, and the top of Blackdown, the noble site of Tennyson's fine house, whence, over miles of wild wood and common, the

eye sweeps to the downs above the Sussex cliffs and the glint of the narrow seas.

We had left London in the afternoon, and did not reach Weybridge until after dark. I had been tormented the whole way down by a nervous fear that I should not know my mother's face again; an absence of three years, of course, could not justify such an apprehension, but it had completely taken possession of my imagination and was causing me much distress, when, as the coach stopped in the dark at the village inn, I heard the words, "Is there any one here for Mrs. Kemble?" uttered in a voice which I knew so well, that I sprang, hat and all, into my mother's arms, and effectually got rid of my fear that I should not know her.

Her rural yearnings had now carried her beyond her suburban refuge at Craven Hill, and she was infinitely happy, in her small cottage habitation, on the outskirts of Weybridge and the edge of its picturesque common. Tiny, indeed, it was, and but for her admirable power of contrivance could hardly have held us with any comfort; but she delighted in it, and so did we all except my father, who, like most men, had no real taste for the country; the men who appear to themselves and others to like it confounding their love for hunting and shooting with that of the necessary field of their sports. Anglers seem to me to be the only sportsmen who really have a taste for and love of nature as well as for fishy water. At any rate, the silent, solitary, and comparatively still character of their pursuit enables them to study and appreciate beauty of scenery more than the violent exercise and excitement of fox-hunting, whatever may be said in favor of the picturesque influences of beating preserves and

wading through turnip-fields with keepers and companions more or less congenial.

Of deer-stalking and grouse-shooting I do not speak; a man who does not become enthusiastic in his admiration of wild scenery while following these sports must have but half the use of his eyes.

Perhaps it was hardly fair to expect my father to relish extremely a residence where he was as nearly as possible too high and too wide, too long and too large, for every room in the house. He used to come down on Saturday and stay till Monday morning, but the rest of the week he spent at what was then our home in London, No. 5 Soho Square; it was a handsome, comfortable, roomy house, and has now, I think, been converted into a hospital.

The little cottage at Weybridge was covered at the back with a vine, which bore with the utmost luxuriance a small, black, sweet-water grape, from which, I remember, one year my mother determined to make wine; a direful experiment, which absorbed our whole harvest of good little fruit, filled every room in the house with unutterable messes, produced much fermentation of temper as well as wine, and ended in a liquid product of such superlative nastiness, that to drink it defied our utmost efforts of obedience and my mother's own resolute courage; so it was with acclamations of execration made libations of—to the infernal gods, I should think—and no future vintage was ever tried, to our great joy.

The little plot of lawn on which our cottage stood was backed by the wild purple swell of the common, and that was crested by a fine fir wood, a beautiful rambling and scrambling ground, full of picturesque

and romantic associations with all the wild and fanciful mental existences which I was then beginning to enjoy. And even as I glide through it now, on the railroad that has laid its still depths open to the sun's glare and scared its silence with the eldritch snort and shriek of the iron team, I have visions of Undine and Sintram, the Elves, the little dog Stromian, the Wood-Witch, and all the world of supernatural beauty and terror which then peopled its recesses for me, under the influence of the German literature that I was becoming acquainted with through the medium of French and English translations, and that was carrying me on its tide of powerful enchantment far away from the stately French classics of my school studies.

Besides our unusual privilege of grape-growing in the open air, our little estate boasted a magnificent beurré pear tree, a small arbor of intertwined and peculiarly fine filbert and cobnut trees, and some capital greengage and apple trees; among the latter, a remarkably large and productive Ribstone pippin. So that in the spring the little plot of land was flowerful, and in the autumn fruitful, and we cordially indorsed my mother's preference for it to the London house in Soho Square.

The sort of orchard which contained all these objects of our regard was at the back of the house; in front of it, however, the chief peculiarity (which was by no means a beauty) of the place was displayed.

This was an extraordinary mound or hillock of sand, about half an acre in circumference, which stood at a distance of some hundred yards immediately in front of the cottage, and in the middle of what ought to have been a flower garden, if this uncouth

protuberance had not effectually prevented the formation of any such ornamental setting to our house. My mother's repeated applications to our landlord (the village baker) to remove or allow her to remove this unsightly encumbrance were unavailing. He thought he might have future use for the sand, and he knew he had no other present place of deposit for it; and there it remained, defying all my mother's ingenuity and love of beauty to convert it into any thing useful or ornamental, or other than a cruel eye-sore and disfigurement to our small domain.

At length she hit upon a device for abating her nuisance, and set about executing it as follows. She had the sand dug out of the interior of the mound and added to its exterior, which she had graded and smoothed and leveled and turfed so as to resemble the glacis of a square bastion or casemate, or other steep, smooth-sided earth-work in a fortification. It was, I suppose, about twenty feet high, and sloped at too steep an angle for us to scale or descend it; a good footpath ran round the top, accessible from the entrance of the sand-heap, the interior walls of which she turfed (to speak Irish) with heather, and the ground or floor of this curious inclosure she planted with small clumps of evergreen shrubs, leaving a broad walk through the middle of it to the house door. A more curious piece of domestic fortification never adorned a cottage garden. It looked like a bit of Robinson Crusoe's castle—perhaps even more like a portion of some deserted fortress. It challenged the astonishment of all our visitors, whose invariable demand was, "What is that curious place in the garden?" "The mound," was the reply; and the mound was a delightful play-ground for us, and did infinite credit to my mother's powers

of contrivance. Forty years and more elapsed between my first acquaintance with Weybridge and my last visit there. The Duke of York's house at Oatlands, afterwards inhabited by my friends Lord and Lady Ellesmere, had become a country hotel, pleasant to all its visitors but those who, like myself, saw ghosts in its rooms and on its gravel walks; its lovely park, a nest of "villas," made into a suburb of London by the railroads that intersect in all directions the wild moorland twenty miles from the city, which looked, when I first knew it, as if it might be a hundred.

I read and spent a night at the Oatlands Hotel, and walked, before I did so, to my mother's old cottage. The tiny house had had some small additions, and looked new and neat and well cared for. The mound, however, still stood its ground, and had relapsed into something of its old savage condition; it would have warranted a theory of Mr. Oldbuck's as to its possible former purposes and origin. I looked at its crumbled and irregular wall, from which the turf had peeled or been washed away; at the tangled growth of grasses and weeds round the top, crenellated with many a breach and gap; and the hollow, now choked up with luxuriant evergreens that overtopped the inclosure and forbade entrance to it, and thought of my mother's work and my girlish play there, and was glad to see her old sand-heap was still standing, though her planting had, with the blessing of time, made it impenetrable to me.

Our cottage was the last decent dwelling on that side of the village; between ourselves and the heath and pine wood there was one miserable shanty, worthy of the poorest potato patch in Ireland. It was inhabited by a ragged ruffian of the name of E——,

whose small domain we sometimes saw undergoing arable processes by the joint labor of his son and heir, a ragged ruffian some sizes smaller than himself, and of a half-starved jackass, harnessed together to the plow he was holding; occasionally the team was composed of the quadruped and a tattered and fierce-looking female biped, a more terrible object than even the man and boy and beast whose labors she shared.

On the other side our nearest neighbors, separated from us by the common and its boundary road, were a family of the name of ——, between whose charming garden and pretty residence and our house a path was worn by a constant interchange of friendly intercourse.

I followed no regular studies whatever during our summer at Weybridge. We lived chiefly in the open air, on the heath, in the beautiful wood above the meadows of Brooklands, and in the neglected, picturesque inclosure of Portmore Park, whose tenantless, half-ruined mansion, and noble cedars, with the lovely windings of the river Wey in front, made it a place an artist would have delighted to spend his hours in.

We haunted it constantly for another purpose. My mother had a perfect passion for fishing, and would spend whole days by the river, pursuing her favorite sport. We generally all accompanied her, carrying baskets and tackle and bait, kettles and camp stools, and looking very much like a family of gypsies on the tramp. We were each of us armed with a rod, and were more or less interested in the sport. We often started after an early breakfast, and, taking our luncheon with us, remained the whole day long

absorbed in our quiet occupation.

My mother was perfectly unobservant of all rules of angling, in her indiscriminate enthusiasm, and "took to the water" whether the wind blew, the sun shone, or the rain fell; fishing—under the most propitious or unpropitious circumstances—was not, indeed, necessarily, catching fish, but still, fishing; and she was almost equally happy whether she did or did not catch any thing. I have known her remain all day in patient expectation of the "glorious nibble," stand through successive showers, with her clothes between whiles drying on her back, and only reluctantly leave the water's edge when it was literally too dark to see her float.

Although we all fished, I was the only member of the family who inherited my mother's passion for it, and it only developed much later in me, for at this time I often preferred taking a book under the trees by the river-side, to throwing a line; but towards the middle of my life I became a fanatical fisherwoman, and was obliged to limit my waste of time to one day in the week, spent on the Lenox lakes, or I should infallibly have wandered thither and dreamed away my hours on their charming shores or smooth expanse daily.

I have often wondered that both my mother and myself (persons of exceptional impatience of disposition and irritable excitability of temperament) should have taken such delight in so still and monotonous an occupation, especially to the point of spending whole days in an unsuccessful pursuit of it. The fact is that the excitement of hope, keeping the attention constantly alive, is the secret of the charm of this strong fascination, infinitely more than even the exercise of successful skill. And this element of

prolonged and at the same time intense expectation, combined with the peculiarly soothing nature of the external objects which surround the angler, forms at once a powerful stimulus and a sedative especially grateful in their double action upon excitable organizations.

CHAPTER V.

I have said that we all more or less joined in my mother's fishing mania at Weybridge; but my sister, then a girl of about eleven years, never had any liking for it, which she attributed to the fact that my mother often employed her to bait the hook for her. My sister's "tender-hefted" nature was horribly disgusted and pained by this process, but my own belief is that had she inherited the propensity to catch fish, even that would not have destroyed it in her. I am not myself a cruel or hardhearted woman (though I have the hunter's passion very strongly), and invariably baited my own hook, in spite of the disgust and horror I experienced at the wretched twining of the miserable worms round my fingers, and springing of the poor little live bait with its back pierced with a hook. But I have never allowed any one to do this office for me, because it seemed to me that to inflict such a task on any one, because it was revolting to me, was not fair or sportsmanlike; and so I went on torturing my own bait and myself, too eagerly devoted to the sport to refrain from it, in spite of the price I condemned myself to pay for it. Moreover, if I have ever had female companions on

my fishing excursions, I have invariably done this service for them, thinking the process too horrid for them to endure; and have often thought that if I were a man, nothing could induce me to marry a woman whom I had seen bait her own hook with any thing more sensitive than paste.

I have said that I followed no systematic studies after I left school; but from that time began for me an epoch of indiscriminate, omnivorous reading, which lasted until I went upon the stage, when all my own occupations were necessarily given up for the exercise of my profession.

At this time my chief delight was in such German literature as translations enabled me to become acquainted with. La Motte Fouqué, Tieck, Wieland's "Oberon," Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister," were my principal studies; soon to be followed by the sort of foretaste of Jean Paul Richter that Mr. Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus" gave his readers; both matter and manner in that remarkable work bearing far more resemblance to the great German Incomprehensible than to any thing in the English language, certainly not excepting Mr. Carlyle's own masterly articles in the *Edinburgh Review* on Burns, Elliot the Corn-Law Rhymer, etc. Besides reading every book that came within my reach, I now commenced the still more objectionable practice of scribbling verses without stint or stay; some, I suppose, in very bad Italian, and some, I am sure, in most indifferent English; but the necessity was on me, and perhaps an eruption of such rubbish was a safer process than keeping it in the mental system might have proved; and in the meantime this intellectual effervescence added immensely to the pleasure of my country life, and my long, rambling walks in that wild, beautiful

neighborhood.

I remember at this moment, by the by, a curious companionship we had in those walks. A fine, big Newfoundland dog and small terrier were generally of the party; and, nothing daunted by their presence, an extremely tame and affectionate cat, who was a member of the family, invariably joined the procession, and would accompany us in our longest walks, trotting demurely along by herself, a little apart from the rest, though evidently considering herself a member of the party.

The dogs, fully occupied with each other, and with discursive raids right and left of the road, and parenthetical rushes in various directions for their own special delectation, would sometimes, returning to us at full gallop, tumble over poor puss and roll her unceremoniously down in their headlong career. She never, however, turned back for this, but, recovering her feet, with her back arched all but in two, and every hair of her tail standing on end with insulted dignity, vented in a series of spittings and swearings her opinion of dogs in general and those dogs in particular, and then resumed her own decently demure gait and deportment; thanking Heaven, I have no doubt, in her cat's soul, that she was not that disgustingly violent and ill-mannered beast—a dog.

My brothers shared with us our fishing excursions and these walks, when at home from school; besides, I was promoted to their nobler companionship by occasionally acting as long-stop or short-stop (stop of some sort was undoubtedly my title) in insufficiently manned or boyed games of cricket: once, while nervously discharging this onerous duty, I received a

blow on my instep from a cricket ball which I did not stop, that seemed to me a severe price for the honor of sharing my brothers' manly pastimes. A sport of theirs in which I joined with more satisfaction was pistol-shooting at a mark: I had not a quick eye, but a very steady hand, so that with a deliberate aim I contrived to hit the mark pretty frequently. I liked this quiet exercise of skill better than that dreadful watching and catching of cannon-balls at cricket; though the noise of the discharge of fire-arms was always rather trying to me, and I especially resented my pistol missing fire when I had braced my courage for the report. My brother John at this time possessed a rifle and a fowling-piece, with the use of both of which he endeavored to familiarize me; but the rifle I found insupportably heavy, and as for the other gun, it kicked so unmercifully, in consequence, I suppose, of my not holding it hard enough against my shoulder the first time I fired it, that I declined all further experiments with it, and reverted to the pretty little lady-like pocket pistols, which were the only fire-arms I ever used until one fine day, some years later, when I was promoted to the honor of firing an American cannon on the practicing ground of the young gentlemen cadets of West Point.

While we retained our little cottage at Weybridge, the house of Oatlands, the former residence of the Duke of York, and burial-place of the duchess's favorite dogs, whose cemetery was one of the "lions" of the garden, was purchased by a Mr. ——, a young gentleman of very large fortune, who came down there and enlivened the neighborhood occasionally with his sporting prowesses, which consisted in walking out, attired in the very height of Bond Street dandyism, with two attendant gamekeepers, one of whom carried and handed him his gun when he

wished to fire it, the other receiving it from him after it had been discharged. This very luxurious mode of following his sport caused some sarcastic comment in the village.

This gentleman did not long retain possession of Oatlands, and it was let to the Earl of Ellesmere, then Lord Francis Egerton, with whom and Lady Francis we became acquainted soon after their taking it; an acquaintance which on my part grew into a strong and affectionate regard for both of them. They were excellent and highly accomplished, and, when first I knew them, two of the handsomest and most distinguished-looking persons I have ever seen.

Our happy Weybridge summers, which succeeded each other for three years, had but one incident of any importance for me—my catching the small-pox, which I had very severely. A slight eruption from which my sister suffered was at first pronounced by our village Æsculapius to be chicken-pox, but presently assumed the more serious aspect of varioloid. My sister, like the rest of us, had been carefully vaccinated; but the fact was then by no means so generally understood as it now is, that the power of the vaccine dies out of the system by degrees, and requires renewing to insure safety. My mother, having lost her faith in vaccination, thought that a natural attack of varioloid was the best preservative from small-pox, and my sister having had her seasoning so mildly and without any bad result but a small scar on her long nose, I was sent for from London, where I was, with the hope that I should take the same light form of the malady from her; but the difference of our age and constitution was not taken into consideration, and I caught the disease, indeed, but as nearly as possible died of it,

and have remained disfigured by it all my life.

I was but little over sixteen, and had returned from school a very pretty-looking girl, with fine eyes, teeth, and hair, a clear, vivid complexion, and rather good features. The small-pox did not affect my three advantages first named, but, besides marking my face very perceptibly, it rendered my complexion thick and muddy and my features heavy and coarse, leaving me so moderate a share of good looks as quite to warrant my mother's satisfaction in saying, when I went on the stage, "Well, my dear, they can't say we have brought you out to exhibit your beauty." Plain I certainly was, but I by no means always looked so; and so great was the variation in my appearance at different times, that my comical old friend, Mrs. Fitzhugh, once exclaimed, "Fanny Kemble, you are the ugliest and the handsomest woman in London!" And I am sure, if a collection were made of the numerous portraits that have been taken of me, nobody would ever guess any two of them to be likenesses of the same person.

The effect of natural small-pox on the skin and features varies extremely in different individuals, I suppose according to their constitution. My mother and her brother had the disease at the same time, and with extreme violence; he retained his beautiful bright complexion and smooth skin and handsome features; my mother was deeply pitted all over her face, though the fine outline of her nose and mouth was not injured in the slightest degree; while with me, the process appeared to be one of general thickening or blurring, both of form and color. Terrified by this result of her unfortunate experiment, my poor mother had my brothers immediately vaccinated, and thus saved them from

the infection which they could hardly have escaped, and preserved the beauty of my youngest brother, which then and for several years after was very remarkable.

Mrs. F—— is among the most vivid memories of my girlish days. She and her husband were kind and intimate friends of my father and mother. He was a most amiable and genial Irish gentleman, with considerable property in Ireland and Suffolk, and a fine house in Portland Place, and had married his cousin, a very handsome, clever, and eccentric woman. I remember she always wore a bracelet of his hair, on the massive clasp of which were engraved the words, "Stesso sangue, stessa sorte." I also remember, as a feature of sundry dinners at their house, the first gold dessert service and table ornaments that I ever saw, the magnificence of which made a great impression upon me; though I also remember their being replaced, upon Mrs. F—— wearying of them, by a set of ground glass and dead and burnished silver, so exquisite, that the splendid gold service was pronounced infinitely less tasteful and beautiful.

Mrs. F——'s sons were school-fellows of my eldest brother, under Dr. Malkin, the master of the grammar school of Bury St. Edmunds; and at this time we always saw Dr. and Mrs. Malkin when they visited London, and I was indebted to the doctor for a great deal of extremely kind interest which he took in my mental development and cultivation.

He suggested books for my reading, and set me, as a useful exercise, to translate Sismondi's fine historical work, "Les Républiques Italiennes," which he wished me to abridge for publication. I was not a little proud

of Dr. Malkin's notice and advice; he was my brother's school-master, an object of respectful admiration, and a kind and condescending friend to me.

He was a hearty, genial man, of portly person, and fine, intelligent, handsome face; active and energetic in his habits and movements, in spite of a slight lameness, which I remember he accounted for to me in the following manner. He was very intimate with Miss O'Neil before she left the stage and became Lady Becher. While dancing with her in a country-dance one evening at her house, she exclaimed, on hearing a sudden sonorous twang, "Dear me! there is one of the chords of my harp snapped." "Indeed it is not," replied Dr. Malkin; "it is my tendo-Achillis which has snapped." And so it was; and from that time he always remained lame.

Mrs. Malkin was a more uncommon person than her husband; the strength of her character and sweetness of her disposition were alike admirable, and the bright vivacity of her countenance and singular grace and dignity of her person must be a pleasant memory in the minds of all who, like myself, knew her while she was yet in the middle bloom of life.

Dr. and Mrs. Malkin's sons were my brother's school and college mates. They were all men of ability, and good scholars, as became their father's sons. Sir Benjamin, the eldest, achieved eminence as a lawyer, and became an Indian judge; and the others would undoubtedly have risen to distinction but for the early death that carried off Frederick and Charles, and the hesitation of speech which closed almost all public careers to their brother Arthur.

He was a prominent and able contributor to the

"Library of Useful Knowledge," and furnished a great part of the first of a whole generation of delightful publications, Murray's "Hand-Book" for Switzerland.

One of the earliest of Alpine explorers, Arthur Malkin mounted to those icy battlements which have since been scaled by a whole army of besiegers, and planted the banner of English courage and enterprise on "peaks, passes, and glaciers" which, when he first climbed the shining summits of the Alps, were all but *terra incognita* to his countrymen.

There is nothing more familiar to the traveling and reading British public nowadays than Alpine adventures and their records; but when my friend first conquered the passes between Evolena and Zermatt (still one of the least overrun mountain regions of Switzerland), their sublime solitudes were awful with the mystery of unexplored loneliness. Now professors climb up them, and artists slide down them, and they are photographed with "members" straddling over their dire crevasses, or cutting capers on their scornful summits, or turning somersaults down their infinite precipices. The air of the high Alps was inhaled by few Englishmen before Arthur Malkin; one can not help thinking that now, even on the top of the Matterhorn and Monte Rosa, it must have lost some of its freshness.

I have said that all Dr. Malkin's sons were men of more than average ability; but one, who never lived to be a man, "died a most rare boy" of about six years, fully justifying by his extraordinary precocity and singular endowments the tribute which his bereaved father paid his memory in a modest and touching record of his brief and remarkable existence.

My Parisian education appeared, at this time, to have failed signally in the one especial result that might have been expected from it: all my French dancing lessons had not given me a good deportment, nor taught me to hold myself upright. I stooped, slouched, and poked, stood with one hip up and one shoulder down, and exhibited an altogether disgracefully ungraceful carriage, which greatly afflicted my parents. In order that I might "bear my body more seemly," various were the methods resorted to; among others, a hideous engine of torture of the backboard species, made of steel covered with red morocco, which consisted of a flat piece placed on my back, and strapped down to my waist with a belt and secured at the top by two epaulets strapped over my shoulders. From the middle of this there rose a steel rod or spine, with a steel collar which encircled my throat and fastened behind. This, it was hoped, would eventually put my shoulders down and my head up, and in the meantime I had the appearance of a young woman walking about in a portable pillory. The ease and grace which this horrible machine was expected to impart to my figure and movements were, however, hardly perceptible after considerable endurance of torture on my part, and to my ineffable joy it was taken off (my harness, as I used to call it; and no knight of old ever threw off his iron shell with greater satisfaction), and I was placed under the tuition of a sergeant of the Royal Foot Guards, who undertook to make young ladies carry themselves and walk well, and not exactly like grenadiers either. This warrior having duly put me through a number of elementary exercises, such as we see the awkward squads on parade grounds daily drilled in, took leave of me with the verdict, that I "was fit to march before

the Duke of York," then commander of the forces; and, thanks to his instructions, I remained endowed with a flat back, well-placed shoulders, an erect head, upright carriage, and resolute step.

I think my education had come nearly to a standstill at this period, for, with the exception of these physical exercises, and certain hours of piano-forte practicing and singing lessons, I was left very much to the irregular and unsystematic reading which I selected for myself. I had a good contralto voice, which my mother was very desirous of cultivating, but I think my progress was really retarded by the excessive impatience with which her excellent ear endured my unsuccessful musical attempts. I used to practice in her sitting-room, and I think I sang out of tune and played false chords oftener, from sheer apprehension of her agonized exclamations, than I should have done under the supervision of a less sensitively organized person. I remember my sister's voice and musical acquirements first becoming remarkable at this time, and giving promise of her future artistic excellence. I recollect a ballad from the Mexican opera by Bishop, called Cortex, "Oh, there's a Mountain Palm," which she sang with a clear, high, sweet, true little voice and touching expression, full of pathos, in which I used to take great delight.

The nervous terror which I experienced when singing or playing before my mother was carried to a climax when I was occasionally called upon to accompany the vocal performances of our friendly acquaintance, James Smith (one of the authors of the "Rejected Addresses"). He was famous for his humorous songs and his own capital rendering of them, but the anguish I endured in accompanying him made those

comical performances of his absolutely tragical to me; the more so that he had a lion-like cast of countenance, with square jaws and rather staring eyes. But perhaps he appeared so stern-visaged only to me; while he sang everybody laughed, but I perspired coldly and felt ready to cry, and so have but a lugubrious impression of some of the most amusing productions of that description, heard to the very best advantage (if I could have listened to them at all) as executed by their author.

Among our most intimate friends at this time were my cousin Horace Twiss and his wife. I have been reminded of him in speaking of James Smith, because he had a good deal of the same kind of humor, not unmixed with a vein of sentiment, and I remember his songs, which he sang with great spirit and expression, with the more pleasure that he never required me to accompany them. One New-Year's Eve that he spent with us, just before going away he sang charmingly some lines he had composed in the course of the evening, the graceful turn of which, as well as the feeling with which he sang them, were worthy of Moore. I remember only the burden:

"Oh, come! one genial hour improve,
And fill one measure duly;
A health to those we truly love,
And those who love us truly!"

And this stanza:

"To-day has waved its parting wings,
To join the days before it;
And as for what the morning brings,
The morning's mist hangs o'er it."

It was delightful to hear him and my mother talk together, and their disputes, though frequent, seemed generally extremely amicable, and as diverting to themselves as to us. On one occasion he ended their discussion (as to whether some lady of their acquaintance had or had not gone somewhere) by a vehement declaration which passed into a proverb in our house: "Yes, yes, she did; for a woman will go anywhere, at any time, with anybody, to see any thing—especially in a gig." Those were days in which a gig was a vehicle the existence of which was not only recognized in civilized society, but supposed to confer a diploma of "gentility" upon its possessor.

Horace Twiss was one of the readiest and most amusing talkers in the world, and when he began to make his way in London society, which he eventually did very successfully, ill-natured persons considered his first step in the right direction to have been a repartee made in the crush-room of the opera, while standing close to Lady L——, who was waiting for her carriage. A man he was with saying, "Look at that fat Lady L——; isn't she like a great white cabbage?" "Yes," answered Horace, in a discreetly loud tone, "she *is* like one—all heart, I believe." The white-heart cabbage turned affably to the rising barrister, begged him to see her to her carriage, and gave him the *entrée* of H—— House. Lord Clarendon subsequently put him in Parliament for his borough of Wootton-Basset, and for a short time he formed part of the ministry, holding one of the under-secretaryships. He was clever, amiable, and good-tempered, and had every qualification for success in society.

He had married a Miss Searle, one of his mother's pupils at the fashionable Bath boarding-school, the

living image of Scott's Fenella, the smallest woman that I have ever seen, with fairy feet and tiny hands, the extraordinary power of which was like that of a steel talon. On one occasion, when Horace Twiss happened to mention that his bright little spark of a wife sat working in his library by him, while he was engaged with his law or business papers, my mother suggested that her conversation must disturb him. "Oh, she doesn't talk," said he, "but I like to hear the scissors fall," a pretty conjugal reply, that left a pleasant image in my mind. His only child by her, a daughter, married first Mr. Bacon, then editor of the *Times*, and, after his death, John Delane, who succeeded him in that office and still holds it; so that her father said "she took the *Times* and Supplement."

About this time I began to be aware of the ominous distresses and disturbances connected with the affairs of the theater, that were to continue and increase until the miserable subject became literally the sauce to our daily bread; embittering my father's life with incessant care and harassing vexation; and of the haunting apprehension of that ruin which threatened us for years, and which his most strenuous efforts only delayed, without averting it.

The proprietors were engaged in a lawsuit with each other, and finally one of them threw the whole concern into chancery; and for years that dreary chancery suit seemed to envelop us in an atmosphere of palpitating suspense or stagnant uncertainty, and to enter as an inevitable element into every hope, fear, expectation, resolution, event, or action of our lives.

How unutterably heart-sick I became of the very sound of its name, and how well I remember the

expression on my father's careworn face one day, as he turned back from the door, out of which he was going to his daily drudgery at the theater, to say to my aunt, who had reproached him with the loss of a button from his rather shabby coat, "Ah, Dall, my dear, you see it is my chancery suit!"

Lord Eldon, Sir John Leach, Lord Lyndhurst, and Lord Brougham were the successive chancellors before whom the case was heard; the latter was a friend of my family, and on one occasion my father took me to the House of Lords to hear the proceedings. We were shown into the chancellor's room, where he indeed was not, but where his huge official wig was perched upon a block; the temptation was irresistible, and for half a minute I had the awful and ponderous periwig on my pate.

While we were still living in Soho Square our house was robbed; or rather, my father's writing-desk was broken open, and sixty sovereigns taken from it—a sum that he could very hardly spare. He had been at the theater, acting, and my mother had spent the evening at some friend's house, and the next morning great was the consternation of the family on finding what had happened. The dining-room sideboard and *cellarette* had been opened, and wine and glasses put on the table, as if our robbers had drank our good health for the success of their attempt.

A Bow Street officer was sent for; I remember his portly and imposing aspect very well; his name was Salmon, and he was a famous member of his fraternity. He questioned my mother as to the honesty of our servants; we had but three, a cook, housemaid, and footman, and for all of these my mother answered unhesitatingly; and yet the expert

assured her that very few houses were robbed without connivance from within.

The servants were had up and questioned, and the cook related how, coming down first thing in the morning, she had found a certain back scullery window open, and, alarmed by that, had examined the lower rooms, and found the dining-room table set out with the decanters and glasses. Having heard her story, the officer, as soon as she left the room, asked my mother if any thing else besides the money had been taken, and if any quantity of the wine had been drank. She said, "No," and with regard to the last inquiry, she supposed, as the cook had suggested when the decanters were examined, that the thieves had probably been disturbed by some alarm, and had not had time to drink much.

Mr. Salmon then requested to look at the kitchen premises; the cook officiously led the way to the scullery window, which was still open, "just as she found it," she said, and proceeded to explain how the robbers must have got over the wall of a court which ran at the back of the house. When she had ended her demonstrations and returned to the kitchen, Salmon, who had listened silently to her story of the case, detained my mother for an instant, and rapidly passed his hand over the outside window-sill, bringing away a thick layer of undisturbed dust, which the passage of anybody through the window must infallibly have swept off. Satisfied at once of the total falsity of the cook's hypothesis, he told my mother that he had no doubt at all that she was a party to the robbery, that the scullery window and dining-room drinking scene were alike mere blinds, and that in all probability she had let into the house whoever had broken open the desk, or else forced it

herself, having acquired by some means a knowledge of the money it contained; adding, that in the very few words of interrogatory which had passed between him and the servants, in my mother's presence, he had felt quite sure that the housemaid and man were innocent; but had immediately detected something in the cook's manner that seemed to him suspicious. What a fine tact of guilt these detectives acquire in their immense experience of it! The cook was not prosecuted, but dismissed, the money, of course, not being recoverable; it was fortunate that neither she nor her honest friends had any suspicion of the contents of three boxes lying in the drawing-room at this very time. They were large, black leather cases, containing a silver helmet, shield, and sword, of antique Roman pattern and beautiful workmanship—a public tribute bestowed upon my uncle, and left by him to my father; they have since become an ornamental trophy in my sister's house. They were then about to be sent for safe keeping to Coutts's bank, and in the meantime lay close to the desk that had been rifled of a more portable but far less valuable booty.

Upon my uncle John's death his widow had returned to England, and fixed her residence at a charming place called Heath Farm, in Hertfordshire. Lord Essex had been an attached friend of my uncle's, and offered this home on his property to Mrs. Kemble when she came to England, after her long sojourn abroad with my uncle, who, as I have mentioned, spent the last years of his life, and died, at Lausanne. Mrs. Kemble invited my mother to come and see her soon after she settled in Hertfordshire, and I accompanied her thither. Cashiobury Park thus became familiar ground to me, and remains endeared to my recollection for its own beauty, for the

delightful days I passed rambling about it, and for the beginning of that love bestowed upon my whole life by H—— S——. Heath Farm was a pretty house, at once rural, comfortable, and elegant, with a fine farm-yard adjoining it, a sort of cross between a farm and a manor house; it was on the edge of the Cashiobury estate, within which it stood, looking on one side over its lawn and flower-garden to the grassy slopes and fine trees of the park, and on the other, across a road which divided the two properties, to Lord Clarendon's place, the Grove. It had been the residence of Lady Monson before her (second) marriage to Lord Warwick. Close to it was a pretty cottage, also in the park, where lived an old Miss M——, often visited by a young kinswoman of hers, who became another of my life-long friends. T —— B——, Miss M——'s niece, was then a beautiful young woman, whose singularly fine face and sweet and spirited expression bore a strong resemblance to two eminently handsome people, my father and Mademoiselle Mars. She and I soon became intimate companions, though she was several years my senior. We used to take long rambles together, and vaguely among my indistinct recollections of her aunt's cottage and the pretty woodland round it, mix sundry flying visions of a light, youthful figure, that of Lord M——, then hardly more than a lad, who seemed to haunt the path of his cousin, my handsome friend, and one evening caused us both a sudden panic by springing out of a thicket on us, in the costume of a Harlequin. Some years after this, when I was about to leave England for America, I went to take leave of T—— B——. She was to be married the next day to Lord M——, and was sitting with his mother, Lady W——, and on a table near her lay a set of jewels, as peculiar as they were

magnificent, consisting of splendid large opals set in diamonds, black enamel, and gold....

To return to our Cashiobury walks: T—— B—— and I used often to go together to visit ladies, the garden round whose cottage overflowed in every direction with a particular kind of white and maroon pink, the powerful, spicy odor of which comes to me, like a warm whiff of summer sweetness, across all these intervening fifty years. Another favorite haunt of ours was a cottage (not of gentility) inhabited by an old man of the name of Foster, who, hale and hearty and cheerful in extreme old age, was always delighted to see us, used to give us choice flowers and fruit out of his tiny garden, and make me sit and sing to him by the half-hour together in his honeysuckle-covered porch. After my first visit to Heath Farm some time elapsed before we went thither again. On the occasion of our second visit Mrs. Siddons and my cousin Cecilia were also Mrs. Kemble's guests, and a lady of the name of H—— S ——. She had been intimate from her childhood in my uncle Kemble's house, and retained an enthusiastic love for his memory and an affectionate kindness for his widow, whom she was now visiting on her return to England. And so I here first knew the dearest friend I have ever known. The device of her family is "Haut et Bon:" it was her description. She was about thirty years old when I first met her at Heath Farm; tall and thin, her figure wanted roundness and grace, but it was straight as a dart, and the vigorous, elastic, active movements of her limbs, and firm, fleet, springing step of her beautifully made feet and ankles, gave to her whole person and deportment a character like that of the fabled Atalanta, or the huntress Diana herself. Her forehead and eyes were beautiful. The broad, white,

pure expanse surrounded with thick, short, clustering curls of chestnut hair, and the clear, limpid, bright, tender gray eyes that always looked radiant with light, and seemed to reflect radiance wherever they turned, were the eyes and forehead of Aurora. The rest of her features were not handsome, though her mouth was full of sensibility and sweetness, and her teeth were the most perfect I ever saw. She was eccentric in many things, but in nothing more so than the fashion of her dress, especially the coverings she provided for her extremities, her hat and boots. The latter were not positively masculine articles, but were nevertheless made by a man's boot-maker, and there was only one place in London where they could be made sufficiently ugly to suit her; and infinite were the pains she took to procure the heavy, thick, cumbrous, misshapen things that as much as possible concealed and disfigured her finely turned ankles and high, arched, Norman instep. Indeed, her whole attire, peculiar (and very ugly, I thought it) as it was, was so by malice prepense on her part. And whereas the general result would have suggested a total disregard of the vanities of dress, no Quaker coquette was ever more jealous of the peculiar texture of the fabrics she wore, or of the fashion in which they were made. She wore no colors, black and gray being the only shades I ever saw her in; and her dress, bare and bald of every ornament, was literally only a covering for her body; but it was difficult to find cashmere fine enough for her scanty skirts, or cloth perfect enough for her short spencers, or lawn clear and exquisite enough for her curious collars and cuffs of immaculate freshness.

I remember a similar peculiarity of dress in a person in all other respects the very antipodes of my friend H——. My mother took me once to visit a certain

Miss W——, daughter of a Stafford banker, her very dear friend, and the godmother from whom I took my second name of Anne.

This lady inhabited a quaint, picturesque house in the oldest part of the town of Stafford. Well do I remember its oak-wainscoted and oak-paneled chambers, and the fine old oak staircase that led from the hall to the upper rooms; also the extraordinary abundance and delicacy of our meals, particularly the old-fashioned nine o'clock supper, about every item of which, it seemed to me, more was said and thought than about any food of which I ever before or since partook. It was in this homely palace of good cheer that a saying originated, which passed into a proverb with us, expressive of a rather *un*nice indulgence of appetite.

One of the ladies, going out one day, called back to the servant who was closing the door behind her: "Tell the cook not to forget the sally-lunns" (a species of muffin) "for tea, well greased on both sides, and we'll put on our cotton gowns to eat them."

The appearance of the mistress of this mansion of rather obsolete luxurious comfort was strikingly singular. She was a woman about sixty years old, tall and large and fat, of what Balzac describes as "un embonpoint flottant," and was habitually dressed in a white linen cambric gown, long and tending to train, but as plain and tight as a bag over her portly middle person and prominent bust; it was finished at the throat with a school-boy's plaited frill, which stood up round her heavy falling cheeks by the help of a white muslin or black silk cravat. Her head was very nearly bald, and the thin, short gray hair lay in distant streaks upon her skull, white and shiny as an

ostrich egg, which on the rare occasions of her going out, or into her garden, she covered with a man's straw or beaver hat.

It is curious how much minor eccentricity the stringent general spirit of formal conformity allows individuals in England: nowhere else, scarcely, in civilized Europe, could such a costume be worn in profound, peaceful defiance of public usage and opinion, with perfect security from insult or even offensive comment, as that of my mother's old friend, Miss W——, or my dear H—— S——. In this same Staffordshire family and its allies eccentricity seemed to prevail alike in life and death; for I remember hearing frequent mention, while among them, of connections of theirs who, when they died, one and all desired to be buried in full dress and with their coffins *standing upright*.

To return to Heath Farm and my dear H——. Nobility, intelligence, and tenderness were her predominating qualities, and her person, manner, and countenance habitually expressed them.

This lady's intellect was of a very uncommon order; her habits of thought and reading were profoundly speculative; she delighted in metaphysical subjects of the greatest difficulty, and abstract questions of the most laborious solution. On such subjects she incessantly exercised her remarkably keen powers of analysis and investigation, and no doubt cultivated and strengthened her peculiar mental faculties and tendencies by the perpetual processes of metaphysical reasoning which she pursued.

Between H—— S—— and myself, in spite of nearly twelve years' difference in our age, there sprang up a lively friendship, and our time at Heath Farm was

spent in almost constant companionship. We walked and talked together the livelong day and a good part of the night, in spite of Mrs. Kemble's judicious precaution of sending us to bed with very moderate wax candle ends; a prudent provision which we contrived to defeat by getting from my cousin, Cecilia Siddons, clandestine alms of fine, long, *life-sized* candles, placed as mere supernumeraries on the toilet table of a dressing-room adjoining her mother's bedroom, which she never used. At this time I also made the acquaintance of my friend's brother, who came down to Heath Farm to visit Mrs. Kemble and his sister. He possessed a brilliant intellect, had studied for the bar, and at the same time made himself favorably known by a good deal of clever periodical writing; but he died too early to have fully developed his genius, and left as proofs of his undoubtedly superior talents only a few powerfully written works of fiction, indicating considerable abilities, to which time would have given maturity, and more experience a higher direction.

Among the principal interests of my London life at this time was the production at our theater of Weber's opera, "Der Freyschütz." Few operas, I believe, have had a wider or more prolonged popularity; none certainly within my recollection ever had any thing approaching it. Several causes conduced to this effect. The simple pathos of the love story, and the supernatural element so well blended with it, which gave such unusual scope to the stage effects of scenery, etc., were two obvious reasons for its success.

From the inimitably gay and dramatic laughing chorus and waltz of the first scene to the divine melody in which the heroine expresses her unshaken

faith in Heaven, immediately before her lover's triumph closes the piece, the whole opera is a series of exquisite conceptions, hardly one of which does not contain some theme or passage calculated to catch the dullest and slowest ear and fix itself on the least retentive memory; and though the huntsman's and bridesmaid's choruses, of course, first attained and longest retained a street-organ popularity, there is not a single air, duet, concerted piece, or chorus, from which extracts were not seized on and carried away by the least musical memories. So that the advertisement of a German gentleman for a valet, who to other necessary qualifications was to add the indispensable one of not being able to whistle a note of "Der Freyschütz," appeared a not unnatural result of the universal furor for this music.

We went to hear it until we literally knew it by heart, and such was my enthusiasm for it that I contrived to get up a romantic passion for the great composer, of whom I procured a hideous little engraving (very ugly he was, and very ugly was his "counterfeit presentment," with high cheek-bones, long hooked nose, and spectacles), which, folded up in a small square and sewed into a black silk case, I carried like an amulet round my neck until I completely wore it out, which was soon after poor Weber's death.

CHAPTER VI.

The immense success of "Der Freyschütz," and the

important assistance it brought to the funds of the theater, induced my father to propose to Weber to compose an opera expressly for Covent Garden. The proposal met with ready acceptance, and the chivalric fairy tale of Wieland's "Oberon" was selected for the subject, and was very gracefully and poetically treated by Mr. Planché, to whom the literary part of the work—the libretto—was confided, and who certainly bestowed as much pains on the versification of his lyrical drama as if it was not destined to be a completely secondary object to the music in the public estimation. Weber himself, however, was by no means a man to disregard the tenor of the words and characters he was to associate with his music, and was greatly charmed with his English coadjutor's operatic version of Wieland's fairy epic. He was invited to come over to London and himself superintend the production of his new work.

Representations of "Der Freyschütz" were given on his arrival, and night after night the theater was crowded to see him preside in the orchestra and conduct his own fine opera; and the enthusiasm of the London public rose to fever height. Weber took up his abode at the house of Sir George Smart, the leader of the Covent Garden orchestra, and our excellent old friend—a capital musician and very worthy man. He was appointed organist to King William IV., and for many years directed those admirable performances of classical music called the Ancient Concerts.

He was a man of very considerable musical knowledge, and had a peculiar talent for teaching and accompanying the vocal compositions of Handel. During the whole of my father's management of Covent Garden, he had the supervision of the musical

representations and conducted the orchestra, and he was principally instrumental in bringing out Weber's fine operas of "Der Freyschütz" and "Oberon." Weber continued to reside in Sir George Smart's house during the whole of his stay in London, and died there soon after the production of his "Oberon." Sir George Smart was the first person who presented Mendelssohn to me. I had been acting Juliet one night, and at the end of the play was raised from the stage by my kind old friend, who had been in the orchestra during the performance, with the great composer, then a young man of nineteen, on his first visit to England. He brought letters of introduction to my father, and made his first acquaintance with me in my grave-clothes. Besides my esteem and regard for Sir George's more valuable qualities, I had a particular liking for some excellent snuff he always had, and used constantly to borrow his snuff-box to sniff at it like a perfume, not having attained a sufficiently mature age to venture upon "pinches;" and a snuff-taking Juliet being inadmissible, I used to wish myself at the elderly lady age when the indulgence might be becoming: but before I attained it, snuff was no longer taken by ladies of any age, and now, I think, it is used by very few men.

In a letter written to me by my mother, during my temporary absence from London, just after the accession of King William IV., I find the following passage with reference to Sir George Smart:

"London is all alive; the new king seems idolized by the people, and he appears no less pleased with them; perhaps Sir George is amongst the happiest of his subjects. His Majesty swears that nothing shall be encouraged but *native talent*, and our friend is to get up a concert at the Duke of Sussex's, where the royal

family are all to dine, at which none but English singers are to perform. Sir George dined with me on Monday, and I perceive he has already arranged in his thoughts all he proposes *to tell the queen about you* on this occasion. It is evident he flatters himself that he is to be deep in her Majesty's confidence."

Sir George Smart and his distinguished guest, Weber, were constantly at our house while the rehearsals of "Oberon" went forward. The first day they dined together at my father's was an event for me, especially as Sir George, on my entering the room, took me by the hand, and drawing me toward Weber, assured him that I and all the young girls in England were over head and ears in love with him. With my guilty satchel round my neck, I felt ready to sink with confusion, and stammered out something about Herr von Weber's beautiful music, to which, with a comical, melancholy smile, he replied, "Ah, my music! it is always my music, but never myself!"

Baron Carl Maria von Weber was a noble-born Saxon German, whose very irregular youth could hardly, one would suppose, have left him leisure to cultivate or exercise his extraordinary musical genius; but though he spent much of his early life in wild dissipation, and died in middle age, he left to the world a mass of compositions of the greatest variety and beauty, and a name which ranks among the most eminent in his pre-eminently musical country. He was a little thin man, lame of one foot, and with a slight tendency to a deformed shoulder. His hollow, sallow, sickly face bore an expression of habitual suffering and ill health, and the long, hooked nose, salient cheek-bones, light, prominent eyes, and spectacles were certainly done no more than justice to in the unattractive representation of my cherished

portrait of him.

He had the air and manner of a well-born and well-bred man of the world, a gentle voice, and a slow utterance in English, which he spoke but indifferently and with a strong accent; he generally conversed with my father and mother in French. One of the first visits he paid to Covent Garden was in my mother's box, to hear Miss Paton and Braham (his prima donna and tenor) in an oratorio. He was enthusiastic in his admiration of Braham's fine performance of one of Handel's magnificent songs ("Deeper and deeper still," I think), but when, in the second part of the concert, which consisted of a selection of secular music, the great singer threw the house into ecstasies, and was tumultuously encored in the pseudo-Scotch ballad of "Blue Bonnets over the Border," he was extremely disgusted, and exclaimed two or three times, "Ah, that is *beast*!" (Ah, cela est bête!) to our infinite diversion. Much more aggravating proof was poor Weber destined to have of the famous tenor's love of mere popularity in his art, and strange enough, no doubt, to the great German composer was the thirst for ignorant applause which induced Braham to reject the beautiful, tender, and majestic opening air Weber had written for him in the character of Huon, and insist upon the writing of a battle-piece which might split the ears of the groundlings and the gods, and furnish him an opportunity for making some of the startling effects of lyrical declamation which never failed to carry his audience by storm.

No singer ever delivered with greater purity or nobler breadth Handel's majestic music; the masterly simplicity of his execution of all really fine compositions was worthy of his first-rate powers; but

the desire of obtaining by easier and less elevated means the acclamations of his admirers seemed irresistible to him, and "Scots wha hae," with the flourish of his stick in the last verse, was a sure triumph which he never disdained. Weber expressed unbounded astonishment and contempt at this unartistic view of things, and with great reluctance at length consented to suppress, or rather transfer to the overture, the noble and pathetic melody designed for Huon's opening song, for which he submitted the fine warlike cantata beginning—

> "Oh,'tis a glorious sight to see
> The charge of the Christian chivalry!"

in which, to be sure, Braham charged with the Christians, and routed the Paynims, and mourned for the wounded, and wept for the dead, and returned in triumph to France in the joyous cabaletta, with wonderful dramatic effect, such as, no doubt, the other song would never have enabled him to produce. But the success of the song did not reconcile Weber to what he considered the vulgarity and inappropriateness of its subject, and the circumstance lowered his opinion both of the English singer and of the English public very grievously.

How well I remember all the discussions of those prolonged, repeated, anxious, careful rehearsals, and the comical despair of which Miss Paton, the heroine of the opera, was the occasion to all concerned, by the curious absence of dramatic congruity of gesture and action which she contrived to combine with the most brilliant and expressive rendering of the music. In the great shipwreck scene, which she sang magnificently, she caught up the short end of a sash tied around her waist, and twirled it about without

unfastening it, by way of signaling from the top of a rock for help from a distant vessel, the words she sang being, "Quick, quick, for a signal this scarf shall be *waved*!" This performance of hers drew from my father the desperate exclamation, "That woman's an inspired idiot!" while Weber limped up and down the room silently wringing his hands, and Sir George Smart went off into ecstatic reminiscences of a certain performance of my mother's, when—in some musical arrangement of "Blue Beard" (by Kelly or Storace, I think), in the part of Sister Anne—she waved and signaled and sang from the castle wall, "I see them galloping! I see them galloping!" after a very different fashion, that drew shouts of sympathetic applause from her hearers.

Miss Paton married Lord William Lennox, was divorced from her husband and married Mr. Wood, and pursued her career as a public singer for many years successfully after this event; nor was her name in any way again made a subject of public animadversion, though she separated herself from Mr. Wood, and at one time was said to have entertained thoughts of going into a Roman Catholic nunnery. Her singing was very admirable, and her voice one of the finest in quality and compass that I ever heard. The effects she produced on the stage were very remarkable, considering the little intellectual power or cultivation she appeared to possess. My father's expression of "an inspired idiot," though wrung from him by the irritation of momentary annoyance, was really not inapplicable to her. She sang with wonderful power and pathos her native Scotch ballads, she delivered with great purity and grandeur the finest soprano music of Handel, and though she very nearly drove poor Weber mad with her apparent want of intelligence

during the rehearsals of his great opera, I have seldom heard any thing finer than her rendering of the difficult music of the part of Reiza, from beginning to end, and especially the scene of the shipwreck, with its magnificent opening recitative, "Ocean, thou mighty monster!"

"Oberon" was brought out and succeeded; but in a degree so far below the sanguine expectations of all concerned, that failure itself, though more surprising, would hardly have been a greater disappointment than the result achieved at such a vast expenditure of money, time, and labor. The expectations of the public could not have been realized by any work which was to be judged by comparison with their already permanent favorite, "Der Freyschütz." No second effort could have seemed any thing but second-best, tried by the standard of that popular production; and whatever judgment musicians and connoisseurs might pronounce as to the respective merits of the two operas, the homely test of the "proof of the pudding" being "in the eating" was decidedly favorable to the master's earlier work; and my own opinion is, that either his "Euryanthe" or his "Preciosa" would have been more popular with the general English public than the finer and more carefully elaborated music of "Oberon." The story of the piece (always a main consideration in matters of art, with average English men and women) wanted interest, certainly, as compared with that of its predecessor; the chivalric loves and adventures of Huon of Bordeaux and the caliph's daughter were indifferent to the audience, compared with the simple but deep interest of the fortunes of the young German forester and his village bride; and the gay and brilliant fairy element of the "Oberon" was no sort of equivalent for the startling *diablerie* of Zamiel,

and the incantation scene. The music, undoubtedly of a higher order than that of "Der Freyschütz," was incomparably more difficult and less popular. The whole of the part of Reiza was trying in the extreme, even to the powers of the great singer for whom it was written, and quite sure not to be a favorite with prime donne from its excessive strain upon the voice, particularly in what is the weaker part of almost all soprano registers; and Reiza's first great aria, the first song of the fairy king, and Huon's last song in the third act, are all compositions of which the finest possible execution must always be without proportionate effect on any audience, from the extreme difficulty of rendering them and their comparative want of melody. By amateurs, out of Germany, the performance of any part of the music was not likely ever to be successfully attempted; and I do not think that a single piece in the opera found favor with the street organists, though the beautiful opening chorus was made into a church hymn by discarding the exquisite aerial fairy symphonies and accompaniments; and the involuntary dance of the caliph's court and servants at the last blast of the magical horn was for a short time a favorite waltz in Germany.

Poor Weber's health, which had been wretched before he came to England, and was most unfavorably affected by the climate, sank entirely under the mortification of the comparatively small success of his great work. He had labored and fretted extremely with the rehearsals, and very soon after its production he became dangerously ill, and died—not, as people said, of a broken heart, but of disease of the lungs, already far advanced when he came to London, and doubtless accelerated by these influences. He died in Sir George Smart's house, who

gave me, as a memorial of the great composer whom I had so enthusiastically admired, a lock of his hair, and the opening paragraph of his will, which was extremely touching and impressive in its wording.

The plaintive melody known as "Weber's Waltz" (said to have been his last composition, found after his death under his pillow) was a tribute to his memory by some younger German composer (Reichardt or Ries); but though not his own, it owed much of its popularity to his name, with which it will always be associated. Bellini transferred the air, verbatim, into his opera of "Beatrice di Tenda," where it appears in her song beginning, "Orombello, ah Sciagurato!" A circumstance which tended to embitter a good deal the close of Weber's life was the arrival in London of Rossini, to whom and to whose works the public immediately transferred its demonstrations of passionate admiration with even more, than its accustomed fickleness. Disparaging comparisons and contrasts to Weber's disadvantage were drawn between the two great composers in the public prints; the enthusiastic adulation of society and the great world not unnaturally followed the brilliant, joyous, sparkling, witty Italian, who was a far better subject for London *lionizing* than his sickly, sensitive, shrinking, and rather soured German competitor for fame and public favor.

The proud, morbid sensitiveness of the Northern genius was certainly in every respect the very antipodes of the healthy, robust, rejoicing, artistic nature of the Southern.

No better instance, though a small one, perhaps, could be given of the tone and temper in which Rossini was likely to encounter both adverse

criticism and the adulation of amateur idolatry, than his reply to the Duchess of Canizzaro, one of his most fanatical worshipers, who asked him which he considered his best comic opera; when, with a burst of joyous laughter, he named "Il Matrimonio Secreto," Cimarosa's enchanting *chef-d'œuvre*, from which, doubtless, Rossini, after the fashion of great geniuses, had accepted more than one most felicitous suggestion, especially that of the admirable finale to the second act of the "Barbiere." It was during this visit of his to London, while Weber lay disappointed and dying in the dingy house in Great Portland Street, that this same Duchess of Canizzaro, better known by her earlier title of Countess St. Antonio, as a prominent leader of fashionable taste in musical matters, invited all the great and gay and distinguished world of London to meet the famous Italian composer; and, seated in her drawing-room with the Duke of Wellington and Rossini on either side of her, exclaimed, "Now I am between the two greatest men in Europe." The Iron Duke not unnaturally rose and left his chair vacant; the great genius retained his, but most assuredly not without humorous appreciation of the absurdity of the whole scene, for he was almost "plus fin que tous les autres," and certainly "bien plus fin que tous *ces* autres."

About this time I returned again to visit Mrs. Kemble at Heath Farm, and renew my days of delightful companionship with H—— S——. Endless were our walks and talks, and those were very happy hours in which, loitering about Cashiobury Park, I made its echoes ring with the music of "Oberon," singing it from beginning to end—overture, accompaniment, choruses, and all; during which performances my friend, who was no musician, used to keep me

company in sympathetic silence, reconciled by her affectionate indulgence for my enthusiasm to this utter postponement of sense to sound. What with her peculiar costume and my bonnetless head (I always carried my bonnet in my hand when it was possible to do so) and frenzied singing, any one who met us might have been justified in supposing we had escaped from the nearest lunatic asylum.

Occasionally we varied our rambles, and one day we extended them so far that the regular luncheon hour found us at such a distance from home, that I—hungry as one is at sixteen after a long tramp—peremptorily insisted upon having food; whereupon my companion took me to a small roadside ale-house, where we devoured bread and cheese and drank beer, and while thus vulgarly employed beheld my aunt's carriage drive past the window. If that worthy lady could have seen us, that bread and cheese which was giving us life would inevitably have been her death; she certainly would have had a stroke of apoplexy (what the French call *foudroyante*), for gentility and propriety were the breath of life to her, and of the highest law of both, which can defy conventions, she never dreamed.

Another favorite indecorum of mine (the bread and cheese was mere mortal infirmity, not moral turpitude) was wading in the pretty river that ran through Lord Clarendon's place, the Grove; the brown, clear, shallow, rapid water was as tempting as a highland brook, and I remember its bright, flashing stream and the fine old hawthorn trees of the avenue, alternate white and rose-colored, like clouds of fragrant bloom, as one of the sunniest pictures of those sweet summer days.

The charm and seduction of bright water has always been irresistible to me, a snare and a temptation I have hardly ever been able to withstand; and various are the chances of drowning it has afforded me in the wild mountain brooks of Massachusetts. I think a very attached maid of mine once saved my life by the tearful expostulations with which she opposed the bewitching invitations of the topaz-colored flashing rapids of Trenton Falls, that looked to me in some parts so shallow, as well as so bright, that I was just on the point of stepping into them, charmed by the exquisite confusion of musical voices with which they were persuading me, when suddenly a large tree-trunk of considerable weight shot down their flashing surface and was tossed over the fall below, leaving me to the natural conclusion, "Just such a log should I have been if I had gone in there." Indeed, my worthy Marie, overcome by my importunity, having selected what seemed to her a safe, and to me a very tame, bathing-place, in another and quieter part of the stream, I had every reason, from my experience of the difficulty of withstanding its powerful current there, to congratulate myself upon not having tried the experiment nearer to one of the "springs" of the lovely torrent, whose Indian name is the "Leaping Water." Certainly the pixies—whose cousin my friends accused me of being, on account of my propensity for their element—if they did not omit any opportunity of alluring me, allowed me to escape scathless on more than one occasion, when I might have paid dearly for being so much or so little related to them.

This fascination of living waters for me was so well known among my Lenox friends of all classes, that on one occasion a Yankee Jehu of our village, driving some of them by the side of a beautiful mountain

brook, said, "I guess we should hardly have got Mrs. Kemble on at all, alongside of this stream," as if I had been a member of his *team*, made restive by the proximity of water. A pool in a rocky basin, with foaming water dashing in and out of it, was a sort of trap for me, and I have more than once availed myself of such a shower-bath, without any further preparation than taking my hat and shoes and stockings off. Once, on a visit to the Catskills, during a charming summer walk with my dear friend, Catherine Sedgwick, I walked into the brook we were coasting, and sat down in the water, without at all interrupting the thread of our conversation; a proceeding which, of course, obliged me to return to the hotel dripping wet, my companion laughing so immoderately at my appearance, that, as I represented to her, it was quite impossible for me to make anybody believe that I had met with an accident and *fallen* into the water, which was the impression I wished (in the interest of my reputation for sanity) to convey to such spectators as we might encounter.

On another occasion, coming over the Wengern Alp from Grindelwald one sultry summer day, my knees were shaking under me with the steep and prolonged descent into Lauterbrunnen. Just at the end of the wearisome downward way an exquisite brook springs into the Lutschine, as it flies through the valley of waterfalls, and into this I walked straight, to the consternation of my guides and dear companion, a singularly dignified little American lady, of Quaker descent and decorum, who was quite at a loss to conceive how, after such an exploit, I was to present myself to the inhabitants, tourists, and others of the little street and its swarming hotels, in my drenched and dripping condition; but, as I represented to her,

nothing would be easier: "I shall get on my mule and ride sprinkling along, and people will only say, 'Ah, cette pauvre dame! qui est tombée à l'eau!'"

My visit to my aunt Kemble was prolonged beyond the stay of my friend H——, and I was left alone at Heath Farm. My walks were, of course, circumscribed, and the whole complexion of my life much changed by my being given over to lonely freedom limited only by the bounds of our pleasure-grounds, and my living converse with my friend exchanged for unrestricted selection from my aunt's book-shelves; from which I made a choice of extreme variety, since Lord Byron and Jeremy Taylor were among the authors with whom I then first made acquaintance, my school introduction to the former having been followed up by no subsequent intimacy.

I read them on alternate days, sitting on the mossy-cushioned lawn, under a beautiful oak tree, with a cabbage-leaf full of fresh-gathered strawberries and a handful of fresh-blown roses beside me, which Epicurean accompaniments to my studies appeared to me equally adapted to the wicked poet and the wise divine. Mrs. Kemble in no way interfered with me, and was quite unconscious of the subjects of my studies; she thought me generally "a very odd girl," but though I occasionally took a mischievous pleasure in perplexing her by fantastical propositions, to which her usual reply was a rather acrimonious "Don't be absurd, Fanny," she did not at all care to investigate my oddity, and left me to my own devices.

Among her books I came upon Wraxall's "Memoirs of the House of Valois," and, reading it with great avidity, determined to write an historical novel, of

which the heroine should be Françoise de Foix, the beautiful Countess de Châteaubriand. At this enterprise I now set eagerly to work, the abundant production of doggerel suffering no diminution from this newer and rather soberer literary undertaking, to which I added a brisk correspondence with my absent friend, and a task she had set me (perhaps with some vague desire of giving me a little solid intellectual occupation) of copying for her sundry portions of "Harris's Hermes;" a most difficult and abstruse grammatical work, much of which was in Latin, not a little in Greek. All these I faithfully copied, Chinese fashion, understanding the English little better than the two dead languages which I transcribed—the Greek without much difficulty, owing to my school-day proficiency in the alphabet of that tongue. These literary exercises, walks within bounds, drives with my aunt, and the occasional solemnity of a dinner at Lord Essex's, were the events of my life till my aunt, Mrs. Whitelock, came to Heath Farm and brought an element of change into the procession of our days.

I think these two widowed ladies had entertained some notion that they might put their solitude together and make society; but the experiment did not succeed, and was soon judiciously abandoned, for certainly two more hopelessly dissimilar characters never made the difficult experiment of a life in common.

Mrs. Kemble, before she went to Switzerland, had lived in the best London society, with which she kept up her intercourse by zealous correspondence; the names of lords and ladies were familiar in her mouth as household words, and she had undoubtedly an undue respect for respectability and reverence for

titled folk; yet she was not at all superficially a vulgar woman. She was quick, keen, clever, and shrewd, with the air, manner, dress, and address of a finished woman of the world. Mrs. Whitelock was simple-hearted and single-minded, had never lived in any English society whatever, and retorted but feebly the fashionable gossip of the day which reached Mrs. Kemble through the London post, with her transatlantic reminiscences of Prince Talleyrand and General Washington. She was grotesque in her manner and appearance, and a severe thorn in the side of her conventionally irreproachable companion, who has been known, on the approach of some coroneted carriage, to observe pointedly, "Mrs. Whitelock, there is an *ekkipage*." "I see it, ma'am," replied the undaunted Mrs. Whitelock, screwing up her mouth and twirling her thumbs in a peculiarly emphatic way, to which she was addicted in moments of crisis. Mrs. Kemble, who was as quick as Pincher in her movements, rang the bell and snapped out, "Not at home!" denying herself her stimulating dose of high-life gossip, and her companion what she would have called a little "genteel sociability," rather than bring face to face her fine friends and Mrs. Whitelock's flounced white muslin apron and towering Pamela cap, for she still wore such things. I have said that Mrs. Kemble was not (superficially) a vulgar woman, but it would have taken the soul of gentility to have presented, without quailing, her amazingly odd companion to her particular set of visitors. A humorist would have found his account in the absurdity of the scene all round; and Jane Austen would have made a delicious chapter of it; but Mrs. Kemble had not the requisite humor to perceive the fun of her companion, her acquaintances, and herself in juxtaposition. I have mentioned her mode of

pronouncing the word equipage, which, together with several similar peculiarities that struck me as very odd, were borrowed from the usage of London good society in the days when she frequented it. My friend, Lord Lansdowne, never called London any thing but *Lunnon*, and always said *obleege* for oblige, like the Miss Berrys and Mrs. F—— and other of their contemporaries, who also said *ekkipage*, *pettikits*, *divle*. Since their time the pronunciation of English in good society, whose usage is the only acknowledged law in that matter, and the grammatical construction of the language habitual in that same good society, has become such as would have challenged the severest criticism, if we had ventured upon it in my father's house.

The unsuccessful partnership of my aunts was dissolved. Mrs. Kemble found the country intolerably dull, declared that the grass and trees made her sick, and fixed her abode in Leamington, then a small, unpretending, pretty country town, which (principally on account of the ability, reputation, and influence of its celebrated and popular resident physician, Dr. Jephson) was a sort of aristocratic-invalid Kur Residenz, and has since expanded into a thriving, populous, showy, semi-fashionable, Anglo-American watering-place in summer, and hunting-place in winter. Mrs. Kemble found the Leamington of her day a satisfactory abode; the Æsculapius, whose especial shrine it was, became her intimate friend; the society was comparatively restricted and select; and the neighborhood, with Warwick Castle, Stoneleigh Abbey, and Guy's Cliff, full of state and ancientry, within a morning's drive, was (which she cared less for) lovely in every direction. Mrs. Whitelock betook herself to a really rural life in a cottage in the beautiful neighborhood of Addlestone,

in Surrey, where she lived in much simple content, bequeathing her small mansion and estate, at her death, to my mother, who passed there the last two years of her life and died there. I never returned to Heath Farm again; sometimes, as I steam by Watford, the image of the time I spent there rises again before me, but I pass from it at forty miles an hour, and it passed from me upwards of forty years ago.

We were now occupying the last of the various houses which for a series of years we inhabited at Bayswater; it belonged to a French Jew diamond seller, and was arranged and fitted up with the peculiar tastefulness which seems innate across the Channel, and inimitable even on the English side of it. There was one peculiarity in the drawing-room of this house which I have always particularly liked: a low chimney with a window over it, the shutter to which was a sliding panel of looking-glass, so that both by day and candle light the effect was equally pretty.

At this time I was promoted to the dignity of a bedroom "to myself," which I was able to make into a small study, the privacy of which I enjoyed immensely, as well as the window opening above our suburban bit of garden, and the sloping meadows beyond it. The following letters, written at this time to my friend Miss S——, describe the interests and occupations of my life. It was in the May of 1827. I was between sixteen and seventeen, which will naturally account for the characteristics of these epistles.

BAYSWATER, May, 1827.

DEAR H——:

I fear you will think me forgetful and unkind in not having answered your last letter; but if you do, you are mistaken—nor ungrateful, which my silence, after the kind interest you have taken in me and mine, seems to be. But when I tell you that besides the many things that have occupied my mind connected with the present situation of our affairs, my hands have been full of work nearly as dismal as my thoughts—mourning—you will easily understand and excuse the delay.

Do not be alarmed; the person for whom we are in black has been so little known to me since my childhood, was so old and infirm, and so entirely cheerful, resigned, and even desirous of leaving this world, that few, even of those who knew and loved him better than I did, could, without selfishness, lament his release. Mr. Twiss, the father of my cousin Horace, is dead lately; and it is of him that I speak. He has unfortunately left three daughters, who, though doing well for themselves in the world, will now feel a sad void in the circle of their home affections and interests.

And now, dear H——, for myself, or ourselves, rather; for, as you may well suppose, my whole thoughts are taken up with our circumstances.

I believe in my last I told you pretty nearly all I knew, or indeed any of us knew, of our affairs; the matter is now much clearer, and not a whit pleasanter.

It seems that my father, as proprietor of

Covent Garden Theater, in consequence of this lawsuit and the debts which encumber the concern, is liable at any time to be called upon for twenty-seven thousand pounds; which, for a man who can not raise five thousand, is not a pleasant predicament. On the other hand, Mr. Harris, our adversary, and joint proprietor with my father, is also liable to enormous demands, if the debts should be insisted upon at present.

The creditors have declared that they are entirely satisfied that my father, and Messrs. Forbes and Willett, the other partners, have done every thing with respect to them which honorable men could do, and offer to wait till some compromise can be made with Mr. Harris, who, it is thought, will be willing to enter into any arrangement rather than be irretrievably ruined, as we all must be unless some agreement takes place between the proprietors. In the meantime, the lawyers have advised our party to appeal from the decision of the Vice-Chancellor. Amid all this perplexity and trouble, we have had the satisfaction of hearing that John and Henry are both doing well; we received a letter from the latter a short time ago, full of affection and kindness to us all. I wish you could have seen my father's countenance as he read it, and with what fondness and almost gratitude he kissed dear Henry's name, while the tears were standing in his eyes. I can not help thinking sometimes that my father deserved a less hard and toilsome existence.

He has resolved that, come what may, he will keep those boys at their respective schools, if he can by any means compass it; and if (which I fear is the case) he finds Bury St. Edmunds too expensive, we shall remove to Westminster, in order that Henry's education may not suffer from our circumstances. Last Thursday was my father's benefit, and a very indifferent one, which I think is rather hard, considering that he really slaves night and day, and every night and every day, in that theater. Cecilia Siddons and I have opened a poetical correspondence; she writes very prettily indeed. Perhaps, had she not had such a bad subject as myself to treat of, I might have said more of her verses. You will be sorry to hear that not only my poor mother's health, but what is almost as precious, her good spirits, have been dreadfully affected by all her anxiety; indeed, her nerves have been so utterly deranged that she has been alternately deaf and blind, and sometimes both, for the last fortnight. Thank Heaven she is now recovering!

CRAVEN HILL, BAYSWATER, May, 1827.

MY DEAREST H——:

I received your letter the day before yesterday, and felt very much obliged to you for it, and was particularly interested by your description of Kenilworth, round which Walter Scott's admirable novel has cast a halo of romance forever; for many who

would have cared little about it as the residence of Leicester, honored for some days by the presence of Elizabeth, will remember with a thrill of interest and pity the night poor Amy Robsart passed there, and the scene between her, Leicester, and the queen, when that prince of villains, Varney, claims her as his wife. But in spite of the romantic and historical associations belonging to the place, I do not think it would have "inspired my muse."

Of our affairs I know nothing, except that we are going to remove to Westminster, on account of Henry's schooling, as soon as we can part with this house.

You will be glad to hear that my mother is a great deal better, though still suffering from nervousness. She desires to be most kindly remembered to you and to my aunt Kemble, and would feel very much obliged to you if you can get from Mrs. Kemble the name and address of the man who built her pony carriage. Do this, and send it in the next letter you write to me, which must be long, but not "long a-coming."

I am glad you like Miss W——, but take care not to like her better than me; and I am very glad you think of Heath Farm sometimes, for there, I know, I must be in some corner or other of the picture, be the foreground what it may. At this time, when the hawthorn is all out and the nightingales are singing, even here, I think of the quantities of May we gathered for my wreaths, and the little scrap

of the nightingale's song we used to catch on the lawn between tea and bedtime. I have been writing a great deal of poetry—at least I mean it for such, and I hope it is not all very bad, as my father has expressed himself surprised and pleased at some things I read him lately. I wish I could send you some of my perpetrations, but they are for the most part so fearfully long that it is impossible. You ask about my uncle's monument: I can tell you nothing about it at present; it is where the memory of the public, the perseverance of the projectors, Flaxman's genius, and John Kemble's fame are. Do you know where that is? No more do I.

CRAVEN HILL, BAYSWATER, June 8, 1827.

MY DEAR H——:

I am sure you will rejoice with us all when I inform you that John has at length exerted himself successfully, and has obtained one of the highest literary honors conferred by Cambridge on its students: these are his tutor's very words, therefore I leave you to imagine how delighted and grateful we all are; indeed, the day we received the intelligence, we all, with my father at our head, looked more like hopeful candidates for Bedlam than any thing else. My poor father jumped, and clapped his hands, and kissed the letter, like a child; as my mother says, "I am glad he has one gleam of sunshine, at least;" he sadly wanted it, and I know nothing that could have given him so

much pleasure. Pray tell my aunt Kemble of it. I dare say she will be glad to hear it. [My brother's tutor was Mr. Peacock, the celebrated mathematician, well known at Cambridge as one of the most eminent members of the university, and a private tutor of whom all his pupils were deservedly proud; even those who, like my brother John, cultivated the classical studies in preference to the severe scientific subjects of which Mr. Peacock was so illustrious a master. His praise of my brother was regretful, though most ungrudging, for his own sympathy was entirely with the intellectual pursuits for which Cambridge was peculiarly famous, as the mathematical university, in contradistinction to the classical tendency supposed to prevail at this time among the teachers and students of Oxford.]

And now let me thank you for your last long letter, and the detailed criticism it contained of my lines; if they oftener passed through such a wholesome ordeal, I should probably scribble less than I do. You ask after my novel of "Françoise de Foix," and my translation of Sismondi's History; the former may, perhaps, be finished some time these next six years; the latter is, and has been, in Dr. Malkin's hands ever since I left Heath Farm. What you say of scriptural subjects I do not always think true; for instance, "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept," does not appear to me to have lost much beauty by Byron's poetical paraphrase. We are really going to leave this pleasant

place, and take up our abode in Westminster; how I shall regret my dear little room, full of flowers and books, and with its cheerful view. Enfin il n'y faut plus penser. I have, luckily, the faculty of easily accommodating myself to circumstances, and though sorry to leave my little hermitage, I shall soon take root in the next place. With all my dislike to moving, my great wish is to travel; but perhaps that is not an absolute inconsistency, for what I wish is never to remain long enough in a place to take root, or, having done so, never to be transplanted. I am writing a journal, and its pages, like our many pleasant hours of conversation, are a whimsical medley of the sad, the sober, the gay, the good, the bad, and the ridiculous; not at all the sort of serious, solemn journal you would write.

CRAVEN HILL, BAYSWATER, ——, 1827.

MY DEAREST H——:

I am afraid you are wondering once more whether I have the gout in my hands; but so many circumstances have latterly arisen to occupy my time and attention that I have had but little leisure for letter-writing. You are now once more comfortably re-established in your little turret chamber [Miss S——'s room in her home, Ardgillan Castle], which I intend to come and storm some day, looking over your pleasant lawn to the beautiful sea and hills. I ought to envy you, and yet, when I look round my own

little snuggery, which is filled with roses and the books I love, and where not a ray of sun penetrates, though it is high noon and burning hot, I only envy you your own company, which I think would be a most agreeable addition to the pleasantness of my little room. I am sadly afraid, however, that I shall soon be called upon to leave it, for though our plans are still so unsettled as to make it quite impossible to say what will be our destination, it is, I think, almost certain that we shall leave this place.

We have had Mrs. Henry Siddons, with her youngest daughter, staying with us for a short time; she is now going on through Paris to Switzerland, on account of my cousin's delicate health, which renders Scotland an unsafe residence for her. John is also at home just now, which, as you may easily believe, is an invaluable gain to me; I rather think, however, that my mother is not of that opinion, for he talks and thinks of nothing but politics, and she has a great dread of my becoming imbued with his mania; a needless fear, I think, however, for though I am willing and glad to listen to his opinions and the arguments of his favorite authors, I am never likely to study them myself, and my interest in the whole subject will cease with his departure for Cambridge.

Henry returned from Bury St. Edmunds, and my father left us for Lancaster last night, and we are now in daily expectation of departing for Weybridge, so that the last fortnight has been one continual bustle.

I have had another reason for not writing to you, which I have only just made up my mind to tell you. Dick —— has been taking my likeness, or rather has begun to do so. I thought, dear H——, that you would like to have this sketch, and I was in hopes that the first letter you received in Ireland from me would contain it; but, alas! Dick is as inconstant and capricious as a genius need be, and there lies my fac-simile in a state of non-conclusion; they all tell me it is very like, but it does appear to me so pretty that I am divided between satisfaction and incredulity. My father, I lament to say, left us last night in very bad spirits. I never saw him so depressed, and feared that my poor mother would suffer to-day from her anxiety about him; however, she is happily pretty well to-day, and I trust will soon, what with Weybridge and pike-fishing, recover her health and spirits entirely.

I suspect this will be the last summer we shall spend at Weybridge, as we are going to give our cottage up, I believe. I shall regret it extremely for my mother; it is agreeable to and very good for her. I do not care much about it for myself; indeed, I care very little where I go; I do not like leaving any place, but the tie of habit, which is quickly formed and strong in me, once broken, I can easily accommodate myself to the next change, which, however, I always pray may be the last. My mother and myself had yesterday a serious, and to me painful, conversation on the necessity of not only not hating society, but tolerating and mixing in it. She and my

father have always been disinclined to it, but their disinclination has descended to me in the shape of active dislike, and I feel sometimes inclined to hide myself, to escape sitting down and communing with my fellow-creatures after the fashion that calls itself social intercourse. I can't help fancying (which, however, *may* be a great mistake) that the hours spent in my own room reading and writing are better employed than if devoted to people and things in which I feel no interest whatever, and do not know how to pretend the contrary.

I must do justice to my mother, however, for any one more reasonable, amiable, and kind, in this as in most respects, can not exist than herself; but nevertheless, when I went to bed last night I sat by my open window, looking at the moon and thinking of my social duties, and then scribbled endless doggerel in a highly Byronic mood to deliver my mind upon the subject, after which, feeling amazingly better, I went to bed and slept profoundly, satisfied that I had given "society" a death-blow. But really, jesting apart, the companionship of my own family —those I live with, I mean—satisfies me entirely, and I have not the least desire for any other.

Good-by, my dearest H——; do not punish me for not writing sooner by not answering this for two months; but be a nice woman and write very soon to yours ever,

FANNY.

> P.S.—I am reading the memoirs of Mademoiselle de Montpensier, la Grande Mademoiselle, written by herself: if you never read them, do; they are very interesting and amusing.

The "Dick" mentioned in this letter was the nephew of my godmother, Miss A—— W——, of Stafford, and son of Colonel ——, a Staffordshire gentleman of moderate means, who went to Germany and settled at Darmstadt, for the sake of giving a complete education in foreign languages and accomplishments to his daughters. His eldest son was in the Church. They resided at the little German court till the young girls became young women, remarkable for their talents and accomplishments. In the course of their long residence at Darmstadt they had become intimate with the reigning duke and his family, whose small royalty admitted of such friendly familiarity with well-born and well-bred foreigners. But when Colonel —— brought his wife and daughters back to England, like most other English people who try a similar experiment, the change from being decided *somebodies* in the court circle of a German principality (whose sovereign was chiefly occupied, it is true, with the government of his opera-house) to being decided *nobodies* in the huge mass of obscure, middle-class English gentility, was all but intolerable to them.

The peculiar gift of their second son, my eccentric friend Richard, was a genius for painting, which might have won him an honored place among English artists, had he ever chosen to join their ranks as a competitor for fame and fortune.

EASTLANDS COTTAGE, WEYBRIDGE, ——, 1827.

MY DEAR H——:

I wrote to you immediately upon our arriving here, which is now nearly a month ago, but having received no answer, and not having heard from you for some time, I conjecture that our charming post-office has done as it did last year, and kept my letters to itself. I therefore take the opportunity, which my brother's departure for town to-morrow gives me, of writing to you and having my letter posted in London. John's going to town is an extreme loss to me, for here we are more thrown together and companionable than we can be in London. His intellectual occupations and interests engross him very much, and though always very interesting to me, are seldom discussed with or communicated to me as freely there as they are here—I suppose for want of better fellowship. I have latterly, also, summoned up courage enough to request him to walk with me; and to my some surprise and great satisfaction, instead of the "I can't, I am really so busy," he has acquiesced, and we have had one or two very pleasant long strolls together. He is certainly a very uncommon person, and I admire, perhaps too enthusiastically, his great abilities.

My father is in Paris, where he was to arrive yesterday, and where to-morrow he will act in the first regularly and decently organized English theater that the French ever saw. He

is very nervous, and we, as you may easily conceive, very anxious about it; when next I write to you I will let you know all that we hear of the result. I must repeat some part of my last letter, in case you did not receive it. We have taken a house in James Street, Buckingham Gate, Westminster, which appears to be in every way a desirable and convenient abode; in itself it is comfortable and cheerful, and its nearness to Henry's school and comparative nearness to the theatre, together with its view over the park, and (though last, not least) its moderate rent, make up a mass of combined advantages which few other situations that we could afford can present.

I am extremely busy, dearest H——, and extremely elated about my play; I know I mentioned it before to you, but you may have reckoned it as one of the soap-bubbles which I am so fond of blowing, admiring, and forgetting; however, when I tell you that I have finished three acts of it, and that the proprietors of Covent Garden have offered me, if it succeeds, two hundred pounds (the price Miss Mitford's "Foscari" brought her), you will agree that I have some reason to be proud as well as pleased.

As nobody but myself can give you any opinion of it, you must be content to take my own, making all allowances for etc., etc., etc. I think, irrespective of age or sex, it is not a bad play—perhaps, considering both, a tolerably fair one; there is some good writing in it, and good situations; the latter I owe to

suggestions of my mother's, who is endowed with what seems to me really a science by itself, i.e. the knowledge of producing dramatic effect; more important to a playwright than even true delineation of character or beautiful poetry, in spite of what Alfieri says: "Un attore che dirà bene, delle cose belle si farà ascoltare per forza." But the "ben dire cose belle" will not make a play without striking situations and effects succeed, for all that; at any rate with an English audience of the present day. Moreover (but this, as well as everything about my play, must be *entre nous* for the present), my father has offered me either to let me sell my play to a bookseller, or to buy it for the theatre at fifty pounds.

Fifty pounds is the very utmost that any bookseller would give for a successful play, *mais en revanche*, by selling my play to the theater it cannot be read or known as a literary work, and as to make a name for myself as a writer is the aim of my ambition, I think I shall decline his offer. My dearest H ——, this quantity about myself and my pursuits will, I am afraid, appear very egotistical to you, but I rely on your unchangeable affection for me to find some interest in what is interesting me so much.

Always you most affectionate

FANNY.

CHAPTER VII.

The success of the English theater in Paris was quite satisfactory; and all the most eminent members of the profession—Kean, Young, Macready, and my father—went over in turn to exhibit to the Parisian public Shakespeare the Barbarian, illustrated by his barbarian fellow-countrymen. I do not remember hearing of any very eminent actress joining in that worthy enterprise; but Miss Smithson, a young lady with a figure and face of Hibernian beauty, whose superfluous native accent was no drawback to her merits in the esteem of her French audience, represented to them the heroines of the English tragic drama; the incidents of which, infinitely more startling than any they were used to, invested their fair victim with an amazing power over her foreign critics, and she received from them, in consequence, a rather disproportionate share of admiration—due, perhaps, more to the astonishing circumstances in which she appeared before them than to the excellence of her acting under them.

One of the most enthusiastic admirers of the English representations said to my father, "Ah! parlez moi d'Othello! voilà, voilà la passion, la tragédie. Dieu! que j'aime cette pièce! il y a tant de *remue-ménage*."

A few rash and superficial criticisms were hardly to be avoided; but in general, my father has often said, in spite of the difficulty of the foreign language, and the strangeness of the foreign form of thought and feeling and combination of incident, his Parisian audience never appeared to him to miss the finer touches or more delicate and refined shades of his acting; and in this respect he thought them superior

to his own countrymen. Lamartine and Victor Hugo had already proclaimed the enfranchisement of French poetical thought from the rigid rule of classical authority; and all the enthusiastic believers in the future glories of the "Muse Romantique" went to the English theater, to be amazed, if not daunted, by the breadth of horizon and height of empyrean which her wings might sweep, and into which she might soar, "puisque Shakespeare l'a bien osé."

ST. JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE,
October 11, 1827,

MY DEAREST H——,

I do not think you would have been surprised at my delay in answering your last, when I told you that on arriving here I found that all my goods and chattels had been (according to my own desire) only removed hither, and that their arrangement and bestowal still remained to be effected by myself; and when I tell you that I have settled all these matters, and moreover *finished my play*, I think you will excuse my not having answered you sooner. Last Monday, having in the morning achieved the termination of the fourth act, and finding that my father did not act on Tuesday, I resolved, if possible, to get it finished in order to read it to him on Tuesday evening. So on Monday evening at six o'clock I sat down to begin my fifth act, and by half-past eleven had completed my task; I am thus minute because I know you will not think these details tiresome, and also because, even if it succeeds and is praised and

admired, I shall never feel so happy as when my father greeted my entrance into the drawing-room with, "Is it done, my love? I shall be the happiest man alive if it succeeds!"

On Tuesday evening I read it to them, and I was so encouraged by the delighted looks my father and mother were continually exchanging, that I believe I read it with more effect than they either of them had thought me capable of. When it was done I was most richly rewarded, for they all seemed so pleased with me and so proud of me, that the most inordinate author's vanity would have been satisfied. And my dear mother, oh, how she looked at me!—forgive me, dear, and grant some little indulgence to my exultation. I thought I deserved some praise, but thrice my deserts were showered upon me by those I love above everything in the world.

When commendation and congratulation had a little given way to reflection, my mother and John entreated my father not to let the play be acted, or, if he did, to have it published first; for they said (and their opinion has been sanctioned by several literary men) that the work as a literary production (I repeat what they say, mind) has merit enough to make it desirable that the public should judge of it as a poetical composition before it is submitted to the mangling necessary for the stage.

Of course, my task being finished, I have

nothing more to do with it; nor do I care whether it is published first or after, provided only it may be acted: though I dare say that process may not prove entirely satisfactory to me either; for though Mr. Young and my father would thoroughly embody my conception of the parts intended for them, yet there is a woman's part which, considering the materials history has furnished, ought to be a very fine one—Louisa of Savoy; and it must be cut down to the capacity of a second-rate actress. The character would have been the sort of one for Mrs. Siddons; how I wish she was yet in a situation to afford it the high preferment of her acceptance!

My father has obtained a most unequivocal success in Paris, the more flattering as it was rather doubtful, and the excellent Parisians not only received him very well, but forthwith threw themselves into a headlong *furor* for Shakespeare and Charles Kemble, which, although they might not improbably do the same to-morrow for two dancing dogs, *we* are quite willing to attribute to the merits of the poet and his interpreter. The French papers have been profuse in their praises of both, and some of our own have quoted their commendations. My mother is, I think, recovering, though slowly, from her long illness. She is less deaf, and rather less blind; but for the general state of her health, time, and time alone, will, I am sure, restore it entirely. I have just seen the dress that my father had made abroad for his part in my play: a bright amber-colored *velours épinglé*,

with a border of rich silver embroidery; this, together with a cloak of violet velvet trimmed with imitation sable. The fashion is what you see in all the pictures and prints of Francis I. My father is very anxious, I think, to act the play; my mother, to have it published before it is acted; and I sit and hear it discussed and praised and criticised, only longing (like a "silly wench," as my mother calls me when I confess as much to her) to see my father in his lovely dress and hear the *alarums of my fifth act*.

I am a little mad, I suppose, and my letter a little tipsy, I dare say, but I am ever your most affectionate

FANNY.

16 ST. JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE,
WESTMINSTER,
October 21, 1827.

MY DEAR H——,

Your letter was short and sweet, but none the sweeter for being short. I should have thought no one could have been worse provided than myself with news or letter chit-chit, and yet I think my letters are generally longer than yours; brevity, in you, is a fault; do not be guilty of it again: "car du reste," as Madame de Sévigné says, "votre style est parfait." John returned to Cambridge on Thursday night. He is a great loss to me, for though I have seen but little of him since our return to town, that little is

too much to lose of one we love. He is an excellent fellow in every way, and in the way of abilities he is particularly to my mind. We all miss him very much; however, his absence will be broken now by visits to London, in order to keep his term [about this time my brother was entered at the Inner Temple, I think], so that we shall occasionally enjoy his company for a day or two. I should like to tell you something about my play, but unluckily have nothing to tell; everything about it is as undecided as when last I wrote to you. It is in the hands of the copyist of Covent Garden, but what its ultimate fate is to be I know not. If it is decided that it is to be brought out on the stage before publication, that will not take place at present, because this is a very unfavorable time of year. If I can send it to Ireland, tell me how I can get it conveyed to you, and I will endeavor to do so. I should like you to read it, but oh, *how* I should like to go and see it acted with you! I am now full of thoughts of writing a comedy, and have drawn out the plan of one—plot, acts, and scenes in due order—already; and I mean to make it Italian and mediæval, for the sake of having one of those bewitching creatures, a jester, in it; I have an historical one in my play, Triboulet, whom I have tried to make an interesting as well as an amusing personage.

My mother, by the aid of a blister and *my play*, is, I think, recovering, though slowly, from her illness; she is still, though, in a state of great suffering, which is by no means

alleviated by being unable to write, read, work, or occupy herself in any manner.

We have been to the play pretty regularly twice a week for the last three weeks, and shall continue to do so during the whole winter; which is a plan I much approve of. I am very fond of going to the play, and Kean, Young, and my father make one of Shakespeare's plays something well worth seeing. I saw the "Merchant of Venice" the other evening, for the first time, and returned home a violent *Keanite*. That man is an extraordinary creature! Some of the things he did, appeared, on reflection, questionable to my judgment and open to criticism; but while under the influence of his amazing power of passion it is impossible to reason, analyze, or do anything but surrender one's self to his forcible appeals to one's emotions. He entirely divested Shylock of all poetry or elevation, but invested it with a concentrated ferocity that made one's blood curdle. He seemed to me to combine the supernatural malice of a fiend with the base reality of the meanest humanity. His passion is prosaic, but all the more intensely terrible for that very reason. I am to see him to-morrow in "Richard III.," and, though I never saw the play before, am afraid I shall be disappointed, because Richard III. is a Plantagenet Prince, and should be a royal villain, and I am afraid Mr. Kean will not have the innate *majesty* which I think belongs to the part; however, we shall see, and when next I write I will tell you how it impressed me.

You deserve that I should bestow all my tediousness upon you, for loving me as well as you do. Mrs. Harry Siddons and her daughter are here for two or three days, on their return from their tour through Switzerland. Mrs. Harry is all that is excellent, though she does not strike me as particularly clever; and Lizzy is a very pretty, very good, very sweet, very amiable girl. Her brother, my cousin, the midshipman, is here too, having come up from Portsmouth to meet his mother and sister, so that the house is full. Think of that happy girl having travelled all through Switzerland, seen the Jungfrau—Manfred's mountain—been in two violent storms at night on the lakes, and telling me placidly that "she liked it all very well." Oh dear, oh dear! how queerly Heaven does distribute privileges! Good-by, dear.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

16 ST. JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE,
December, 1827.

MY DEAREST H——,

My heart is full of joy, and I write that you may rejoice with me; our dear John has distinguished himself greatly, but lest my words should seem sisterly and exaggerated, I will repeat what Mr. Peacock, his tutor, wrote to my father: "He has covered himself with glory. Such an oration as his has not been heard for many years in Cambridge, and it was as tastefully and modestly

delivered as it was well written." This has made us all *very, very* happy, and though the first news of it overcame my poor mother, whose nerves are far from firm, she soon recovered, and we are impatiently expecting his return from college. My play is at present being pruned by my father, and will therefore not occupy my thoughts again till it comes out, which I hope will be at Easter. I did not write sooner, because I had nothing to say; but now that this joy about my brother has come to me, *je te l'envoie*. Since last you heard from me I have seen the great West India Dock and the Thames Tunnel. Oh, H——, "que c'est une jolie chose que l'homme!" Annihilated by any one of the elements if singly opposed to its power, he by his genius yet brings their united forces into bondage, and compels obedience from all their manifold combined strength. We penetrate the earth, we turn the course of rivers, we exalt the valleys and bow down the mountains; and we die and return to our dust, and they remain and remember us no more. Often enough, indeed, the names of great inventors and projectors have been overshadowed or effaced by mere finishers of their work or adapters of their idea, who have reaped the honor and emolument due to an obscure originator, who passes away from the world, his rightful claim to its admiration and gratitude unknown or unacknowledged. But these obey the law of their being; they cannot but do the work God's inspiration calls them to.

But I must tell you what this tunnel is like, or

at least try to do so. You enter, by flights of stairs, the first door, and find yourself on a circular platform which surrounds the top of a well or shaft, of about two hundred feet in circumference and five hundred in depth. This well is an immense iron frame of cylindrical form, filled in with bricks; it was constructed on level ground, and then, by some wonderful mechanical process, sunk into the earth. In the midst of this is a steam engine, and above, or below, as far as your eye can see, huge arms are working up and down, while the creaking, crashing, whirring noises, and the swift whirling of innumerable wheels all round you, make you feel for the first few minutes as if you were going distracted. I should have liked to look much longer at all these beautiful, wise, working creatures, but was obliged to follow the last of the party through all the machinery, down little wooden stairs and along tottering planks, to the bottom of the well. On turning round at the foot of the last flight of steps through an immense dark arch, as far as sight could reach stretched a vaulted passage, smooth earth underfoot, the white arches of the roof beyond one another lengthening on and on in prolonged vista, the whole lighted by a line of gas lamps, and as bright, almost, as if it were broad day. It was more like one of the long avenues of light that lead to the abodes of the genii in fairy tales, than anything I had ever beheld. The profound stillness of the place, which was first broken by my father's voice, to which the vaulted roof gave extraordinary

and startling volume of tone, the indescribable feeling of subterranean vastness, the amazement and delight I experienced, quite overcame me, and I was obliged to turn from the friend who was explaining everything to me, to cry and ponder in silence. How I wish you had been with us, dear H——! Our name is always worth something to us: Mr. Brunel, who was superintending some of the works, came to my father and offered to conduct us to where the workmen were employed—an unusual favor, which of course delighted us all. So we left our broad, smooth path of light, and got into dark passages, where we stumbled among coils of ropes and heaps of pipes and piles of planks, and where ground springs were welling up and flowing about in every direction, all which was very strange. As you may have heard, the tunnel caved in once, and let the Thames in through the roof; and in order that, should such an accident occur again, no lives may be lost, an iron frame has been constructed—a sort of cage, divided into many compartments, in each of which a man with his lantern and his tools is placed —and as they clear the earth away this iron frame is moved onward and advances into new ground. All this was wonderful and curious beyond measure, but the appearance of the workmen themselves, all begrimed, with their brawny arms and legs bare, some standing in black water up to their knees, others laboriously shovelling the black earth in their cages (while they sturdily sung at their task), with the red, murky light of links

and lanterns flashing and flickering about them, made up the most striking picture you can conceive. As we returned I remained at the bottom of the stairs last of all, to look back at the beautiful road to Hades, wishing I might be left behind, and then we reascended, through wheels, pulleys, and engines, to the upper day. After this we rowed down the river to the docks, lunched on board a splendid East Indiaman, and came home again. I think it is better for me, however, to look at the trees, and the sun, moon, and stars, than at tunnels and docks; they make me too *humanity proud*.

I am reading "Vivian Grey." Have you read it? It is very clever.

Ever your most affectionate

FANNY.

16 ST. JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE,
January, 1828.

DEAREST H——,

I jumped, in despite of a horrid headache, when I saw your letter. Indeed, if you knew how the sight of your handwriting delights me, you would not talk of lack of matter; for what have I to tell you of more interest for you, than the health and proceedings of those you love must be to me?

Dear John is come home with his trophy. He is really a highly gifted creature; but I sometimes fear that the passionate eagerness

with which he *pursues his pursuit*, the sort of frenzy he has about politics, and his constant excitement about political questions, may actually injure his health, and the vehemence with which he speaks and writes in support of his peculiar views will perhaps endanger his future prospects.

He is neither tory nor whig, but a radical, a utilitarian, an adorer of Bentham, a worshiper of Mill, an advocate for vote by ballot, an opponent of hereditary aristocracy, the church establishment, the army and navy, which he deems sources of unnecessary national expense; though who is to take care of our souls and bodies, if the three last-named institutions are done away with, I do not quite see. Morning, noon, and night he is writing whole volumes of arguments against them, full of a good deal of careful study and reading, and in a close, concise, forcible style, which is excellent in itself, and the essays are creditable to his laborious industry; but they will not teach him mathematics, or give him a scholarship or his degree. That he will distinguish himself hereafter I have no doubt; but at present he is engrossed by a passion (for it seems to me nothing less) which occupies his mind and time, to the detriment, if not the exclusion, of all other studies.

I feel almost ashamed of saying anything about myself, after the two or three scoldings you have sent me of late. Perhaps while my blue devils found vent in ridiculous verses, they did not much matter; but their having

prompted me lately to throw between seven and eight hundred pages (about a year's work) into the fire, seems to me now rather deplorable. You perhaps will say that the fire is no bad place for seven or eight hundred pages of my manuscript; but I had spent time and pains on them, and I think they should not have been thrown away in a foolish fit of despondency. I am at present not very well. I do not mean that I have any specific illness, but headaches and side-aches, so that I am one moment in a state of feverish excitement and the next nervous and low-spirited; this is not a good account, but a true one.

I have no "new friends," dearest H——; perhaps because my dislike to society makes me stupid and disagreeable when I am in it. I have made one acquaintance, which might perhaps grow to a friendship were it not that distance and its attendant inconveniences have hitherto prevented my becoming more intimate with the lady I refer to. She is a married woman; her name is Jameson. She is an Irishwoman, and the authoress of the "Diary of an Ennuyée." I like her very much; she is extremely clever; I wish I knew her better. I have been to one dance and one or two dinners lately, but to tell you the truth, dear H——, the old people naturally treat me after my years, as a young person, and the young people (perhaps from my self-conceit) seem to me stupid and uninteresting, and so, you see, I do not like society. Cecilia Siddons is out of town at present, and I have not seen her for some time. You may have heard that the theatre has gained a lawsuit against

Sinclair, the celebrated singer, by a reversal of the former verdict in the case. We were not even aware that such a process was going on, and when my father came home and said, "We have won our cause," my mother and myself started up, supposing he meant *the* chancery suit. That, unfortunately, is still pending, pending, like the sword of Damocles, over our heads, banishing all security for the present or hope for the future. The theatre is, I believe, doing very well just now, and we go pretty often to the play, which I like. I have lately been seeing my father playing Falstaff several times, and I think it is an excellent piece of acting; he gives all the humor without too much coarseness, or *charging*, and through the whole, according to the fat knight's own expression, he is "Sir John to all the world," with a certain courtly deportment which prevents him from degenerating into the mere gross buffoon. They are in sad want of a woman at both the theatres. I've half a mind to give Covent Garden one. Don't be surprised. I have something to say to you on this subject, but have not room for it in this letter. My father is just now acting in the north of England. We expect him back in a fortnight. God bless you, dear H——.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

The vehement passion of political interest which absorbed my brother at this time was in truth affecting the whole of English society almost as

passionately. In a letter written in 1827, the Duke of Wellington, after speaking of the strong partisan sentiment which was agitating the country, added, "The ladies and all the youth are with us;" that is, with the Tory party, which, under his leadership, was still an active power of obstruction to the imminent changes to which both he and his party were presently to succumb. His ministry was a period of the stormiest excitement in the political world, and the importance of the questions at issue—Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform—powerfully affected men's minds in the ranks of life least allied to the governing class. Even in a home so obscure and so devoted to other pursuits and interests as ours, the spirit of the times made its way, and our own peculiar occupations became less interesting to us than the intense national importance of the public questions which were beginning to convulse the country from end to end. About this time I met with a book which produced a great and not altogether favorable effect upon my mind (the blame resting entirely with me, I think, and not with what I read). I had become moody and fantastical for want of solid wholesome mental occupation, and the excess of imaginative stimulus in my life, and was possessed with a wild desire for an existence of lonely independence, which seemed to my exaggerated notions the only one fitted to the intellectual development in which alone I conceived happiness to consist. Mrs. Jameson's "Diary of an Ennuyée," which I now read for the first time, added to this desire for isolation and independence such a passionate longing to go to Italy, that my brain was literally filled with chimerical projects of settling in the south of Europe, and there leading a solitary life of literary labor, which, together with the fame I

hoped to achieve by it, seemed to me the only worthy purpose of existence. While under the immediate spell of her fascinating book, it was of course very delightful to me to make Mrs. Jameson's acquaintance, which I did at the house of our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Basil Montagu. They were the friends of Coleridge, Hazlitt, Charles Lamb, Proctor (Barry Cornwall, who married Mrs. Montagu's daughter), and were themselves individually as remarkable, if not as celebrated, as many of their more famous friends. Basil Montagu was the son of the Earl of Sandwich and the beautiful Miss Wray, whose German lover murdered her at the theatre by shooting her in her private box, and then blew his own brains out. Mr. Montagu inherited ability, eccentricity, and personal beauty, from his parents. His only literary productions that I am acquainted with were a notice of Bacon and his works, which he published in a small pamphlet volume, and another volume of extracts from some of the fine prose writers of the seventeenth century. I have a general impression that his personal intercourse gave a far better idea of his intellectual ability than anything that he achieved either in his profession or in letters.

His conversation was extremely vivid and sparkling, and the quaint eccentricity of his manner added to the impression of originality which he produced upon one. Very unlike the common run of people as he was, however, he was far less so than his wife, who certainly was one of the most striking and remarkable persons I have known. Her appearance was extraordinary: she was much above middle height, with a beautiful figure and face, the outline of which was of classical purity and severity, while her whole carriage and appearance was dignified and majestic to the highest degree. I knew her for

upwards of thirty years, and never saw her depart from a peculiar style of dress, which she had adopted with the finest instinct of what was personally becoming as well as graceful and beautiful in itself. She was so superior in this point to her sex generally, that, having found that which was undoubtedly her own proper individual costume, she never changed the fashion of it. Her dress deserved to be called (what all dress should be) a lesser fine art, and seemed the proper expression in clothes of her personality, and really a part of herself. It was a long, open robe, over an underskirt of the same material and color (always moonlight silver gray, amethyst purple, or black silk or satin of the richest quality), trimmed with broad velvet facings of the same color, the sleeves plain and tight fitting from shoulder to wrist, and the bosom covered with a fine lace half-body, which came, like the wimple of old mediæval portraits, up round her throat, and seemed to belong in material and fashion to the clear chin-stay which followed the noble contour of her face, and the picturesque cap which covered, without concealing, her auburn hair and the beautiful proportions of her exquisite head.

This lady knew no language but her own, and to that ignorance (which one is tempted in these days occasionally to think desirable) she probably owed the remarkable power and purity with which she used her mother tongue. Her conversation and her letters were perfect models of spoken and written English. Her marriage with Mr. Montagu was attended with some singular circumstances, the knowledge of which I owe to herself. She was a Yorkshire widow lady, and came with her only child (a little girl) to visit some friends in London, with whom Basil Montagu was intimate. Mrs. S—— had

probably occasionally been the subject of conversation between him and her hosts, when they were expecting her; for one evening soon after her arrival, as she was sitting partly concealed by one of the curtains in the drawing-room, Basil Montagu came rapidly into the room, exclaiming (evidently not perceiving her), "Come, where is your wonderful Mrs. S——? I want to see her." During the whole evening he engrossed her attention and talked to her, and the next morning at breakfast she laughingly complained to her hosts that he had not been content with that, but had tormented her in dreams all night. "For," said she, "I dreamt I was going to be married to him, and the day before the wedding he came to me with a couple of boxes, and said solemnly, 'My dear Anne, I want to confide these relics to your keeping; in this casket are contained the bones of my dear first wife, and in this those of my dear second wife; do me the favor to take charge of them for me.'" The odd circumstance was that Basil Montagu had been married twice, and that when he made his third matrimonial venture, and was accepted by Mrs. S——, he appeared before her one day, and with much solemnity begged her to take charge of two caskets, in which were respectively treasured, not the bones, but the letters of her two predecessors. It is quite possible that he might have heard of her dream on the first night of their acquaintance, and amused himself with carrying it out when he was about to marry her; but when Mrs. Montagu told me the story I do not think she suggested any such rationalistic solution of the mystery. Her daughter, Anne S—— (afterwards Mrs. Procter), who has been all my life a kind and excellent friend to me, inherited her remarkable mother's mental gifts and special mastery over her own language; but she added to these, as

part of her own individuality, a power of sarcasm that made the tongue she spoke in and the tongue she spoke with two of the most formidable weapons any woman was ever armed with. She was an exceedingly kind-hearted person, perpetually occupied in good offices to the poor, the afflicted, her friends, and all whom she could in any way serve; nevertheless, such was her severity of speech, not unfrequently exercised on those she appeared to like best, that Thackeray, Browning, and Kinglake, who were all her friendly intimates, sometimes designated her as "Our Lady of Bitterness," and she is alluded to by that title in the opening chapter of "Eothen." A daily volume of wit and wisdom might have been gathered from her familiar talk, which was *crisp*, with suggestions of thought in the liveliest and highest form. Somebody asking her how she and a certain acrid critic of her acquaintance got on together, she replied, "Oh, very well; we sharpen each other like two knives." Being congratulated on the restoration of cordiality between herself and a friend with whom she had had some difference, "Oh yes," said she, "the cracked cup is mended, but it will never hold water again." Both these ladies, mother and daughter, had a most extraordinary habit of crediting their friends with their own wise and witty sayings; thus Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Procter would say, "Ah yes, you know, as you once said," and then would follow something so sparkling, profound, concise, incisive, and brilliant, that you remained, eyes and mouth open, gasping in speechless astonishment at the merit of the saying you never said (and couldn't have said if your life had depended on it), and the magnificence of the gift its author was making you. The princes in the Arabian Nights, who only gave you a ring worth thousands of

sequins, were shabby fellows compared with these ladies, who declared that the diamonds and rubies of their own uttering had fallen from your lips. Persons who lay claim to the good things of others are not rare; those who do not only disclaim their own, but even credit others with them, are among the very rarest. In all my intercourse with the inhabitants of *two* worlds, I have known no similar instance of self-denial; and reflecting upon it, I have finally concluded that it was too superhuman to be a real virtue, and could proceed only from an exorbitant superabundance of natural gift, which made its possessors reckless, extravagant, and even unprincipled in the use of their wealth; they had wit enough for themselves, and to spare for all their friends, and these were many.

At an evening party at Mrs. Montagu's, in Bedford Square, in 1828, I first saw Mrs. Jameson. The Ennuyée, one is given to understand, dies; and it was a little vexatious to behold her sitting on a sofa, in a very becoming state of blooming *plumptitude*; but it was some compensation to be introduced to her. And so began a close and friendly intimacy, which lasted for many years, between myself and this very accomplished woman. She was the daughter of an Irish miniature-painter of the name of Murphy, and began life as a governess, in which capacity she educated the daughters of Lord H——, and went to Italy with the family of Mrs. R——. When I first knew her she had not long been married to Mr. Robert Jameson, a union so ill-assorted that it restored Mrs. Jameson to the bosom of her own family, to whom her conjugal ill-fortune proved a blessing, for never did daughter and sister discharge with more loving fidelity the duties of those relationships. Her life was devoted to her parents

while they lived, and after their death to her sisters and a young niece whom she adopted. Her various and numerous gifts and acquirements were exercised, developed, and constantly increased by a life of the most indefatigable literary study, research, and labor. Her reading was very extensive; her information, without being profound, was general; she was an excellent modern linguist, and perfectly well versed in the literature of her own country and of France, Germany, and Italy. She had an uncommon taste and talent for art, and as she added to her knowledge of the theory and history of painting familiar acquaintance with most of the fine public and private galleries in Europe, a keen sensibility to beauty, and considerable critical judgment, her works upon painting, and especially the exceedingly interesting volumes she published on the "Sacred and Legendary Art of the Romish Church," are at once delightful and interesting sources of information, and useful and accurate works of reference, to which considerable value is added by her own spirited and graceful etchings.

The literary works of hers in which I have a direct personal interest, are a charming book of essays on Shakespeare's female characters, entitled "Characteristics of Women," which she did me the honor to dedicate to me; some pages of letterpress written to accompany a series of sketches John Hayter made of me in the character of Juliet; and a notice of my sister's principal operatic performances after she came out on the stage. Mrs. Jameson at one time contemplated writing a life of my aunt Siddons, not thinking Boaden's biography of her satisfactory; in this purpose, however, she was effectually opposed by Campbell, who had undertaken the work, and, though he exhibited neither interest nor zeal in

the fulfillment of his task, doggedly (in the manger) refused to relinquish it to her. Certainly, had Mrs. Jameson carried out her intention, Mrs. Siddons would have had a monument dedicated to her memory better calculated to preserve it than those which the above-named gentlemen bestowed on her. It would have been written in a spirit of far higher artistic discrimination, and with infinitely more sympathy both with the woman and with the actress.

CHAPTER VIII.

Late in middle life Mrs. Jameson formed an intimate acquaintance, which at one time assumed the character of a close friendship, with Lady Byron, under the influence of whose remarkable mind and character the subjects of artistic and literary interest, which had till then absorbed Mrs. Jameson's attention and occupied her pen, gave place to others of a very different kind—those which engrossed for a time, to the exclusion of almost all others, the minds of men and women in England at the beginning of the Crimean War; when the fashion of certain forms of philanthropy set by that wonderful woman, Florence Nightingale, was making hospital nurses of idle, frivolous fine ladies, and turning into innumerable channels of newly awakened benevolence and activity—far more zealous than discreet—the love of adventure, the desire for excitement, and the desperate need of occupation, of many women who had no other qualifications for the

hard and holy labors into which they flung themselves.

Mrs. Jameson felt the impulse of the time, as it reached her through Lady Byron and Miss Nightingale, and warmly embraced the wider and more enlightened aspect of women's duties beginning to be advocated with extreme enthusiasm in English society. One of the last books she published was a popular account of foreign Sisters of Mercy, their special duties, the organization of their societies, and the sphere of their operations; suggesting the formation of similar bodies of religiously charitable sisterhoods in England. She had this subject so much at heart, she told me, that she had determined to give a series of public lectures upon it, provided she found her physical power equal to the effort of making herself heard by an audience in any public room of moderate size. She tested the strength of her chest and voice by delivering one lecture to an audience assembled in the drawing-rooms of a friend; but, as she never repeated the experiment, I suppose she found the exertion too great for her.

When first I met Mrs. Jameson she was an attractive-looking young woman, with a skin of that dazzling whiteness which generally accompanies reddish hair, such as hers was; her face, which was habitually refined and *spirituelle* in its expression, was capable of a marvelous power of concentrated feeling, such as is seldom seen on any woman's face, and is peculiarly rare on the countenance of a fair, small, delicately featured woman, all whose personal characteristics were essentially feminine. Her figure was extremely pretty; her hands and arms might have been those of Madame de Warens.

Mrs. Jameson told me that the idea of giving public lectures had suggested itself to her in the course of her conversations with Lady Byron upon the possible careers that might be opened to women. I know Lady Byron thought a very valuable public service might be rendered by women who so undertook to advocate important truths of which they had made special study, and for the dissemination of which in this manner they might be especially gifted. She accepted in the most liberal manner the claim put forward by women to more extended spheres of usefulness, and to the adoption of careers hitherto closed to them; she was deeply interested, personally, in some who made the arduous attempt of studying and practicing medicine, and seemed generally to think that there were many directions in which women might follow paths yet unopened, of high and noble exertion, and hereafter do society and the cause of progress good service.

Lady Byron was a peculiarly reserved and quiet person, with a manner habitually deliberate and measured, a low, subdued voice, and rather diffident hesitation in expressing herself: and she certainly conveyed the impression of natural reticence and caution. But so far from ever appearing to me to justify the description often given of her, of a person of exceptionally cold, hard, measured intellect and character, she always struck me as a woman capable of profound and fervid enthusiasm, with a mind of rather a romantic and visionary order.

She surprised me extremely one evening as she was accompanying me to one of my public readings, by exclaiming, "Oh, how I envy you! What would I not give to be in your place!" As my vocation, I am sorry to say, oftener appeared to me to justify my own

regret than the envy of others, I answered, "What! to read Shakespeare before some hundreds of people?" "Oh no," she said; "not to read Shakespeare to them, but to have all that mass of people under your control, subject to your influence, and receiving your impressions." She then went on to say she would give anything to lecture upon subjects which interested her deeply, and that she should like to advocate with every power she possessed. Lady Byron, like most enthusiasts, was fond of influencing others and making disciples to her own views. I made her laugh by telling her that more than once, when looking from my reading-desk over the sea of faces uplifted towards me, a sudden feeling had seized me that I must say something *from myself* to all those human beings whose attention I felt at that moment entirely at my command, and between whom and myself a sense of sympathy thrilled powerfully and strangely through my heart, as I looked steadfastly at them before opening my lips; but that, on wondering afterwards *what* I might, could, would, or should have said to them from myself, I never could think of anything but two words: "Be good!" which as a preface to the reading of one of Shakespeare's plays ("The Merry Wives of Windsor," for instance) might have startled them. Often and strongly as the temptation recurred to me, I never could think of anything better worth saying to my audience. I have some hope that sometimes in the course of the reading I said it effectually, without shocking them by a departure from my proper calling, or deserving the rebuke of "Ne sutor ultra crepidam."

In February, 1828, I fell ill of the measles, of which the following note to Miss S—— is a record.

MY DEAREST H——,

I am in a great hurry, because my parcel is not made up yet, and I expect your brother's emissary to call at every moment. I send you my play, also an album of mine, also an unfinished sketch of me, also a copy of my will. The play you must not keep, because it is my only copy; neither must you keep my album, because I want to finish one of the pieces of verse begun in it; my picture—such as it is—begun, but never finished, by Dick ——, I thought you would like better than nothing. He has finished one that is a very good likeness of me, but it was done for my mother, or I should have wished you to have it. My will I made last week, while I was in bed with the measles, and want you to keep that.

I have been very ill for the last fortnight, but am well again now. I am pressed for time to-day, but will soon write to you in earnest.

I'm afraid you'll find my play very long; when my poor father began cutting it, he looked ruefully at it, and said, "There's plenty of it, Fan," to which my reply is Madame de Sévigné's, "Si j'eusse eu plus de temps, je ne t'aurais pas écrit si longuement." Dear H——, if you knew how I thought of you, and the fresh, sweet mayflowers with which we filled our baskets at Heath Farm, while I lay parched and full of pain and fever in my illness!

Yours ever,

FANNY.

My beloved aunt Dall nursed and tended me in my sickness with unwearied devotion; and one day when I was convalescent, finding me depressed in spirits and crying, she said laughingly to me, "Why, child, there is nothing the matter with you; but you are weak in body and mind." This seemed to me the most degraded of all conceivable conditions, and I fell into a redoublement of weeping over my own abasement and imbecility.

My attention was suddenly attracted to a large looking-glass opposite my bed, and it occurred to me that in my then condition of nerves nothing was more likely than that I should turn visionary and fancy I beheld apparitions. And under this conviction I got up and covered the glass, in which I felt sure I should presently "see sic sights as I daured na tell." I speak of this because, though I was in a physical condition not unlikely to produce such phenomena, I retained the power of perceiving that they would be the result of my physical condition, and that I should in some measure be accessory to my own terror, whatever form it might assume.

I have so often in my life been on the very edge of ghost-seeing, and felt so perfectly certain that the least encouragement on my part would set them before me, and that nothing but a resolute effort of will would save me from such a visitation, that I have become convinced that of the people who have seen apparitions, one half have—as I should term it—chosen to do so. I have all my life suffered from a tendency to imaginary terrors, and have always felt sure that a determined exercise of self-control would effectually keep them from having the dominion over me. The most distressing form of nervous excitement that I have ever experienced was one that for many

years I was very liable to, and which always recurred when I was in a state of unusual exaltation or depression of spirits; both which states in me were either directly caused or greatly aggravated by certain electrical conditions of the atmosphere, which seemed to affect my whole nervous system as if I had been some machine expressly constructed for showing and testing the power of such influences on the human economy.

I habitually read while combing and brushing my hair at night, and though I made no use of my looking-glass while thus employed, having my eyes fixed on my book, I sat (for purposes of general convenience) at my toilet table in front of the mirror. While engrossed in my book it has frequently happened to me accidentally to raise my eyes and suddenly to fix them on my own image in the glass, when a feeling of startled surprise, as if I had not known I was there and did not immediately recognize my own reflection, would cause me to remain looking at myself, the intentness with which I did so increasing as the face appeared to me not my own; and under this curious fascination my countenance has altered, becoming gradually so dreadful, so much more dreadful in expression than any human face I ever saw or could describe, while it was next to impossible for me to turn my eyes away from the hideous vision confronting me, that I have felt more than once that unless by the strongest effort of will I immediately averted my head, I should certainly become insane. Of course I was myself a party to this strange fascination of terror, and must, no doubt, have exercised some power of volition in the assumption of the expression that my face gradually presented, and which was in no sense a distortion or grimace, but a terrible look suggestive

of despair and desperate wickedness, the memory of which even now affects me painfully. But though in some measure voluntary, I do not think I was conscious at the time that the process was so; and I have never been able to determine the precise nature of this nervous affection, which, beginning thus in a startled feeling of sudden surprise, went on to such a climax of fascinated terror.

I was already at this time familiar enough with the theory of ghosts, of which one need not be afraid, through Nicolai of Berlin's interesting work upon the curious phantasmagoria of apparitions, on which he made and recorded so many singular observations. Moreover, my mother, from a combination of general derangement of the system and special affection of the visual nerves, was at one time constantly tormented by whole processions and crowds of visionary figures, of the origin and nature of which she was perfectly aware, but which she often described as exceedingly annoying by their grotesque and distorted appearance, and wearisome from their continual recurrence and thronging succession. With the recovery of her general health she obtained a release from this disagreeable haunting.

One of the most remarkable and painful instances of affection of the visual organs in consequence of a violent nervous shock was that experienced by my friend Miss T——, who, after seeing her cousin, Lady L——, drowned while bathing off the rocks at her home at Ardgillan, was requested by Lord L—— to procure for him, before his wife's burial, the wedding ring from her finger. The poor lady's body was terribly swollen and discolored, and Miss T—— had to use considerable effort to withdraw the ring from the dead finger. The effect of the whole disastrous

event upon her was to leave her for several months afflicted with an affection of the eyes, which represented half of the face of every person she saw with the swollen, livid, and distorted features of her drowned cousin; a horrible and ghastly result of the nervous shock she had undergone, which she feared she should never be delivered from, but which gradually wore itself out.

The only time I ever saw an apparition was under singularly unfavorable circumstances for such an experience. I was sitting at midday in an American railroad car, which every occupant but my maid and myself had left to go and get some refreshment at the station, where the train stopped some time for that purpose. I was sitting with my maid in a small private compartment, sometimes occupied by ladies travelling alone, the door of which (wide open at the time) communicated with the main carriage, and commanded its entire length. Suddenly a person entered the carriage by a door close to where I sat, and passed down the whole length of the car. I sprang from my seat, exclaiming aloud, "There is C ——!" and rushed to the door before, by any human possibility, any one could have reached the other end of the car; but nobody was to be seen. My maid had seen nothing. The person I imagined I had seen was upwards of two hundred miles distant; but what was to me the most curious part of this experience was that had I really met the person I saw anywhere, my most careful endeavor would have been to avoid her, and, if possible, to escape being seen by her; whereas this apparition, or imagination, so affected my nerves that I rushed after it as if desirous of pursuing and overtaking it, while my deliberate desire with regard to the image I thus sprang towards would have been never to have seen it again as long as I lived. The

state of the atmosphere at the time of this occurrence was extraordinarily oppressive, and charged with a tremendous thunder-storm, a condition of the air which, as I have said, always acts with extremely distressing and disturbing influence upon my whole physical system.

ST. JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE,
FEBRUARY, 1828.

MY DEAREST H——,

I have this instant received your letter, and, contrary to John's wise rule of never answering an epistle till three days after he receives it, I sit down to write, to talk, to be with you. Pray, when your potatoes flourish, your fires are put out by the sun, and your hills are half hid in warm mist, wish one hearty wish for me, such as I spend by the dozen on you. I confess I am disappointed, as far as I can be with a letter of yours, at finding you had not yet received my parcel, for my vanity has been in considerable anxiety respecting your judgment on my production. Now that the effervescence of my poetical *furor* has subsided, and that repeated perusals have taken a little of the charm of novelty from my play, my own opinion of it is that it is a clever performance *for so young a person*, but nothing more. The next will, I hope, be better, and I think you will agree with me in regard to this. Dearest H——, in my last letter want of time and room prevented my enlarging on my hint about the stage, but as far as my own determination goes at present, I think it is

the course that I shall most likely pursue. You know that independence of mind and body seems to me the great desideratum of life; I am not patient of restraint or submissive to authority, and my head and heart are engrossed with the idea of exercising and developing the literary talent which I think I possess. This is meat, drink, and sleep to me; my world, in which I live, and have my happiness; and, moreover, I hope, by means of fame (the prize for which I pray). To a certain degree it may be my means of procuring benefits of a more substantial nature, which I am by no means inclined to estimate at less than their worth. I do not think I am fit to marry, to make an obedient wife or affectionate mother; my imagination is paramount with me, and would disqualify me, I think, for the every-day, matter-of-fact cares and duties of the mistress of a household and the head of a family. I think I should be unhappy and the cause of unhappiness to others if I were to marry. I cannot swear I shall never fall in love, but if I do I will fall out of it again, for I do not think I shall ever so far lose sight of my best interest and happiness as to enter into a relation for which I feel so unfit. Now, if I do not marry, what is to become of me in the event of anything happening to my father? His property is almost all gone; I doubt if we shall ever receive one pound from it. Is it likely that, supposing I were willing to undergo the drudgery of writing for my bread, I could live by my wits and the produce of my brain; or is such an existence

desirable?

Perhaps I might attain to the literary dignity of being the lioness of a season, asked to dinner parties "because I am so clever;" perhaps my writing faculty might become a useful auxiliary to some other less precarious dependence; but to write to eat—to live, in short—that seems to me to earn hard money after a very hard fashion. The stage is a profession that people who have a talent for it make lucrative, and which honorable conduct may make respectable; one which would place me at once beyond the fear of want, and that is closely allied in its nature to my beloved literary pursuits.

If I should (as my father and mother seem to think not unlikely) change my mind with respect to marrying, the stage need be no bar to that, and if I continue to write, the stage might both help me in and derive assistance from my exercise of the pursuit of dramatic authorship. And the mere mechanical labor of writing costs me so little, that the union of the two occupations does not seem to me a difficulty. My father said the other day, "There is a fine fortune to be made by any young woman, of even decent talent, on the stage now." A fine fortune is a fine thing; to be sure, there remains a rather material question to settle, that of "even decent talent." A passion for all beautiful poetry I am sure you will grant me; and you would perhaps be inclined to take my father and mother's word for my dramatic capacity. I spoke to them earnestly on this subject

lately, and they both, with some reluctance, I think, answered me, to my questions, that they thought, as far as they could judge (and, unless partiality blinds them entirely, none can be better judges), I might succeed. In some respects, no girl intending herself for this profession can have had better opportunities of acquiring just notions on the subject of acting. I have constantly heard refined and thoughtful criticism on our greatest dramatic works, and on every various way of rendering them effective on the stage. I have been lately very frequently to the theater, and seen and heard observingly, and exercised my own judgment and critical faculty to the best of my ability, according to these same canons of taste by which it has been formed. Nature has certainly not been as favorable to me as might have been wished, if I am to embrace a calling where personal beauty, if not indispensable, is so great an advantage. But if the informing spirit be mine, it shall go hard if, with a face and voice as obedient to my emotions as mine are, I do not in some measure make up for the want of good looks. My father is now proprietor and manager of the theatre, and those certainly are favorable circumstances for my entering on a career which is one of great labor and some exposure, at the best, to a woman, and where a young girl cannot be too prudent herself, nor her protectors too careful of her. I hope I have not taken up this notion hastily, and I have no fear of looking only on the bright side of the picture, for ours is a house where

that is very seldom seen.

Good-by; God bless you! I shall be very anxious to hear from you; I sent you a note with my play, telling you I had just got up from the measles; but as my note has not reached you, I tell you so again. I am quite well, however, now, and shall not give them to you by signing myself

Yours most affectionately,

FANNY.

P.S.—I forgot to answer your questions in telling you all this, but I will do so methodically now. My side-ache is some disturbance in my liver, evidently, and does not give way entirely either to physic or exercise, as the slightest emotion, either pleasurable or painful, immediately brings it on; my blue devils I pass over in silence; such a liver and my kind of head are sure to breed them.

Certainly I reverence Jeremy Bentham for his philanthropy, plain powerful sense, and lucid forcible writing; but as for John's politics, they are, as Beatrice tells the prince he is, "too costly for every-day wear." His theories are so perfect that I think imperfect men could never be brought to live under a scheme of government of his devising.

I think Mrs. Jameson would like you, and you her, if you met, but my mind is running on something else than this. My father's income is barely eight hundred a year. John's expenses, since he has been at college, have

been nearly three. Five hundred a year for such a family as ours is very close and careful work, dear H——, and if my going on the stage would nearly double that income, lessen my dear father's anxieties for us all, and the quantity of work which he latterly has often felt too much for him, and remove the many privations which my dear mother cheerfully endures, as well as the weight of her uncertainty about our future provision, would not this be a "consummation devoutly to be wished"?

ST. JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE, March, 1828.

MY DEAREST H——,

I have been thinking what you have been thinking of my long silence, about which, however, perhaps you have not been thinking at all. What, you say in one of your last about my destroying your letters troubles me a good deal, dearest H——. I really cannot bear to think of it; why, those letters are one of my very few precious possessions. When I am unhappy (as I sometimes am), I read them over, and I feel strengthened and comforted; if it is your *positive desire* that I should burn them, of course I must do it; but if it is only a sort of "I think you had better" that you have about it, I shall keep them, and you must be satisfied with one of my old "I can't help it's." As for my own scrawls, I do *not* desire that you should keep them. I write, as I speak, on the impulse of the moment, and I should be sorry that the incoherent and

often contradictory thoughts that I pour forth daily should be preserved against me by anybody.

My father is now in Edinburgh. He has been absent from London about a week. I had a conversation with him about the stage some time before he went, in which he allowed that, should our miserably uncertain circumstances finally settle unfavorably, the theatre might be an honorable and advantageous resource for me; but that at present he should be sorry to see me adopt that career. As he is the best and kindest father and friend to us all, such a decision on his part was conclusive, as you will easily believe; and I have forborne all further allusion to the subject, although on some accounts I regret being obliged to do so.

I was delighted with your long letter of criticisms; I am grateful to you for taking the trouble of telling me so minutely all you thought about my play. For myself, although at the time I wrote it I was rather puffed up and elated in spirit, and looked at it naturally in far too favorable a light, I assure you I have long since come to a much soberer frame of mind respecting it. I think it is quite unfit for the stage, where the little poetical merit it possesses would necessarily be lost; besides, its construction is wholly undramatic. The only satisfaction I now take in it is entirely one of hope; I am very young, and I cannot help feeling that it offers some promise for the future, which I trust may be fulfilled. Now even, already, I am sure I

could do infinitely better; nor will it be long, I think, before I try my strength again. If you could see the multiplicity of subjects drawn up in my book under the head of "projected works," how you would shake your wise head, and perhaps your lean sides. I wish I could write a good prose work, but that, I take it, is really difficult, as good, concise, powerful, clear prose must be much less easy to write than even tolerable poetry. I have been reading a quantity of German plays (translations, of course, but literal ones), and I have been reveling in that divine devildom, "Faust." Suppose it does send one to bed with a side-ache, a headache, and a heartache, isn't it worth while? Did you ever read Goethe's "Tasso"? Certainly he makes the mad poet a mighty disagreeable person; but in describing him it seemed to me as if Goethe was literally transcribing my thoughts and feelings, my mind and being.

Now, dearest H——, don't bear malice, and, because I have not written for so long, wait still longer before you answer. My mother has been in the country for a few days, and has returned with a terrible cough and cold, with which pleasant maladies she finds the house full here to welcome her, so that we all croak in unison most harmoniously. I was at the Siddonses' the other evening. My aunt was suffering, I am sorry to say, with one of her terrible headaches; Cecilia was pretty well, but as it was a *soirée chantante*, I had little opportunity of talking to either of them. Did you mention my notion about going on the stage in any of your letters to Cecy?

> The skies are brightening and the trees are budding; it will soon be the time of year when we first met. Pray remember me when the hawthorn blossoms; hail, snow, or sunshine, I remember you, and am ever your affectionate
>
> FANNY.

The want of a settled place of residence compelled me, many years after writing this letter, to destroy the letters of my friend, which I had preserved until they amounted to many hundreds; my friend kept, in the house that was her home from her fourteenth to her sixtieth year, all mine to her—several thousands, the history of a whole human life—and gave them back to me when she was upwards of seventy and I of sixty years old; they are the principal aid to my memory in my present task of retrospection.

My life at home at this time became difficult and troublesome, and unsatisfactory to myself and others; my mind and character were in a chaotic state of fermentation that required the wisest, firmest, and gentlest guidance. I was vehement and excitable, violently impulsive, and with a wild, ill-regulated imagination.

The sort of smattering acquirements from my schooling, and the desultory reading which had been its only supplement, had done little or nothing (perhaps even worse than nothing) towards my effectual moral or mental training. A good fortune, for which I can never be sufficiently thankful, occurred to me at this time, in the very intimate intercourse which grew up just then between our family and that of my cousin, Mrs. Henry Siddons.

She had passed through London on her way to the Continent, whither she was going for the sake of the health of her youngest daughter, an interesting and attractive young girl some years older than myself, who at this time seemed threatened with imminent consumption. She had a sylph-like, slender figure, tall, and bending and wavering like a young willow sapling, and a superabundant profusion of glossy chestnut ringlets, which in another might have suggested vigor of health and constitution, but always seemed to me as if their redundant masses had exhausted hers, and were almost too great a weight for her slim throat and drooping figure. Her complexion was transparently delicate, and she had dark blue eyes that looked almost preternaturally large. It seems strange to remember this ethereal vision of girlish fragile beauty as belonging to my dear cousin, who, having fortunately escaped the doom by which she then seemed threatened, lived to become a most happy and excellent wife and mother, and one of the largest women of our family, all of whose female members have been unusually slender in girlhood and unusually stout in middle and old age. When Mrs. Henry Siddons was obliged to return to Edinburgh, which was her home, she was persuaded by my mother to leave her daughter with us for some time; and for more than a year she and her elder sister and their brother, a lad studying at the Indian Military College of Addiscombe, were frequent inmates of our house. The latter was an extremely handsome youth, with a striking resemblance to his grandmother, Mrs. Siddons; he and my brother Henry were certainly the only two of the younger generation who honorably maintained the reputation for beauty of their elders; in spite of which, and the general admiration they excited

(especially when seen together), perhaps indeed from some uncomfortable consciousness of their personal advantages, they were both of them shamefaced and bashful to an unusual degree.

I remember a comical instance of the shy *mauvaise honte*, peculiar to Englishmen, which these two beautiful boys exhibited on the occasion of a fancy ball, to which we were all invited, at the house of our friend, Mrs. E. G——. To me, of course, my first fancy ball was an event of unmixed delight, especially as my mother had provided for me a lovely Anne Boleyn costume of white satin, point-lace, and white Roman pearls, which raised my satisfaction to rapture. The two Harrys, however, far from partaking of my ecstasy, protested, pouted, begged off, all but broke into open rebellion at the idea of making what they called "guys" and "chimney-sweeps" of themselves; and though the painful sense of any singularity might have been mitigated by the very numerous company of their fellow-fools assembled in the ball-room, to keep them in countenance, and the very unpretending costume of simple and, elegant black velvet in which my mother had attired them, as Hamlet and Laertes (it must have been in their very earliest college days), they hid themselves behind the ball-room door and never showed as much as their noses or their toes, while I danced beatifically till daylight, and would have danced on till noon.

Mrs. Henry Siddons, in her last stay with us, obtained my mother's consent that I should go to Edinburgh to pay her a visit, which began by being of indeterminate length, and prolonged itself for a year—the happiest of my life, as I often, while it lasted, thought it would prove; and now that my

years are over I know to have been so. To the anxious, nervous, exciting, irritating tenor of my London life succeeded the calm, equable, and all but imperceptible control of my dear friend, whose influence over her children, the result of her wisdom in dealing with them, no less than of their own amiable dispositions, was absolute. In considering Mrs. Henry Siddons's character, when years had modified its first impression upon my own, my estimate of it underwent, of course, some inevitable alteration; but when I stayed with her in Edinburgh I was at the idolatrous period of life, and never, certainly, had an enthusiastic young girl worshiper a worthier or better idol.

She was not regularly handsome, but of a sweet and most engaging countenance; her figure was very pretty, her voice exquisite, and her whole manner, air, and deportment graceful, attractive, and charming. Men, women, and children not only loved her, but inevitably *fell in love* with her, and the fascination which she exercised over every one that came in contact with her invariably deepened into profound esteem and confidence in those who had the good fortune to share her intimacy. Her manner, which was the most gentle and winning imaginable, had in it a touch of demure playfulness that was very charming, at the same time that it habitually conveyed the idea of extreme self-control, and a great reserve of moral force and determination underneath this quiet surface.

Mrs. Harry's manner was artificial, and my mother told me she thought it the result of an early determination to curb the demonstrations of an impetuous temper and passionate feelings. It had become her second nature when I knew her,

however, and contributed not a little to the immense ascendency she soon acquired over my vehement and stormy character. She charmed me into absolute submission to her will and wishes, and I all but worshiped her.

She was a Miss Murray, and came of good Scottish blood, her great-grandfather having at one time been private secretary to the Young Pretender. She married Mrs. Siddons's youngest son, Harry, the only one of my aunt's children who adopted her own profession, and who, himself an indifferent actor, undertook the management of the Edinburgh theater, fell into ill-health, and died, leaving his lovely young widow with four children to the care of her brother, William Murray, who succeeded him in the government of the theater, of which his sister and himself became joint proprietors.

Edinburgh at that time was still the small but important capital of Scotland, instead of what railroads and modern progress have reduced it to, merely the largest town. Those were the days of the giants, Scott, Wilson, Hogg, Jeffrey, Brougham, Sidney Smith, the Horners, Lord Murray, Allison, and all the formidable intellectual phalanx that held mental dominion over the English-speaking world, under the blue and yellow standard of the *Edinburgh Review*.

The ancient city had still its regular winter season of fashionable gayety, during which sedan chairs were to be seen carrying through its streets, to its evening assemblies, the more elderly members of the *beau monde*. The nobility and gentry of Scotland came up from their distant country residences to their town-houses in "Auld Reekie," as they now come up to

London.

Edinburgh was a brilliant and peculiarly intellectual center of society with a strongly marked national character, and the theater held a distinguished place among its recreations; the many eminent literary and professional men who then made the Scotch capital illustrious being zealous patrons of the drama and frequenters of the play-house, and proud, with reason, of their excellent theatrical company, at the head of which was William Murray, one of the most perfect actors I have ever known on any stage, and among whom Terry and Mackay, admirable actors and cultivated, highly intelligent men, were conspicuous for their ability.

Mrs. Henry Siddons held a peculiar position in Edinburgh, her widowed condition and personal attractions combining to win the sympathy and admiration of its best society, while her high character and blameless conduct secured the respect and esteem of her theatrical subjects and the general public, with whom she was an object of almost affectionate personal regard, and in whose favor, as long as she exercised her profession, she continued to hold the first place, in spite of their temporary enthusiasm for the great London stars who visited them at stated seasons. "*Our* Mrs. Siddons," I have repeatedly heard her called in Edinburgh, not at all with the slightest idea of comparing her with her celebrated mother-in-law, but rather as expressing the kindly personal good-will and the admiring approbation with which she was regarded by her own townsfolk, who were equally proud and fond of her. She was not a great actress, nor even what in my opinion could be called a good actress, for she had no natural versatility or power of assumption

whatever, and what was opposed to her own nature and character was altogether out of the range of her powers.

On the other hand, when (as frequently happened) she had to embody heroines whose characteristics coincided with her own, her grace and beauty and innate sympathy with every thing good, true, pure, and upright made her an admirable representative of all such characters. She wanted physical power and weight for the great tragic drama of Shakespeare, and passion for the heroine of his love tragedy; but Viola, Rosalind, Isabel, Imogen, could have no better representative. In the first part Sir Walter Scott has celebrated (in the novel of "Waverley") the striking effect produced by her resemblance to her brother, William Murray, in the last scene of "Twelfth Night;" and in many pieces founded upon the fate and fortune of Mary Stuart she gave an unrivaled impersonation of the "enchanting queen" of modern history.

My admiration and affection for her were, as I have said, unbounded; and some of the various methods I took to exhibit them were, I dare say, intolerably absurd, though she was graciously good-natured in tolerating them.

Every day, summer and winter, I made it my business to provide her with a sprig of myrtle for her sash at dinner-time; this, when she had worn it all the evening, I received again on bidding her good night, and stored in a *treasure* drawer, which, becoming in time choked with fragrant myrtle leaves, was emptied with due solemnity into the fire, that destruction in the most classic form might avert from them all desecration. I ought by rights to have

eaten their ashes, or drunk a decoction of them, or at least treasured them in a golden urn, but contented myself with watching them shrivel and crackle with much sentimental satisfaction. I remember a most beautiful myrtle tree, which, by favor of a peculiarly sunny and sheltered exposure, had reached a very unusual size in the open air in Edinburgh, and in the flowering season might have borne comparison with the finest shrubs of the warm terraces of the under cliff of the Isle of Wight. From this I procured my daily offering to my divinity.

The myrtle is the least voluptuous of flowers; the legend of Juno's myrtle-sheltered bath seems not unnaturally suggested by the vigorous, fresh, and healthy beauty of the plant, and the purity of its snowy blossoms. The exquisite quality, too, which myrtle possesses, of preserving uncorrupted the water in which it is placed, with other flowers, is a sort of moral attribute, which, combined with the peculiar character of its fragrance, seems to me to distinguish this lovely shrub from every other flower of the field or garden.

To return to my worship of Mrs. Harry Siddons. On one occasion the sash of her dress came unfastened and fell to the ground, and, having secured possession of it, I retained my prize and persisted in wearing it, baldric fashion, over every dress I put on. It was a silk scarf, of a sober dark-gray color, and occasionally produced a most fantastical and absurd contrast with what I was wearing.

These were childish expressions of a feeling the soberer portion of which remains with me even now, and makes the memory of that excellent woman, and kind, judicious friend, still very dear to my grateful

affection. Not only was the change of discipline under which I now lived advantageous, but the great freedom I enjoyed, and which would have been quite impossible in London, was delightful to me; while the wonderful, picturesque beauty of Edinburgh, contrasted with the repulsive dinginess and ugliness of my native city, was a constant source of the liveliest pleasure to me.

The indescribable mixture of historic and romantic interest with all this present, visible beauty, the powerful charm of the Scotch ballad poetry, which now began to seize upon my imagination, and the inexhaustible enchantment of the associations thrown by the great modern magician over every spot made memorable by his mention, combined to affect my mind and feelings at this most susceptible period of my life, and made Edinburgh dear and delightful to me above all other places I ever saw, as it still remains—with the one exception of Rome, whose combined claim to veneration and admiration no earthly city can indeed dispute.

Beautiful Edinburgh! dear to me for all its beauty and all the happiness that I have never failed to find there, for the keen delight of my year of youthful life spent among its enchanting influences, and for the kind friends and kindred whose affectionate hospitality has made each return thither as happy as sadder and older years allowed—my blessing on every stone of its streets!

I had the utmost liberty allowed me in my walks about the city, and at early morning have often run up and round and round the Calton Hill, delighting, from every point where I stopped to breathe, in the noble panorama on every side. Not unfrequently I

walked down to the sands at Porto Bello and got a sea bath, and returned before breakfast; while on the other side of the town my rambles extended to Newhaven and the rocks and sands of Cramond Beach.

While Edinburgh had then more the social importance of a capital, it had a much smaller extent; great portions of the present new town did not then exist. Warriston and the Bridge of Dean were still out of town; there was no Scott's monument in Princess Street, no railroad terminus with its smoke and scream and steam scaring the echoes of the North Bridge; no splendid Queen's Drive encircled Arthur's Seat. Windsor Street, in which Mrs. Harry Siddons lived, was one of the most recently finished, and broke off abruptly above gardens and bits of meadow land, and small, irregular inclosures, and mean scattered houses, stretching down toward Warriston Crescent; while from the balcony of the drawing-room the eye, passing over all this untidy suburban district, reached, without any intervening buildings, the blue waters of the Forth and Inchkeith with its revolving light.

Standing on that balcony late one cold, clear night, watching the rising and setting of that sea star that kept me fascinated out in the chill air, I saw for the first time the sky illuminated with the aurora borealis. It was a magnificent display of the phenomenon, and I feel certain that my attention was first attracted to it by the crackling sound which appeared to accompany the motion of the pale flames as they streamed across the sky; indeed, *crackling*, is not the word that properly describes the sound I heard, which was precisely that made by the

flickering of blazing fire; and as I have often since read and heard discussions upon the question whether the motion of the aurora is or is not accompanied by an audible sound, I can only say that on this occasion it was the sound that first induced me to observe the sheets of white light that were leaping up the sky. At this time I knew nothing of these phenomena, or the debates among scientific men to which they had given rise, and can therefore trust the impression made on my senses.

I have since then witnessed repeated appearances of these beautiful meteoric lights, but have never again detected any sound accompanying their motion. The finest aurora I ever saw was at Lenox, Massachusetts; a splendid rose-colored pavilion appeared to be spread all over the sky, through which, in several parts, the shining of the stars was distinctly visible, while at the zenith the luminous drapery seemed gathered into folds, the color of which deepened almost to crimson. It was wonderfully beautiful. At Lenox, too, one night during the season of the appearance of the great comet of 1858, the splendid flaming plume hovered over one side of the sky, while all round the other horizon streams of white fire appeared to rise from altars of white light. It was awfully glorious, and beyond all description beautiful. The sky of that part of the United States, particularly in the late autumn and winter, was more frequently visited by magnificent meteors than any other with which I have been acquainted.

The extraordinary purity, dryness, and elasticity of the atmosphere in that region was, I suppose, one cause of these heavenly shows; the clear transparency of the sky by day often giving one the feeling that one was looking straight into heaven

without any intermediate window of atmospheric air, while at night (especially in winter) the world of stars, larger, brighter, more numerous than they ever seemed to me elsewhere, and yet apparently infinitely higher and farther off, were set in a depth of dark whose blackness appeared transparent rather than opaque.

Midnight after midnight I have stood, when the thermometer was twenty and more degrees below freezing, looking over the silent, snow-smothered hills round the small mountain village of Lenox, fast asleep in their embrace, and from thence to the solemn sky rising above them like a huge iron vault hung with thousands of glittering steel weapons, from which, every now and then, a shining scimitar fell flashing earthward; it was a cruel looking sky, in its relentless radiance.

My solitary walks round Edinburgh have left two especial recollections in my mind; the one pleasant, the other very sad. I will speak of the latter first; it was like a leaf out of the middle of a tragedy, of which I never knew either the beginning or the end.

CHAPTER IX.

I was coming home one day from a tramp toward Cramond Beach, and was just on the brow of a wooded height looking towards Edinburgh and not two miles from it, when a heavy thunder-cloud darkened the sky above my head and pelted me with

large drops of ominous warning. On one side of the road the iron gate and lodge of some gentleman's park suggested shelter; and the half-open door of the latter showing a tidy, pleasant-looking woman busy at an ironing table, I ventured to ask her to let me come in till the sponge overhead should have emptied itself. She very good-humoredly consented, and I sat down while the rain rang merrily on the gravel walk before the door, and smoked in its vehement descent on the carriage-road beyond.

The woman pursued her work silently, and I presently became aware of a little child, as silent as herself, sitting beyond her, in a small wicker chair; on the baby's table which fastened her into it were some remnants of shabby, broken toys, among which her tiny, wax-like fingers played with listless unconsciousness, while her eyes were fixed on me. The child looked wan and wasted, and had in its eyes, which it never turned from me, the weary, wistful, unutterable look of "far away and long ago" longing that comes into the miserably melancholy eyes of monkeys.

"Is the baby ill?" said I.

"Ou na, mem; it's no to say that ill, only just always peaking and pining like"—and she stopped ironing a moment to look at the little creature.

"Is it your own baby?" said I, struck with the absence of motherly tenderness in spite of the woman's compassionate tone and expression.

"Ou na, mem, it's no my ain; I hae nane o' my ain."

"How old is it?" I went on.

"Nigh upon five year old," was the answer, with

which the ironing was steadily resumed, with apparently no desire to encourage more questions.

"Five years old!" I exclaimed, in horrified amazement: its size was that of a rickety baby under three, while its wizened face was that of a spell-struck creature of no assignable age, or the wax image of some dwindling life wasting away before the witch-kindled fire of a diabolical hatred. The tiny hands and arms were pitiably thin, and showed under the yellow skin sharp little bones no larger than a chicken's; and at her wrists and temples the blue tracery of her veins looked like a delicate map of the blood, that seemed as if it could hardly be pulsing through her feeble frame; while below the eyes a livid shadow darkened the faded face that had no other color in it.

The tears welled up into my eyes, and the woman, seeing them, suddenly stopped ironing and exclaimed eagerly: "Ou, mem, ye ken the family; or maybe ye'll hae been a friend of the puir thing's mither!" I was obliged to say that I neither knew them nor any thing about them, but that the child's piteous aspect had made me cry.

In answer to the questions with which I then plied her, the woman, who seemed herself affected by the impression I had received from the poor little creature's appearance, told me that the child was that of the only daughter of the people who owned the place; that there was "something wrong" about it all, she did not know what—a marriage ill-pleasing to the grandparents perhaps, perhaps even worse than that; but the mother was dead, the family had been abroad for upward of three years, and the child had been left under her charge. This was all she told

me, and probably all she knew; and as she ended she wiped the tears from her own eyes, adding, "I'm thinking the puir bairn will no live long itsel'."

The rain was over and the sun shone, and I got up to go; as I went, the child's dreary eyes followed me out at the door, and I cried all the way home. Was it possible that my appearance suggested to that tiny soul the image of its young lost mother?

The other incident in my rambles that I wish to record was of a far pleasanter sort. I had gone down to the pier at Newhaven, one blowy, blustering day (the fine Granton Pier Hotel and landing-place did not yet exist), and stood watching the waves taking their mad run and leap over the end of the pier, in a glorious, foaming frenzy that kept me fascinated with the fine uproar, till it suddenly occurred to me that it would be delightful to be out among them (I certainly could have had no recollections of sea-sickness), and I determined to try and get a boat and go out on the frith.

I stopped at a cottage on the outskirts of the fishing town (it was not much more than a village then) of Newhaven, and knocked. Invited to come in, I did so, and there sat a woman, one of the very handsomest I ever saw, in solitary state, leisurely combing a magnificent curtain of fair hair that fell over her ample shoulders and bosom and almost swept the ground. She was seated on a low stool, but looked tall as well as large, and her foam-fresh complexion and gray-green eyes might have become Venus Anadyomene herself, turned into a Scotch fish-wife of five and thirty, or "thereawa." "Can you tell me of any one who will take me out in a boat for a little while?" quoth I. She looked steadily at me for a

minute, and then answered laconically, "Ay, my man and boy shall gang wi' ye." A few lusty screams brought her husband and son forth, and at her bidding they got a boat ready, and, with me well covered with sail-cloths, tarpaulins, and rough dreadnaughts of one sort and another, rowed out from the shore into the turmoil of the sea. A very little of the dancing I got now was delight enough for me, and, deadly sick, I besought to be taken home again, when the matronly Brinhilda at the cottage received me with open-throated peals of laughter, and then made me sit down till I had conquered my qualms and was able to walk back to Edinburgh. Before I went, she showed me a heap of her children, too many, it seemed to me, to be counted; but as they lay in an inextricable mass on the floor in an inner room, there may have seemed more arms and legs forming the radii, of which a clump of curly heads was the center, than there really were.

The husband was a comparatively small man, with dark eyes, hair, and complexion; but her "boy," the eldest, who had come with him to take care of me, was a fair-haired, fresh-faced young giant, of his mother's strain, and, like her, looked as if he had come of the Northern Vikings, or some of the Niebelungen Lied heroes.

When I went away, my fish-wife bade me come again in smooth weather, and if her husband and son were at home they should take me out; and I gave her my address, and begged her, when she came up to town with her fish, to call at the house.

She was a splendid specimen of her tribe, climbing the steep Edinburgh streets with bare white feet, the heavy fish-basket at her back hardly stooping her

broad shoulders, her florid face sheltered and softened in spite of its massiveness into something like delicacy by the transparent shadow of the white handkerchief tied hoodwise over her fair hair, and her shrill sweet voice calling "Caller haddie!" all the way she went, in the melancholy monotone that resounds through the thoroughfares of Edinburgh—the only melodious street-cry (except the warning of the Venetian gondoliers) that I ever heard.

I often went back to visit my middle-aged Christie Johnstone, and more than once saw her and her fellow fish-women haul up the boats on their return after being out at sea. They all stood on the beach clamoring like a flock of sea-gulls, and, as a boat's keel rasped the shingles, rushed forward and seized it; and while the men in their sea clothes, all dripping like huge Newfoundland dogs, jumped out in their heavy boots and took each the way to their several houses, their stalwart partners, hauling all together at the rope fastened to the boat, drew it up beyond water-mark, and seized and sorted its freight of fish, and stalked off each with her own basketful, with which she trudged up to trade and chaffer with the "gude wives" of the town, and bring back to the men the value of their work. It always seemed to me that these women had about as equal a share of the labor of life as the most zealous champion of the rights of their sex could desire.

I did not indulge in any more boating expeditions, but admired the sea from the pier, and became familiar with all the spokes of the fish-wife's family wheel; at any rate, enough to distinguish Jamie from Sandy, and Willie from Johnnie, and Maggie from Jeanie, and Ailsie from Lizzie, and was great friends with them all.

When I returned to Edinburgh, a theatrical star of the first magnitude, I took a morning's holiday to drive down to Newhaven, in search of my old ally, Mistress Sandie Flockhart. She no longer inhabited the little detached cottage, and divers and sundry were the Flockhart "wives" that I "speired at" through the unsavory street of Newhaven, before I found the right one at last, on the third flat of a filthy house, where noise and stench combined almost to knock me down, and where I could hardly knock loud enough to make myself heard above the din within and without. She opened the door of a room that looked as if it was running over with live children, and confronted me with the unaltered aspect of her comely, smiling face. But I had driven down from Edinburgh in all the starlike splendor of a lilac silk dress and French crape bonnet, and my dear fish-wife stared at me silently, with her mouth and gray eyes wide open; only for a moment, however, for in the next she joyfully exclaimed, "Ech, sirs! but it's yer ain sel come back again at last!" Then seizing my hand, she added breathlessly, "I'se gotten anither ane, and ye maun come in and see him;" so she dragged me bodily through and over her surging progeny to a cradle, where, soothed by the strident lullabies of its vociferating predecessors, her last-born and eleventh baby lay peaceably slumbering, an infant Hercules.

Among Mrs. Harry Siddons's intimate friends and associates were the remarkable brothers George and Andrew Combe; the former a lawyer by profession, but known to the literary and scientific world of Europe and America as the Apostle of Phrenology, and the author of a work entitled "The Constitution of Man," and other writings, whose considerable merit and value appear to me more or less impaired

by the craniological theory which he made the foundation of all his works, and which to my mind diminished the general utility of his publications for those readers who are not prepared to accept it as the solution of all the mysteries of human existence.

His writings are all upon subjects of the greatest importance and universal interest, and full of the soundest moral philosophy and the most enlightened humanity; and their only drawback, to me, is the phrenological element which enters so largely into his treatment of every question. Indeed, his life was devoted to the dissemination of this new philosophy of human nature (new, at any rate, in the precise details which Gall, Spurzheim, and he elaborated from it), which, Combe believed, if once generally accepted, would prove the clew to every difficulty, and the panacea for every evil existing in modern civilization. Political and social, religious and civil, mental and moral government, according to him, hinged upon the study and knowledge of the different organs of the human brain, and he labored incessantly to elucidate and illustrate this subject, upon which he thought the salvation of the world depended. For a number of years I enjoyed the privilege of his friendship, and I have had innumerable opportunities of hearing his system explained by himself; but as I was never able to get beyond a certain point of belief in it, it was agreed on all hands that my brain was deficient in the organ of causality, *i.e.*, in the capacity of logical reasoning, and that therefore it was not in my power to perceive the force of his arguments or the truth of his system, even when illustrated by his repeated demonstrations.

I am bound to say that my cousin Cecilia Combe had

quite as much trouble with her household, her lady's-maids were quite as inefficient, her housemaids quite as careless, and her cooks quite as fiery-tempered and unsober as those of "ordinary Christians," in spite of Mr. Combe's observation and manipulation of their bumps previous to engaging them.

I remember once, when I was sitting to Lawrence Macdonald for my bust, which was one of the first he ever executed, before he left Edinburgh to achieve fame and fortune as the most successful marble portrait-maker in Rome, an absurd instance of Mr. Combe's insight into character occurred at my expense.

Macdonald was an intimate friend of the Combes, and I used to see him at their house very frequently, and Mr. Combe often came to the studio when I was sitting. One day while he was standing by, grimly observing Macdonald's absorbed manipulation of his clay, while I, the original *clay*, occupied the "bad eminence" of an artist's studio throne, my aunt came in with a small paper bag containing raspberry tarts in her hand. This was a dainty so peculiarly agreeable to me that, even at that advanced stage of my existence, those who loved me, or wished to be loved by me, were apt to approach me with those charming three-cornered puff paste propitiations.

As soon as I espied the confectioner's light paper bag I guessed its contents, and, springing from my dignified station, seized on the tarts as if I had been the notorious knave of the nursery rhyme. "There now, Macdonald, I told you so!" quoth Mr. Combe, and they both began to laugh; and so did I, with my mouth full of raspberry puff, for it was quite evident to me that my phrenological friend had impressed

upon my artistic friend the special development of my organ of alimentiveness, as he politely called it, which I translated into the vulgate as "bump of greediness." In spite of my reluctance to sit to him, from the conviction that the thick outline of my features would turn the edge of the finest chisel that "ever yet cut breath," and perhaps by dint of phrenology, Macdonald succeeded in making a very good bust of me; and some time after, to my great amusement, having seen me act in the "Grecian Daughter," he said to me, "Oh, but what I want to do now is a statue of you."

"Yes," said I, "and I will tell you exactly where—in the last scene, where I cover my face."

"Precisely so!" cried my enthusiastic friend, and then burst out laughing, on seeing the trap I had laid for him; but he was a very honest man, and stood by his word.

The attitude he wished to represent in a statue was that when, having stabbed Dionysius, I raised the dagger toward heaven with one hand, and drew my drapery over my face with the other. For my notion of heroic women has always been, I am afraid, rather base—a sort of "They do not mind death, but they can not bear pinching;" and though Euphrasia might, could, would, and should stab the man who was about to murder her father, I have no idea that she would like to look at the man she had stabbed. "O Jupiter, no blood!" is apt to be the instinct, I suspect, even in very villainous feminine natures, and those who are and those who are not cowards alike shrink from sights of horror.

When I made Macdonald's acquaintance I was a girl of about seventeen, and he at the very beginning of

his artistic career; but he had an expression of power and vivid intelligence which foretold his future achievements in the exquisite art to which he devoted himself.

When next I met Macdonald it was after a long lapse of time, in 1846, in Rome. Thither he had gone to study his divine art, and there he had remained for a number of years in the exercise of it. He was now the Signor Lorenzo of the Palazzo Barberini, the most successful and celebrated maker of busts, probably, in Rome, having achieved fame, fortune, the favor of the great, and the smiles of the fair, of the most fastidious portion of the English society that makes its winter season in Italy. He dined several times at our house (I was living with my sister and her husband); under his guidance we went to see the statutes of the Vatican by torchlight; and he came out once or twice in the summer of that year to visit us at our villa at Frascati.

I returned to Rome in 1852, and saw Macdonald frequently, in his studio, in our own house, and in general society; and shortly before leaving Rome I met him at dinner at Mrs. Archer Clive's (the authoress of "Paul Ferrol"). I had a nosegay of snowdrops in the bosom of my dress, and Macdonald, who sat next me, observed that they reminded him of Scotland, that he had never seen one in all the years he had passed in Italy, and did not even know that they grew there.

The next day I went to the gardener of the Villa Medici, an old friend of mine, and begged him to procure a pot of snowdrops for me, which I carried to Macdonald's studio, thinking an occasional reminiscence of his own northern land, which he had

not visited for years, not a bad element to infuse into his Roman life and surroundings. Macdonald's portraits are generally good likenesses, sufficiently idealized to be also good works of art. In statuary he never accomplished any thing of extraordinary excellence. I think the "Ulysses Recognized by his Dog" his best performance in sculpture. His studio was an extremely interesting place of resort, from the portraits of his many remarkable sitters with which it was filled.

I met dear old Macdonald, in the winter of 1873, creeping in the sun slowly up the Pincio as I waddled heavily down it (*Eheu!*), his snow-white hair and moustache making his little-altered and strongly marked features only more striking. I visited his studio and found there, ardently and successfully creating immortal gods, a handsome, pleasing youth, his son, inheriting his father's genius, and, strange to say, his broadest of Scotch accents, though he had himself never been out of Rome, where he was born.

On one occasion Mr. Combe was consulted by Prince Albert with regard to the royal children, and was desired to examine their heads. He did not, of course, repeat any of the opinions he had given upon the young princes' "developments," but said they were very nice children, and likely to be capitally educated, for, he added (though shaking his head over cousinly intermarriages among royal personages), Prince Albert was well acquainted with the writings of Gall and Spurzheim, and his own work on "The Constitution of Man." Prince Albert seems to have known something of every thing that was worthy of a Wiseman's knowledge.

In spite of my inability to accept his science of

human nature, Mr. Combe was always a most kind and condescending friend to me. He was a man of singular integrity, uprightness, and purity of mind and character, and of great justice and impartiality of judgment; he was extremely benevolent and humane, and one of the most reasonable human beings I have ever known. From first to last my intercourse with him was always delightful and profitable to me. Of the brothers, however, the younger, Dr. Andrew Combe, was by far the most generally popular, and deservedly so. He was one of the most excellent and amiable of men; his countenance, voice, and manner were expressive of the kindliest benevolence; he had none of the angular rigidity of person and harshness of feature of his brother: both were worthy and distinguished men, but Andrew Combe was charming, which George Combe was not—at least to those who did not know him. Although Dr. Combe completely indorsed his brother's system, he was far lass fanatical and importunate in his advocacy of it. Indeed, his works upon physiology, hygiene, and the physical education of children are of such universal value and importance that no parent or trainer of youth should be unfamiliar with them. Moreover, to them and their excellent author society is indebted for an amount of knowledge on these subjects which has now passed into general use and experience, and become so completely incorporated in the practice of the present day, that it is hardly remembered to whom the first and most powerful impression of the importance of the "natural laws," and their observance in our own lives and the training of our children, is due. I knew a school of young girls in Massachusetts, where taking regular exercise, the use of cold baths, the influence of fresh air, and all the process of careful physical education to which they

were submitted, went by the general name of *Combeing*, in honor of Dr. Combe.

Dr. Combe was Mrs. Harry Siddons's medical adviser, most trusted friend, and general counselor. The young people of her family, myself included, all loved and honored him; and the gleam of genial pleasant humor (a quality of which his worthy brother had hardly a spark) which frequently brightened the gentle gravity of his countenance and demeanor made his intercourse delightful to us; and great was the joy when he proposed to take one or other of us in his gig for a drive to some patient's house, in the lovely neighborhood of Edinburgh. I remember my poor dear mother's dismay when, on my return home, I told her of these same drives. She was always in a fever of apprehension about people's falling in love with each other, and begged to know how old a man this delightful doctor, with whom Mrs. Harry allowed her own daughters and my mother's daughters to go *gigging*, might be. "Ah," replied I, inexpressibly amused at the idea of Dr. Combe in the character of a gay gallant, "ever so old!" I had the real school-girl's estimate of age, and honestly thought that dear Dr. Combe was quite an old man. I believe he was considerably under forty. But if he had been much younger, the fatal disease which had set its seal upon him, and of which he died—after defending his life for an almost incredible space of time from its ultimate victory (which all his wisdom and virtue could but postpone)—was so clearly written upon his thin, sallow face, deep-sunk eyes, and emaciated figure, and gave so serious and almost sad an expression to his countenance and manner, that one would as soon have thought of one's grandfather as an unsafe companion for young girls. I still possess a document,

duly drawn up and engrossed in the form of a deed by his brother, embodying a promise which he made to me jestingly one day, that when he was dead he would not fail to let me know, if ever ghosts were permitted to revisit the earth, by appearing to me, binding himself by this contract that the vision should be unaccompanied by the smallest smell of sulphur or flash of blue flame, and that instead of the indecorous undress of a slovenly winding-sheet, he would wear his usual garments, and the familiar brown great-coat with which, to use his own expression, he "buttoned his bones together" in his life. I remembered that laughing promise when, years after it was given, the news of his death reached me, and I thought how little dismay I should feel if it could indeed have been possible for me to see again, "in his image as he lived," that kind and excellent friend. On one of the occasions when Dr. Combe took me to visit one of his patients, we went to a quaint old house in the near neighborhood of Edinburgh. If the Laird of Dumbiedike's mansion had been still standing, it might have been that very house. The person we went to visit was an old Mr. M ——, to whom he introduced me, and with whom he withdrew, I suppose for a professional consultation, leaving me in a strange, curious, old-fashioned apartment, full of old furniture, old books, and faded, tattered, old nondescript articles, whose purpose it was not easy to guess, but which must have been of some value, as they were all protected from the air and dust by glass covers. When the gentlemen returned, Mr. M—— gratified my curiosity by showing every one of them to me in detail, and informing me that they had all belonged to, or were in some way relics of, Charles Edward Stuart. "And this," said the old gentleman, "was his

sword." It was a light dress rapier, with a very highly cut and ornamented steel hilt. I half drew the blade, thinking how it had flashed from its scabbard, startling England and dazzling Scotland at its first unsheathing, and in what inglorious gloom of prostrate fortunes it had rusted away at last, the scorn of those who had opposed, and the despair of those who had embraced, its cause. "And so that was the Pretender's sword!" said I, hardly aware that I had spoken until the little, withered, snuff-colored gentleman snatched rather than took it from me, exclaiming, "Wha' did ye say, madam? it was the *prince's* sword!" and laid it tenderly back in the receptacle from which he had taken it.

As we drove away, Dr. Combe told me, what indeed I had perceived, that this old man, who looked like a shriveled, russet-colored leaf for age and feebleness, was a passionate partisan of Charles Edward, by whom my mention of him as the Pretender, if coming from a man, would have been held a personal insult. It was evident that I, though a mere chit of the irresponsible sex, had both hurt and offended him by it. His sole remaining interest in life was hunting out and collecting the smallest records or memorials of this shadow of a hero; surely the merest "royal apparition" that ever assumed kingship. "What a set those Stuarts must have been!" exclaimed an American friend of mine once, after listening to "Bonnie Prince Charlie," "to have had all those glorious Jacobite songs made and sung for them, and not to have been more of men than they were!" And so I think, and thought even then, for though I had a passion for the Jacobite ballads, I had very little enthusiasm for their thoroughly inefficient hero, who, for the claimant of a throne, was undoubtedly *un très pauvre sire*. Talking over this with me, as we

drove from Mr. M——'s, Dr. Combe said he was persuaded that at that time there were men to be found in Scotland ready to fight a duel about the good fame of Mary Stuart.

Sir Walter Scott told me that when the Scottish regalia was discovered, in its obscure place of security, in Edinburgh Castle, pending the decision of government as to its ultimate destination, a committee of gentlemen were appointed its guardians, among whom he was one; and that he received a most urgent entreaty from an old lady of the Maxwell family to be permitted to see it. She was nearly ninety years old, and feared she might not live till the crown jewels of Scotland were permitted to become objects of public exhibition, and pressed Sir Walter with importunate prayers to allow her to see them before she died. Sir Walter's good sense and good nature alike induced him to take upon himself to grant the poor old lady's petition, and he himself conducted her into the presence of these relics of her country's independent sovereignty; when, he said, tottering hastily forward from his support, she fell on her knees before the crown, and, clasping and wringing her wrinkled hands, wailed over it as a mother over her dead child. His description of the scene was infinitely pathetic, and it must have appealed to all his own poetical and imaginative sympathy with the former glories of his native land.

My mother's anxiety about Dr. Combe's age reminds me that my intimacy with my cousin, Harry Siddons, who was now visiting his mother previous to his departure for India to begin his military career, had been a subject of considerable perplexity to her while I was still at home and he used to come from Addiscombe to see us. Nothing could be more

diametrically opposite than his mother's and my mother's system (if either could be called so) of dealing with the difficulty, though I have my doubts whether Mrs. Harry perceived any in the case; and whereas I think my mother's apprehensions and precautions would have very probably been finally justified by some childish engagement between Harry and myself, resulting in all sorts of difficulties and complications as time went on and absence and distance produced their salutary effect on a boy of twenty and a girl of seventeen, Mrs. Harry remained passive, and apparently unconscious of any danger; and we walked and talked and danced and were sentimental together after the most approved cousinly fashion, and Harry went off to India with my name engraved upon his sword—a circumstance which was only made known to me years after by his widow (his and my cousin, Harriet Siddons), whom he met and loved and married in India, and who made me laugh, telling me how hard he and she had worked, scratched, and scrubbed together to try and efface my name from the good sword; which, however, being true steel, and not inconstant heart of man, refused to give up its dedication. I should have much objected to any such inscription had I been consulted.

My cousin Harry's wife was the second daughter of George Siddons, Mrs. Siddons's eldest son, who through her interest was appointed, while still quite a young man, to the influential and lucrative post of collector of the port at Calcutta, which position he retained for nearly forty years. He married a lady in whose veins ran the blood of the kings of Delhi, and in whose descendants, in one or two instances, even in the fourth generation, this ancestry reveals itself by a type of beauty of strikingly Oriental character.

Among these is the beautiful Mrs. Scott-Siddons, whose exquisite features present the most perfect living miniature of her great-grandmother's majestic beauty. In two curiously minute, highly finished miniatures of the royal Hindoo personages, her ancestors, which Mrs. George Siddons gave Miss Twiss (and the latter gave me), it is wonderful how strong a likeness may be traced to several of their remote descendants born in England of English parents.

To return to Edinburgh: another intimate acquaintance, or rather friend, of Mr. Combe's whom I frequently met at his house was Duncan McLaren, father of the present member of Parliament, the able editor of the *Scotsman*. Between him and the Combes all matters of public interest and importance were discussed from the most liberal and enlightened point of view, and it was undoubtedly a great advantage to an intelligent girl of my age to hear such vigorous, manly, clear expositions of the broadest aspects of all the great political and governmental questions of the day. Admirable sound sense was the characteristic that predominated in that intellectual circle, and was brought to bear upon every subject; and I remember with the greatest pleasure the evenings I passed at Mr. Combe's residence in Northumberland Street, with these three grave men. Among the younger associates to whom these elders and betters extended their kindly hospitality was William Gregory, son of the eminent professor of chemistry, who himself has since pursued the same scientific course with equal success and distinction, adding a new luster to the honorable name he inherited.

Mr. William Murray, my dear Mrs. Harry's brother,

was another member of our society, to whom I have alluded, in speaking of the Edinburgh Theater, as an accomplished actor; and sometimes I used to think that was all he was, for it was impossible to determine whether the romance, the sentiment, the pathos, the quaint humor, or any of the curiously capricious varying moods in which these were all blended, displayed real elements of his character or only shifting exhibitions of the peculiar versatility of a nature at once so complex and so superficial that it really was impossible for others, and I think would have been difficult for himself, to determine what was genuine thought and feeling in him, and what the mere appearance or demonstration or imitation of thought and feeling. Perhaps this peculiarity was what made him such a perfect actor. He was a very melancholy man, with a tendency to moody morbidness of mind which made him a subject of constant anxiety to his sister. His countenance, which was very expressive without being at all handsome, habitually wore an air of depression, and yet it was capable of brilliant vivacity and humorous play of feature. His conversation, when he was in good spirits, was a delightful mixture of sentiment, wit, poetry, fun, fancy and imagination. He had married the sister of Mrs. Thomas Moore (the Bessie so tenderly invited to "fly from the world" with the poet), and I used to think that he was like an embodiment of Moore's lyrical genius: there was so much pathos and wit and humor and grace and spirit and tenderness, and such a quantity of factitious flummery besides in him, that he always reminded me of those pretty and provoking songs in which some affected attitudinizing conceit mingles with almost every expression of genuine feeling, like an artificial rose in a handful of wild flowers.

I do not think William Murray's diamonds were of the finest water, but his *paste* was; and it was difficult enough to tell the one from the other. He had a charming voice, and sang exquisitely, after a fashion which I have no doubt he copied (as, however, only original genius can copy) from Moore; but his natural musical facility was such that, although no musician, and singing everything only by ear, he executed the music of the Figaro in Mozart's "Nozze" admirably. He had a good deal of his sister's winning charm of manner, and was (but not, I think, of malice prepense) that pleasantly pernicious creature, a male flirt. It was quite out of his power to address any woman (sister or niece or cookmaid) without an air and expression of sentimental courtesy and tender chivalrous devotion, that must have been puzzling and perplexing in the extreme to the uninitiated; and I am persuaded that until some familiarity bred—if not contempt, at least comprehension—every woman of his acquaintance (his cook included) must have felt convinced that he was struggling against a respectful and hopeless passion for her.

Of another acquaintance of ours in Edinburgh, a Mrs. A——, I wish to say a word. She was a very singular woman; not perhaps in being tolerably ignorant and silly, with an unmeaning face and a foolish, commonplace manner, an average specimen of vacuity of mind and vapidity of conversation, but undoubtedly singular in that she combined with these not un-frequent human conditions a most rare gift of musical and poetical interpretation—a gift so peculiar that when she sang she literally seemed inspired, taken possession of, by some other soul, that entered into her as she opened her mouth and departed from her as she shut it. She had a dull,

brick-colored, long, thin face, and dull, pale-green eyes, like boiled gooseberries; but when in a clear, high, sweet, passionless soprano, like the voice of a spirit, and without any accompaniment, she sang the old Scotch ballads which she had learned in early girlhood from her nurse, she produced one of the most powerful impressions that music and poetry combined can produce. From her I heard and learned by ear "The Douglas Tragedy," "Fine Flowers in the Valley," "Edinbro'," and many others, and became completely enamored of the wild beauty of the Scotch ballads, the terror and pity of their stories, and the strange, sweet, mournful music to which they were told. I knew every collection of them, that I could get hold of, by heart, from Scott's "Border Minstrelsy" to Smith's six volumes of "National Scottish Songs with their Musical Settings," and I said and sang them over in my lonely walks perpetually; and they still are to me among the deepest and freshest sources of poetical thought and feeling that I know. It is impossible, I think, to find a truer expression of passion, anguish, tenderness, and supernatural terror, than those poems contain. The dew of heaven on the mountain fern is not more limpid than the simplicity of their diction, nor the heart's blood of a lover more fervid than the throbbing intensity of their passion. Misery, love, longing, and despair have found no finer poetical utterance out of Shakespeare; and the deepest chords of woe and tenderness have been touched by these often unknown archaic song-writers, with a power and a pathos inferior only to his. The older ballads, with the exquisite monotony of their burdens soothing and relieving the tragic tenor of their stories, like the sighing of wind or the murmuring of water; the clarion-hearted Jacobite songs, with the

fragrance of purple heather and white roses breathing through their strains of loyal love and death-defying devotion; and the lovely, pathetic, and bewitchingly humorous songs of Burns, with their enchanting melodies, were all familiar to me, and, during the year that I spent in Edinburgh, were my constant study and delight.

On one occasion I sat by Robert Chambers, and heard him relate some portion of the difficulties and distresses of his own and his brother's early boyhood (the interesting story has lately become generally known by the publication of their memoirs); and I then found it very difficult to swallow my dinner, and my tears, while listening to him, so deeply was I affected by his simple and touching account of the cruel struggle the two brave lads—destined to become such admirable and eminent men—had to make against the hardships of their position. I remember his describing the terrible longing occasioned by the smell of newly baked bread in a baker's shop near which they lived, to their poor, half-starved, craving appetites, while they were saving every farthing they could scrape together for books and that intellectual sustenance of which, in after years, they became such bountiful dispensers to all English-reading folk. Theirs is a very noble story of virtue conquering fortune and dedicating it to the highest purposes. I used to meet the Messrs. Chambers at Mr. Combe's house; they were intimate and valued friends of the phrenologist, and I remember when the book entitled "Vestiges of Creation" came out, and excited so great a sensation in the public mind, that Mr. Combe attributed the authorship of it, which was then a secret, to Robert Chambers.

Another Edinburgh friend of ours was Baron Hume, a Scottish law dignitary, a charming old gentleman of the very old school, who always wore powder and a pigtail, knee-breeches, gold-buckles, and black silk stockings; and who sent a thrill of delight through my girlish breast when he addressed me, as he invariably did, by the dignified title of "madam;" though I must sorrowfully add that my triumph on this score was considerably abated when, on the occasion of my second visit to Edinburgh, after I had come out on the stage, I went to see my kind old friend, who was too aged and infirm to go to the theater, and who said to me as I sat on a low stool by his sofa, "Why, madam, they tell me you are become a great tragic actress! But," added he, putting his hand under my chin, and raising my face toward him, "how am I to believe that of this laughing face, madam?" No doubt he saw in his memory's eye the majestic nose of my aunt, and my "visnomy" under the effect of such a contrast must have looked comical enough, by way of a tragic mask. By the bye, it is on record that while Gainsborough was painting that exquisite portrait of Mrs. Siddons which is now in the South Kensington Gallery, and which for many fortunate years adorned my father's house, after working in absorbed silence for some time he suddenly exclaimed, "Damn it, madam, there is no end to your nose!" The *restoration* of that beautiful painting has destroyed the delicate charm of its coloring, which was perfectly harmonious, and has as far as possible made it coarse and vulgar: before it had been spoiled, not even Sir Joshua's "Tragic Muse" seemed to me so noble and beautiful a representation of my aunt's beauty as that divine picture of Gainsborough's.

Two circumstances occurred during my stay in

Edinburgh which made a great impression upon me: the one was the bringing of the famous old gun, Mons Meg, up to the castle; and the other was the last public appearance of Madame Catalani. I do not know where the famous old cannon had been kept till it was resolved to place it in Edinburgh Castle, but the event was made quite a public festival, and by favor of some of the military authorities who presided over the ceremony we were admirably placed in a small angle or turret that commanded the beautiful land and sea and town, and immediately overlooked the hollow road up which, with its gallant military escort of Highland troops, and the resounding accompaniment of their warlike music, the great old lumbering piece of ordnance came slowly, dragged by a magnificent team of horses, into the fortress. Nothing could be more striking than the contrast presented by this huge, clumsy, misshapen, obsolete engine of war, and the spruce, trim, shining, comparatively little cannon (mere pocket-pistols for Bellona) which furnished the battery just below our stand, and which, as soon as the unwieldy old warrioress had occupied the post of honor reserved for her in their midst, sent forth a martial acclaim of welcome that made the earth tremble under our feet, and resounded through the air, shivering, with the strong concussion, more than one pane of glass in the windows of Princess Street far below.

Of Madame Catalani, all I can say is that I think she sang only "God save the King" and "Rule Britannia" on the occasion on which I heard her, which was that of her last public appearance in Edinburgh. I remember only these, and think had she sung any thing else I could not have forgotten it. She was quite an old woman, but still splendidly handsome. Her magnificent dark hair and eyes, and beautiful arms,

and her blue velvet dress with a girdle flashing with diamonds, impressed me almost as much as her singing; which, indeed, was rather a declamatory and dramatic than a musical performance. The tones of her voice were still fine and full, and the majestic action of her arms as she uttered the words, "When Britain first arose from the waves," wonderfully graceful and descriptive; still, I remember better that I *saw*, than that I *heard*, Madame Catalani. She is the first of the queens of song that I have seen ascend the throne of popular favor, in the course of sixty years, and pretty little Adelina Patti the last; I have heard all that have reigned between the two, and above them all Pasta appears to me pre-eminent for musical and dramatic genius—alone and unapproached, the muse of tragic song.

CHAPTER X.

I can not remember any event, or series of events, the influence of which could, during my first stay in Edinburgh, have made a distinctly serious or religious impression on my mind, or have directed my thoughts especially toward the more solemn concerns and aspects of life. But from some cause or other my mind became much affected at this time by religious considerations, and a strong devotional element began to predominate among my emotions and cogitations. In my childhood in my father's house we had no special religious training; our habits were those of average English Protestants of decent respectability. My mother read the Bible to us in the

morning before breakfast; Mrs. Trimmer's and Mrs. Barbauld's Scripture histories and paraphrases were taught to us; we learnt our catechism and collects, and went to church on Sunday, duly and decorously, as a matter of course. Grace was always said before and after meals by the youngest member of the family present; and I remember a quaint, old-fashioned benediction which, when my father happened to be at home at our bedtime, we used to kneel down by his chair to receive, and with which he used to dismiss us for the night: "God bless you! make you good, happy, healthy, and wise!" These, with our own daily morning and evening prayers, were our devotional habits and pious practices. In Mrs. Harry Siddons's house religion was never, I think, directly made a subject of inculcation or discussion; the usual observances of Church of England people were regularly fulfilled by all her family, the spirit of true religion governed her life and all her home relations, but special, direct reference to religious subjects was infrequent among us. God's service in that house took the daily and hourly form of the conscientious discharge of duty, unselfish, tender affection toward each other, and kindly Christian charity toward all. At various times in my life, when hearing discussions on the peculiar (technical, I should be disposed to call it) profession and character supposed by some very good people of a certain way of thinking to be the only indication of what they considered real religion, I have remembered the serene, courageous self-devotion of my dear friend, when, during a dangerous (as it was at one time apprehended, fatal) illness of her youngest daughter, she would leave her child's bedside to go to the theater, and discharge duties never very attractive to her, and rendered distasteful

then by cruel anxiety, but her neglect of which would have injured the interests of her brother, her fellow-actors, and all the poor people employed in the theater, and been a direct infringement of her obligations to them. I have wondered what amount of religion a certain class of "professing Christians" would have allowed entered into that great effort.

We attended habitually a small chapel served by the Rev. William Shannon, an excellent but not exciting preacher, who was a devoted friend of Mrs. Harry Siddons; and occasionally we went to Dr. Allison's church and heard him—then an old man—preach, and sometimes his young assistant, Mr. Sinclair, whose eloquent and striking sermons, which impressed me much, were the only powerful direct appeals made to my religious sentiments at that time. I rather incline to think that I had, what a most unclerical young clergyman of my acquaintance once assured me I had, a natural turn for religion. I think it not unlikely that a great deal of the direct religious teaching and influences of my Paris school-days was, as it were, coming up again to the surface of my mind, and occupying my thoughts with serious reflections upon the most important subjects. The freedom I enjoyed gave scope and leisure to my character to develop and strengthen itself; and to the combined healthful repose and activity of all my faculties, the absence of all excitement and irritation from external influences, the pure moral atmosphere and kindly affection by which I lived surrounded during this happy year, I attribute whatever perception of, desire for, or endeavor after goodness I was first consciously actuated by. In the rest and liberty of my life at this time, I think, whatever was best in me had the most favorable chance of growth, and I have remained ever grateful to the wise

forbearance of the gentle authority under which I lived, for the benefit as well as the enjoyment I derived from the time I passed in Edinburgh.

I think that more harm is frequently done by over than by under culture in the moral training of youth. Judicious *letting alone* is a precious element in real education, and there are certain chords which, often touched and made to vibrate too early, are apt to lose instead of gaining power; to grow first weakly and morbidly sensitive, and then hard and dull; and finally, when the full harmony of the character depends upon their truth and depth of tone, to have lost some measure of both under repeated premature handling.

I sometimes think that instead of beginning, as we do, with a whole heaven-and-earth-embracing theory of duty to God and man, it might be better to adopt with our children the method of dealing only with each particular instance of moral obligation empirically as it occurs; with each particular incident of life, detached, as it were, from the notion of a formal system, code, or theory of religious belief, until the recurrence of the same rules of morality under the same governing principle, invoked only in immediate application to some instance of conduct or incident of personal experience, built up by degrees a body of precedent which would have the force and efficacy of law before it was theoretically inculcated as such. Whoever said that principles were *moral habits* spoke, it seems to me, a valuable truth, not generally sufficiently recognized or acted upon in the task of education.

The only immediate result, that I can remember, of my graver turn of thought at this time upon my

conduct was a determination to give up reading Byron's poetry. It was a great effort and a very great sacrifice, for the delight I found in it was intense; but I was quite convinced of its injurious effect upon me, and I came to the conclusion that I would forego it.

"Cain" and "Manfred" were more especially the poems that stirred my whole being with a tempest of excitement that left me in a state of mental perturbation impossible to describe for a long time after reading them. I suppose the great genius touched in me the spirit of our time, which, chit as I was, was common to us both; and the mere fact of my being *un enfant du siècle* rendered me liable to the infection of the potent, proud, desponding bitterness of his writing.

The spirit of an age creates the spirit that utters it, and though Byron's genius stamped its impress powerfully upon the thought and feeling of his contemporaries, he was himself, after all, but a sort of quintessence of *them*, and gave them back only an intensified, individual extract of themselves. The selfish vanity and profligate vice which he combined with his extraordinary intellectual gifts were as peculiar to himself as his great mental endowments; and though fools may have followed the fashion of his follies, the heart of all Europe was not stirred by a fashion of which he set the example, but by a passion for which he found the voice, indeed, but of which the key-note lay in the very temper of the time and the souls of the men of his day. Goethe, Alfieri, Châteaubriand, each in his own language and with his peculiar national and individual accent, uttered the same mind; they stamped their own image and superscription upon the coin to which, by so doing, they gave currency, but the mine from whence they

drew their metal was the civilized humanity of the nineteenth century. It is true that some of Solomon's coining rings not unlike Goethe's and Byron's; but Solomon forestalled his day by being *blasé* before the nineteenth century. Doubtless the recipe for that result has been the same for individuals ever since the world rolled, but only here and there a great king, who was also a great genius, possessed it in the earlier times; it took all the ages that preceded it to make the *blasé* age, and Byron, pre-eminently, to speak its mind in English—which he had no sooner done than every nineteenth-century shop-boy in England quoted Byron, wore his shirt-collar open, and execrated his destiny. Doubtless by grace of his free-will a man may wring every drop of sap out of his own soul and help his fellows like-minded with himself to do the same; but the everlasting spirit of truth renews the vitality of the world, and while Byron was growling and howling, and Shelley was denying and defying, Scott was telling and Wordsworth singing things beautiful and good, and new and true.

Certain it is, however, that the noble poet's glorious chanting of much inglorious matter did me no good, and so I resolved to read that grand poetry no more. It was a severe struggle, but I persevered in it for more than two years, and had my reward; I broke through the thraldom of that powerful spell, and all the noble beauty of those poems remained to me thenceforth divested of the power of wild excitement they had exercised over me. A great many years after this girlish effort and sacrifice, Lady Byron, who was a highly esteemed friend of mine, spoke to me upon the subject of a new and cheap edition of her husband's works about to be published, and likely to be widely disseminated among the young clerk and

shopkeeper class of readers, for whom she deprecated extremely the pernicious influence it was calculated to produce. She consulted me on the expediency of appending to it some notice of Lord Byron written by herself, which she thought might modify or lessen the injurious effect of his poetry upon young minds. "Nobody," she said, "knew him as I did" (this certainly was not the general impression upon the subject); "nobody knew as well as I the causes that had made him what he was; nobody, I think, is so capable of doing justice to him, and therefore of counteracting the injustice he does to himself, and the injury he might do to others, in some of his writings." I was strongly impressed by the earnestness of her expression, which seemed to me one of affectionate compassion for Byron and profound solicitude lest, even in his grave, he should incur the responsibility of yet further evil influence, especially on the minds of the young. I could not help wondering, also, whether she did not shrink from being again, to a new generation and a wider class of readers, held up to cruel ridicule and condemnation as the cold-hearted, hard, pedantic prude, without sympathy for suffering or relenting toward repentance. I had always admired the reticent dignity of her silence with reference to her short and disastrous union with Lord Byron, and I felt sorry, therefore, that she contemplated departing from the course she had thus far steadfastly pursued, though I appreciated the motive by which she was actuated. I could not but think, however, that she overestimated the mischief Byron's poetry was likely to do the young men of 1850, highly prejudicial as it undoubtedly was to those of his day, illustrated, so to speak, by the bad notoriety of his own character and career. But the generation of English youth who had

grown up with Thackeray, Dickens, and Tennyson as their intellectual nourishment, seemed to me little likely to be infected with Byronism, and might read his poetry with a degree of impunity which the young people of his own time did not enjoy. I urged this my conviction upon her, as rendering less necessary than she imagined the antidote she was anxious to append to the poison of the new edition of her husband's works. But to this she replied that she had derived her impression of the probable mischief to a class peculiarly interesting to him, from Frederick Robertson, and of course his opinion was more than an overweight for mine.

Lady Byron did not, however, fulfill her purpose of prefacing the contemplated edition of Byron's poems with a notice of him by herself, which I think very likely to have been a suggestion of Mr. Robertson's to her.

My happy year in Edinburgh ended, I returned to London, to our house in James Street, Buckingham Gate, where I found my parents much burdened with care and anxiety about the affairs of the theater, which were rapidly falling into irretrievable embarrassment. My father toiled incessantly, but the tide of ill-success and losing fortune had set steadily against him, and the attempt to stem it became daily harder and more hopeless. I used sometimes to hear some of the sorrowful details of this dreary struggle, and I well remember the indignation and terror I experienced when one day my father said at dinner, "I have had a new experience to-day: I have been arrested for the first time in my life." I believe my father was never personally in debt during all his life; he said he never had been up to that day, and I am very sure he never was afterward. Through all

the severe labor of his professional life, and his strenuous exertions to maintain his family and educate my brothers like gentlemen, and my sister and myself with every advantage, he never incurred the misery of falling into debt, but paid his way as he went along, with difficulty, no doubt, but still steadily and successfully, "owing no man any thing." But the suit in question was brought against him as one of the proprietors of the theater, for a debt which the theater owed; and, moreover, was that of a person whom he had befriended and helped forward, and who had always professed the most sincere gratitude and attachment to him. The constantly darkening prospects of that unlucky theater threw a gloom over us all; sometimes my father used to speak of selling his share in it for any thing he could get for it (and Heaven knows it was not likely to be much!), and going to live abroad; or sending my mother, with us, to live cheaply in the south of France, while he continued to work in London. Neither alternative was cheerful for him or my poor mother, and I felt very sorrowful for them, though I thought I should like living in the south of France better than in London. I was working with a good deal of enthusiasm at a tragedy on the subject of Fiesco, the Genoese noble's conspiracy against the Dorias—a subject which had made a great impression upon me when I first read Schiller's noble play upon it. My own former fancy about going on the stage, and passionate desire for a lonely, independent life in which it had originated, had died away with the sort of moral and mental effervescence which had subsided during my year's residence in Edinburgh. Although all my sympathy with the anxieties of my parents tended to make the theater an object of painful interest to me, and

though my own attempts at poetical composition were constantly cast in a dramatic form, in spite of my enthusiastic admiration of Goethe's and Schiller's plays (which, however, I could only read in French or English translations, for I then knew no German) and my earnest desire to write a good play myself, the idea of making the stage my profession had entirely passed from my mind, which was absorbed with the wish and endeavor to produce a good dramatic composition. The turn I had exhibited for acting at school appeared to have evaporated, and Covent Garden itself never occurred to me as a great institution for purposes of art or enlightened public recreation, but only as my father's disastrous property, to which his life was being sacrificed; and every thought connected with it gradually became more and more distasteful to me. It appears to me curious, that up to this time, I literally knew nothing of Shakespeare, beyond having seen one or two of his plays acted; I had certainly never read one of them through, nor did I do so until some time later, when I began to have to learn parts in them by heart.

I think the rather serious bias which my mind had developed while I was still in Scotland tended probably to my greater contentment in my home, and to the total disinclination which I should certainly now have felt for a life of public exhibition. My dramatic reading and writing was curiously blended with a very considerable interest in literature of a very different sort, and with the perusal of such works as Mason on "Self-Knowledge," Newton's "Cardiphonia," and a great variety of sermons and religious essays. My mother, observing my tendency to reading on religious subjects, proposed to me to take my first communion. She was a member of the Swiss Protestant Church, the

excellent pastor of which, the Rev. Mr. S——, was our near neighbor, and we were upon terms of the friendliest intimacy with him and his family. In his church I received the sacrament for the first time, but I do not think with the most desirable effect. The only immediate result that I can remember of this increase of my Christian profession and privileges was, I am sorry to say, a rigid pharisaical formalism, which I carried so far as to decline accompanying my father and mother to our worthy clergyman's house, one Sunday, when we were invited to spend the evening with him and his family. This sort of acrid fruit is no uncommon first harvest of youthful religious zeal; and I suppose my parents and my worthy pastor thought it a piece of unripe, childish, impertinent conscientiousness, hardly deserving a serious rebuke.

Another of my recollections which belong to this time is seeing several times at our house that exceedingly coarse, disagreeable, clever, and witty man, Theodore Hook. I always had a dread of his loud voice, and blazing red face, and staring black eyes; especially as on more than one occasion his after-dinner wit seemed to me fitter for the table he had left than the more refined atmosphere of the drawing-room. One day he dined with us to meet my cousin Horace Twiss and his handsome new wife. Horace had in a lesser degree some of Hook's wonderful sense of humor and quickness of repartee, and the two men brought each other out with great effect. Of course I had heard of Mr. Hook's famous reply when, after having returned from the colonies, where he was in an official position, under suspicion of peculation, a friend meeting him said, "Why, hallo, Hook! I did not know you were in England! What has brought you back again?" "Something

wrong about the *chest*," replied the imperturbable wit. He was at this time the editor of the John Bull, a paper of considerable ability, and only less scurrility than the *Age*; and in spite of his *chest difficulty* he was much sought in society for his extraordinary quickness and happiness in conversation. His outrageous hoax of the poor London citizen, from whom he extorted an agonized invitation to dinner by making him believe that he and Charles Mathews were public surveyors, sent to make observations for a new road, which was to go straight through the poor shopkeeper's lawn, flower-garden, and bedroom, he has, I believe, introduced into his novel of "Gilbert Gurney." But not, of course, with the audacious extemporaneous song with which he wound up the joke, when, having eaten and drank the poor citizen's dinner, prepared for a small party of citizen friends (all the time assuring him that he and his friend would use their very best endeavors to avert the threatened invasion of his property by the new line of road), he proposed singing a song, to the great delight of the unsophisticated society, the concluding verse of which was—

"And now I am bound to declare
That your wine is as good as your cook,
And that this is Charles Mathews, the player,
And I, sir, am Theodore Hook."

He always demanded, when asked for a specimen of his extemporizing power, that a subject should be given to him. I do not remember, on one occasion, what was suggested in the first instance, but after some discussion Horace Twiss cried out, "The Jews." It was the time of the first mooting of the question of the Jews being admitted to stand for Parliament and having seats in the House, and party spirit ran extremely high upon the subject. Theodore Hook shrugged his shoulders and made a discontented grimace, as if baffled by his theme, the Jews. However, he went to the piano, threw back his head, and began strumming a galloping country-dance tune, to which he presently poured forth the most inconceivable string of witty, comical, humorous, absurd allusions to everybody present as well as to the subject imposed upon him. Horace Twiss was at that time under-secretary either for foreign affairs or the colonies, and Hook took occasion to say, or rather sing, that the foreign department could have little charms for a man who had so many more in the home, with an indication to Annie Twiss; the final verse of this real firework of wit was this—

"I dare say you think there's little wit
In this, but you've all forgot
That, instead of being a jeu d'esprit,
'Tis only a jeu de mot,"

pronouncing the French words as broadly as

possible, "a *Jew d'esprit*, and 'tis only a *Jew de motte*," for the sake of the rhyme, and his subject, the Jews. It certainly was all through a capital specimen of ready humor. I remember on another occasion hearing him exercise his singular gift in a manner that seemed to me as unjustifiable as it was disagreeable. I met him at dinner at Sir John McDonald's, then adjutant-general, a very kind and excellent friend of mine. Mrs. Norton and Lord C ——, who were among the guests, both came late, and after we had gone into the dining-room, where they were received with a discreet quantity of mild chaff, Mrs. Norton being much too formidable an adversary to be challenged lightly. After dinner, however, when the men came up into the drawing-room, Theodore Hook was requested to extemporize, and having sung one song, was about to leave the piano in the midst of the general entreaty that he would not do so, when Mrs. Norton, seating herself close to the instrument so that he could not leave it, said, in her most peculiar, deep, soft, contralto voice, which was like her beautiful dark face set to music, "I am going to sit down here, and you shall not come away, for I will keep you in like an iron crow." There was nothing about her manner or look that could suggest any thing but a flattering desire to enjoy Hook's remarkable talent in some further specimen of his power of extemporizing, and therefore I suppose there must have been some previous ill-will or heart-burning on his part toward her—she was reckless enough in her use of her wonderful wit and power of saying the most intolerable stinging things, to have left a smart on some occasion in Hook's memory, for which he certainly did his best to pay her then. Every verse of the song he now sang ended with his turning with a bow to her, and the words, "my

charming iron crow;" but it was from beginning to end a covert satire of her and her social triumphs; even the late arrival at dinner and its supposed causes were duly brought in, still with the same mock-respectful inclination to his "charming iron crow." Everybody was glad when the song was over, and applauded it quite as much from a sense of relief as from admiration of its extraordinary cleverness; and Mrs. Norton smilingly thanked Hook, and this time made way for him to leave the piano.

We lived near each other at this time, we in James Street, Buckingham Gate, and the Nortons at Storey's Gate, at the opposite end of the Birdcage Walk. We both of us frequented the same place of worship—a tiny chapel wedged in among the buildings at the back of Downing Street, the entrance to which was from the park; it has been improved away by the new government offices. Our dinner at the McDonalds' was on a Saturday, and the next day, as we were walking part of the way home together from church, Mrs. Norton broke out about Theodore Hook and his odious ill-nature and abominable coarseness, saying that it was a disgrace and a shame that for the sake of his paper, the *John Bull*, and its influence, the Tories should receive such a man in society. I, who but for her outburst upon the subject should have carefully avoided mentioning Hook's name, presuming that after his previous evening's performance it could not be very agreeable to Mrs. Norton, now, not knowing very well what to say, but thinking the Sheridan blood (especially in her veins) might have some sympathy with and find some excuse for him, suggested the temptation that the possession of such wit must always be, more or less, to the abuse of it. "Witty!" exclaimed the indignant beauty, with her lip and nostril quivering, "witty!

One may well be witty when one fears neither God nor devil!" I was heartily glad Hook was not there; he was not particular about the truth, and would infallibly, in some shape or other, have translated for her benefit, "Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, et n'ai point d'autre crainte."

The Nortons' house was close to the issue from St. James's Park into Great George Street. I remember passing an evening with them there, when a host of distinguished public and literary men were crowded into their small drawing-room, which was literally resplendent with the light of Sheridan beauty, male and female: Mrs. Sheridan (Miss Callender, of whom, when she published a novel, the hero of which commits forgery, that wicked wit, Sidney Smith, said he knew she was a Callender, but did not know till then that she was a Newgate calendar), the mother of the Graces, more beautiful than anybody but her daughters; Lady Grahame, their beautiful aunt; Mrs. Norton, Mrs. Blackwood (Lady Dufferin), Georgiana Sheridan (Duchess of Somerset and queen of beauty by universal consent), and Charles Sheridan, their younger brother, a sort of younger brother of the Apollo Belvedere. Certainly I never saw such a bunch of beautiful creatures all growing on one stem. I remarked it to Mrs. Norton, who looked complacently round her tiny drawing-room and said, "Yes, we are rather good-looking people." I remember this evening because of the impression made on me by the sight of these wonderfully "good-looking people" all together, and also because of my having had to sing with Moore—an honor and glory hardly compensating the distress of semi-strangulation, in order to avoid drowning his feeble thread of a voice with the heavy, robust contralto which I found it very difficult to swallow half of, while singing

second to him, in his own melodies, with the other half. My acquaintance with Mrs. Norton lasted through a period of many years, and, though never very intimate, was renewed with cordiality each time I returned to England. It began just after I came out on the stage, when I was about twenty, and she a few years older. My father and mother had known her parents and grandparents, Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Miss Lindley, from whom their descendants derived the remarkable beauty and brilliant wit which distinguished them.

My mother was at Drury Lane when Mr. Sheridan was at the head of its administration, and has often described to me the extraordinary proceedings of that famous first night of "Pizarro," when, at last keeping the faith he had so often broken with the public, Mr. Sheridan produced that most effective of melodramas, with my aunt and uncle's parts still unfinished, and, depending upon their extraordinary rapidity of study, kept them learning the last scenes of the last act, which he was still writing, while the beginning of the piece was being performed. By the by, I do not know what became of the theories about the dramatic art, and the careful and elaborate study necessary for its perfection. In this particular instance John Kemble's Rolla and Mrs. Siddons's Elvira must have been what may be called extemporaneous acting. Not impossibly, however, these performances may have gained in vivid power and effect what they lost in smoothness and finish, from the very nervous strain and excitement of such a mental effort as the actors were thus called upon to make. My mother remembered well, too, the dismal Saturdays when, after prolonged periods of non-payment of their salaries, the poorer members of the company, and all the unfortunate work-people,

carpenters, painters, scene-shifters, understrappers of all sorts, and plebs in general of the great dramatic concern, thronging the passages and staircases, would assail Sheridan on his way to the treasury with pitiful invocations: "For God's sake, Mr. Sheridan, pay us our salaries!" "For Heaven's sake, Mr. Sheridan, let us have something this week!" and his plausible reply of, "Certainly, certainly, my good people, you shall be attended to directly." Then he would go into the treasury, sweep it clean of the whole week's receipts (the salaries of the principal actors, whom he dared not offend and could not dispense with, being, if not wholly, partially paid), and, going out of the building another way, leave the poor people who had cried to him for their arrears of wages baffled and cheated of the price of their labor for another week. The picture was not a pleasant one.

When I first knew Caroline Sheridan, she had not long been married to the Hon. George Norton. She was splendidly handsome, of an un-English character of beauty, her rather large and heavy head and features recalling the grandest Grecian and Italian models, to the latter of whom her rich coloring and blue-black braids of hair gave her an additional resemblance. Though neither as perfectly lovely as the Duchess of Somerset, nor as perfectly charming as Lady Dufferin, she produced a far more striking impression than either of them, by the combination of the poetical genius with which she alone, of the three, was gifted, with the brilliant wit and power of repartee which they (especially Lady Dufferin) possessed in common with her, united to the exceptional beauty with which they were all three endowed. Mrs. Norton was extremely epigrammatic in her talk, and comically dramatic in her manner of

narrating things. I do not know whether she had any theatrical talent, though she sang pathetic and humorous songs admirably, and I remember shaking in my shoes when, soon after I came out, she told me she envied me, and would give anything to try the stage herself. I thought, as I looked at her wonderful, beautiful face, "Oh, if you should, what would become of me!" She was no musician, but had a deep, sweet contralto voice, precisely the same in which she always spoke, and which, combined with her always lowered eyelids ("downy eyelids" with sweeping silken fringes), gave such incomparably comic effect to her sharp retorts and ludicrous stories; and she sang with great effect her own and Lady Dufferin's social satires, "Fanny Grey," and "Miss Myrtle," etc., and sentimental songs like "Would I were with Thee," "I dreamt 'twas but a Dream," etc., of which the words were her own, and the music, which only amounted to a few chords with the simplest modulations, her own also. I remember she used occasionally to convulse her friends *en petit comité* with a certain absurd song called "The Widow," to all intents and purposes a piece of broad comedy, the whole story of which (the wooing of a disconsolate widow by a rich lover, whom she first rejects and then accepts) was comprised in a few words, rather spoken than sung, eked out by a ludicrous burden of "rum-ti-iddy-iddy-iddy-ido," which, by dint of her countenance and voice, conveyed all the alternations of the widow's first despair, her lover's fiery declaration, her virtuous indignation and wrathful rejection of him, his cool acquiescence and intimation that his full purse assured him an easy acceptance in various other quarters, her rage and disappointment at his departure, and final relenting and consent on his

return; all of which with her "iddy-iddy-ido" she sang, or rather acted, with incomparable humor and effect. I admired her extremely.

In 1841 I began a visit of two years and a half in England. During this time I constantly met Mrs. Norton in society. She was living with her uncle, Charles Sheridan, and still maintained her glorious supremacy of beauty and wit in the great London world. She came often to parties at our house, and I remember her asking us to dine at her uncle's, when among the people we met were Lord Lansdowne and Lord Normanby, both then in the ministry, whose good-will and influence she was exerting herself to *captivate* in behalf of a certain shy, silent, rather rustic gentleman from the far-away province of New Brunswick, Mr. Samuel Cunard, afterwards Sir Samuel Cunard of the great mail-packet line of steamers between England and America. He had come to London an obscure and humble individual, endeavoring to procure from the government the sole privilege of carrying the transatlantic mails for his line of steamers. Fortunately for him he had some acquaintance with Mrs. Norton, and the powerful beauty, who was kind-hearted and good-natured to all but her natural enemies (i.e. the members of her own London society), exerted all her interest with her admirers in high place in favor of Cunard, and had made this very dinner for the express purpose of bringing her provincial *protégé* into pleasant personal relations with Lord Lansdowne and Lord Normanby, who were likely to be of great service to him in the special object which had brought him to England. The only other individual I remember at the dinner was that most beautiful person, Lady Harriet d'Orsay. Years after, when the Halifax projector had become Sir Samuel Cunard, a man of fame in the worlds of

commerce and business of New York and London, a baronet of large fortune, and a sort of proprietor of the Atlantic Ocean between England and the United States, he reminded me of this charming dinner in which Mrs. Norton had so successfully found the means of forwarding his interests, and spoke with enthusiasm of her kind-heartedness as well as her beauty and talents; he, of course, passed under the Caudine Forks, beneath which all men encountering her had to bow and throw down their arms. She was very fond of inventing devices for seals, and other such ingenious exercises of her brains, and she gave —— a star with the motto, "Procul sed non extincta," which she civilly said bore reference to me in my transatlantic home. She also told me, when we were talking of mottoes for seals and rings, that she had had engraved on a ring she always wore the name of that miserable bayou of the Mississippi—Atchafalaya —where Gabriel passes near one side of an island, while Evangeline, in her woe-begone search, is lying asleep on the other; and that, to her surprise, she found that the King of the Belgians wore a ring on which he had had the same word engraved, as an expression of the bitterest and most hopeless disappointment.

In 1845 I passed through London, and spent a few days there with my father, on my way to Italy. Mrs. Norton, hearing of my being in town, came to see me, and urged me extremely to go and dine with her before I left London, which I did. The event of the day in her society was the death of Lady Holland, about which there were a good many lamentations, of which Lady T—— gave the real significance, with considerable *naïveté*: "Ah, poore deare Ladi Ollande! It is a grate pittie; it was suche a *pleasant 'ouse!*" As I had always avoided Lady Holland's acquaintance, I

could merely say that the regrets I heard expressed about her seemed to me only to prove a well-known fact—how soon the dead were forgotten. The *real* sorrow was indeed for the loss of her house, that pleasantest of all London rendezvouses, and not for its mistress, though those whom I then heard speak were probably among the few who did regret her. Lady Holland had one good quality (perhaps more than one, which I might have found out if I had known her): she was a constant and exceedingly warm friend, and extended her regard and remembrance to all whom Lord Holland or herself had ever received with kindness or on a cordial footing. My brother John had always been treated with great friendliness by Lord Holland, and in her will Lady Holland, who had not seen him for years, left him as a memento a copy, in thirty-two volumes, of the English essayists, which had belonged to her husband.

Almost immediately after this transient renewal of my intercourse with Mrs. Norton, I left England for Italy, and did not see her again for several years. The next time I did so was at an evening party at my sister's house, where her appearance struck me more than it had ever done. Her dress had something to do with this effect, no doubt. She had a rich gold-colored silk on, shaded and softened all over with black lace draperies, and her splendid head, neck, and arms were adorned with magnificently simple Etruscan gold ornaments, which she had brought from Rome, whence she had just returned, and where the fashion of that famous antique jewelry had lately been revived. She was still "une beauté triomphante à faire voir aux ambassadeurs."

During one of my last sojourns in London I met Mrs.

Norton at Lansdowne House. There was a great assembly there, and she was wandering through the rooms leaning on the arm of her youngest son, her glorious head still crowned with its splendid braids of hair, and wreathed with grapes and ivy leaves, and this was my last vision of her; but, in the autumn of 1870, Lady C—— told me of meeting her in London society, now indeed quite old, but indomitably handsome and witty.

I think it only humane to state, for the benefit of all mothers anxious for their daughters', and all daughters anxious for their own, future welfare in this world, that in the matter of what the lady's-maid in the play calls "the first of earthly blessings—personal appearance," Caroline Sheridan as a girl was so little distinguished by the exceptional beauty she subsequently developed, that her lovely mother, who had a right to be exacting in the matter, entertained occasionally desponding misgivings as to the future comeliness of one of the most celebrated beauties of her day.

At the time of my earliest acquaintance with the Nortons, our friends the Basil Montagus had left their house in Bedford Square, and were also living at Storey's Gate. Among the remarkable people I met at their house was the Indian rajah, Ramohun Roy, philosopher, scholar, reformer, Quaker, theist, I know not what and what not, who was introduced to me, and was kind enough to take some notice of me. He talked to me of the literature of his own country, especially its drama, and, finding that I was already acquainted with the Hindoo theatre through the medium of my friend Mr. Horace Wilson's translations of its finest compositions, but that I had never read "Sakuntalà," the most remarkable of them

all, which Mr. Wilson had not included in his collection (I suppose because of its translation by Sir William Jones), Ramohun Roy sent me a copy of it, which I value extremely as a memento of so remarkable a man, but in which I confess I am utterly unable to find the extraordinary beauty and sublimity which he attributed to it, and of which I remember Goethe also speaks enthusiastically (if I am not mistaken, in his conversations with Eckermann), calling it the most wonderful production of human genius. Goethe had not, any more than myself, the advantage of reading "Sakuntalà" in Sanskrit, and I am quite at a loss to account for the extreme and almost exaggerated admiration he expresses for it.

JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE, AUGUST 23, ——.

MY DEAREST H——,

I received your last on my return from the country, where I had been staying a fortnight, and I assure you that after an uncomfortable and rainy drive into town I found it of more service in warming me than even the blazing fire with which we are obliged to shame the month of August.

I have a great deal to tell you about our affairs, and the effect that their unhappy posture seems likely to produce upon my future plans and prospects. Do you remember a letter I wrote to you a long time ago about going on the stage? and another, some time before that, about my becoming a governess? The urgent necessity which I think now exists for exertion, in all those

who are capable of it among us, has again turned my thoughts to these two considerations. My father's property, and all that we might ever have hoped to derive from it, being utterly destroyed in the unfortunate issue of our affairs, his personal exertions are all that remain to him and us to look to. There are circumstances in which reflections that our minds would not admit at other times of necessity force themselves upon our consideration. Those talents and qualifications, both mental and physical, which have been so mercifully preserved to my dear father hitherto, cannot, in the natural course of things, all remain unimpaired for many more years. It is right, then, that those of us who have the power to do so should at once lighten his arms of all unnecessary burden, and acquire the habit of independent exertion before the moment comes when utter inexperience would add to the difficulty of adopting any settled mode of proceeding; it is right and wise to prepare for the evil day before it is upon us. These reflections have led me to the resolution of entering upon some occupation or profession which may enable me to turn the advantages my father has so liberally bestowed upon me to some account, so as not to be a useless incumbrance to him at present, or a helpless one in future time. My brother John, you know, has now determined, to go into the Church. Henry we have good although remote hopes of providing well for, and, were I to make use of my own capabilities, dear little A—— would be the only one

about whom there need be any anxiety. I propose writing to my father before he returns home (he is at present acting in the provinces) on this subject. Some step I am determined to take; the nature of it will, of course, remain with him and my mother. I trust that whatever course they resolve upon I shall be enabled to pursue steadily, and I am sure that, be it what it may, I shall find it comparatively easy, as the motive is neither my own profit nor reputation, but the desire of bringing into their right use whatever talents I may possess, which have not been given for useless purposes. I hope and trust that I am better fitted for either of the occupations I have mentioned than I was when I before entertained an idea of them. You asked me what inclined John's thoughts to the Church. It would be hard to say; or rather, I ought to say, that Providence which in its own good time makes choice of its instruments, and which I ever firmly trusted would not suffer my brother's fine powers to be wasted on unworthy aims. I am not able to say how the change which has taken place in his opinions and sentiments was effected; but you know one has not done *all* one's thinking at two and twenty. I have been by circumstances much separated from my brother, and when with him have had but little communication upon such subjects. It was at a time when, I think, his religious principles were somewhat unsettled, that his mind was so passionately absorbed by politics. The nobler instincts of his nature, diverted for a while from due direct

intercourse with their divine source, turned themselves with enthusiastic, earnest hope to the desire of benefiting his fellow-creatures; and to these aims—the reformation of abuses, the establishment of a better system of government, the gradual elevation and improvement of the people, and the general progress of the country towards enlightened liberty and consequent prosperity—he devoted all his thoughts. This was the period of his fanatical admiration for Jeremy Bentham and Mill, who, you know, are our near neighbors here, and whose houses we never pass without John being inclined to salute them, I think, as the shrines of some beneficent powers of renovation. And here comes the break in our intercourse and in my knowledge of his mental and moral progress. I went to Scotland, and was amazed, after I had been there some time, to hear from my mother that John had not got his scholarship, and had renounced his intention of going to the bar and determined to study for the Church. I returned home, and found him much changed. His high sense of the duties attending it makes me rejoice most sincerely that he has chosen that career, which may not be the surest path to worldly advancement, but if conscientiously followed must lead, I should think, to the purest happiness this life can offer. I think much of this change may be attributed to the example and influence of some deservedly dear friends of his; probably something to the sobering effect of the disappointment and mortification of his failure at college, where

such sanguine hopes and expectations of his success had been entertained. Above all, I refer his present purpose to that higher influence which has followed him through all his mental wanderings, suggesting the eager inquiries of his restless and dissatisfied spirit, and finally leading it to this, its appointed goal. He writes to us in high spirits from Germany, and his letters are very delightful.

Mrs. Siddons and Cecy are with Mrs. Kemble at Leamington. Mrs. Harry Siddons is, I fear, but little better; she has had another attack of erysipelas, and I am very anxious to get to her, but the distance, and the dependence of all interesting young females in London on the legs and leisure of chaperons, prevents me from seeing her as often as I wish.

German is an arduous undertaking, and I have once more abandoned it, not only on account of its difficulty, but because I do not at present wish to enter upon the study of a foreign language, when I am but just awakened to my radical ignorance of my own. God bless you, dear H——.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

As long as I retained a home of my own, I resisted my friend's half-expressed wish that I should destroy her letters; but when I ceased to have any settled place of habitation, it became impossible to provide for the safe-keeping of a mass of papers the accumulation of which received additions every few days, and by degrees (for my courage failed me very

often in the task) my friend's letters were destroyed. Few things that I have had to relinquish have cost me a greater pang or sense of loss, and few of the conditions of my wandering life have seemed to me more grievous than the necessity it imposed upon me of destroying these letters. My friend did not act upon her own theory with regard to my correspondence, and indeed it seems to me that no general rule can be given with regard to the preservation or destruction of correspondence. What revelations of misery and guilt may lie in the forgotten folds of hoarded letters, that have been preserved only to blast the memory of the dead! What precious words, again, have been destroyed, that might have lightened for a whole heavy lifetime the doubt and anguish of the living! In this, as in all we do, we grope about in darkness, and the one and the other course must often enough have been bitterly lamented by those who "did for the best" in keeping or destroying these chronicles of human existence.

Madame Pasta's daughter once said to Charles Young, who enthusiastically admired her great genius, "Vous trouvez qu'elle chante et joue bien, n'est-ce pas?" "Je crois bien," replied he, puzzled to understand her drift. "Well," replied the daughter of the great lyrical artist, "to us, to whom she belongs, and who know and love her, her great talent is the least admirable thing about her; but no one but us knows that."

Doubtless if letters of Shakespeare's could be found, letters developing the mystery of those sorrowful sonnets, or even letters describing his daily dealings with his children, and Mistress Anne Hathaway, his wife; nay, even the fashion, color, and texture of the

hangings of "the second-best bed," her special inheritance, a frenzy of curiosity would be aroused by them. All his glorious plays would not be worth (bookseller's value) some scraps of thought and feeling, or mere personal detail, or even commonplace (he must have been sovereignly commonplace) impartment of theatrical business news and gossip to his fellow-players, or Scotch Drummond, or my Lord Southampton, or the Dark Woman of the sonnets. But we know little about him, thank Heaven! and I am glad that little is not more.

I know he must have sinned and suffered, mortal man since he was, but I do not wish to know how. From his plays, in spite of the necessarily impersonal character of dramatic composition, we gather a vivid and distinct impression of serene sweetness, wisdom, and power. In the fragment of personal history which he gives us in his sonnets, the reverse is the case; we have a painful impression of mournful struggling with adverse circumstances and moral evil elements, and of the labor and the love of his life alike bestowed on objects deemed by himself unworthy; and in spite of his triumphant promise of immortality to the false mistress or friend, or both, to whom (as far as he has revealed them to us) he has kept his promise, we fall to pitying Shakespeare, the bestower of immortality. In the great temple raised by his genius to his own undying glory, one narrow door opens into a secret, silent crypt, where his image, blurred and indistinct, is hardly discernible through the gloomy atmosphere, heavy and dim as if with sighs and tears. Here is no clew, no issue, and we return to the shrine filled with light and life and warmth and melody; with knowledge and love of man, and worship of God and nature. There is our benefactor and friend, simplest and most lovable,

though most wonderful of his kind; other image of him than that bright one may the world never know!

The extraordinary development of the taste for petty details of personal gossip which our present literature bears witness to makes it almost a duty to destroy all letters not written for publication; and yet there is no denying that life is essentially interesting —every life, any life, all lives, if their detailed history could be given with truth and simplicity. For my own part, I confess that the family correspondence, even of people utterly unknown to me, always seems to me full of interest. The vivid interest the writers took in themselves makes their letters better worth reading than many books we read; they are life, as compared with imitations of it —life, that mystery and beauty surpassing every other; they are morsels of that profoundest of all secrets, which baffles alike the man of science, the metaphysician, artist, and poet. And yet it would be hard if A, B, and C's letters should therefore be published, especially as, had they contemplated my reading them, they would doubtless never have written them, or written them quite other than they did.

To resume my chronicle. My brother John was at this time traveling in Germany; the close of his career at Cambridge had proved a bitter disappointment to my father, and had certainly not fulfilled the expectations of any of his friends or the promise of his own very considerable abilities. He left the university without taking his degree, and went to Heidelberg, where he laid the foundation of his subsequent thorough knowledge of German, and developed the taste for the especial philological studies to which he eventually devoted himself, but

his eminence in which brought him little emolument and but tardy fame, and never in the least consoled my father for the failure of all the brilliant hopes he had formed of the future distinction and fortune of his eldest son. When a man has made up his mind that his son is to be Lord Chancellor of England, he finds it hardly an equivalent that he should be one of the first Anglo-Saxon scholars in Europe.

In my last letter to Miss S—— I have referred to some of my brother's friends and their possible influence in determining his choice of the clerical profession in preference to that of the law, which my father had wished him to adopt, and for which, indeed, he had so far shown his own inclination as to have himself entered at the Inner Temple.

Among my brother's contemporaries, his school and college mates who frequented my father's house at this time, were Arthur Hallam, Alfred Tennyson and his brothers, Frederick Maurice, John Sterling, Richard Trench, William Donne, the Romillys, the Malkins, Edward Fitzgerald, James Spedding, William Thackeray, and Richard Monckton Milnes.

These names were those of "promising young men," our friends and companions, whose various remarkable abilities we learned to estimate through my brother's enthusiastic appreciation of them. How bright has been, in many instances, the full performance of that early promise, England has gratefully acknowledged; they have been among the jewels of their time, and some of their names will be famous and blessed for generations to come. It is not for me to praise those whom all English-speaking folk delight to honor; but in thinking of that bright band of very noble young spirits, of my brother's love

and admiration for them, of their affection for him, of our pleasant intercourse in those far-off early days,—in spite of the faithful, life-long regard which still subsists between myself and the few survivors of that goodly company, my heart sinks with a heavy sense of loss, and the world from which so much light has departed seems dark and dismal enough.

CHAPTER XI.

Alfred Tennyson had only just gathered his earliest laurels. My brother John gave me the first copy of his poems I ever possessed, with a prophecy of his future fame and excellence written on the fly-leaf of it. I have never ceased to exult in my possession of that copy of the first edition of those poems, which became the songs of our every day and every hour, almost; we delighted in them and knew them by heart, and read and said them over and over again incessantly; they were our pictures, our music, and infinite was the scorn and indignation with which we received the slightest word of adverse criticism upon them. I remember Mrs. Milman, one evening at my father's house, challenging me laughingly about my enthusiasm for Tennyson, and asking me if I had read a certain severely caustic and condemnatory article in the *Quarterly* upon his poems. "Have you read it?" said she; "it is so amusing! Shall I send it to you?" "No, thank you," said I; "have you read the poems, may I ask?" "I cannot say that I have," said she, laughing. "Oh, then," said I (not laughing), "perhaps it would be better that I should send you

those?"

It has always been incomprehensible to me how the author of those poems ever brought himself to alter them, as he did, in so many instances—all (as it seemed to me) for the worse rather than the better. I certainly could hardly love his verses better than he did himself, but the various changes he made in them have always appeared to me cruel disfigurements of the original thoughts and expressions, which were to me treasures not to be touched even by his hand; and his changing lines which I thought perfect, omitting beautiful stanzas that I loved, and interpolating others that I hated, and disfiguring and maiming his own exquisite creations with second thoughts (none of which were best to me), has caused me to rejoice, while I mourn, over my copy of the first version of "The May Queen," "Œnone," "The Miller's Daughter," and all the subsequent *improved* poems, of which the improvements were to me desecrations. In justice to Tennyson, I must add that the present generation of his readers swear by *their* version of his poems as we did by ours, for the same reason,—they knew it first.

The early death of Arthur Hallam, and the imperishable monument of love raised by Tennyson's genius to his memory, have tended to give him a pre-eminence among the companions of his youth which I do not think his abilities would have won for him had he lived; though they were undoubtedly of a high order. There was a gentleness and purity almost virginal in his voice, manner, and countenance; and the upper part of his face, his forehead and eyes (perhaps in readiness for his early translation), wore the angelic radiance that they still must wear in heaven. Some time or other, at some rare moments

of the divine spirit's supremacy in our souls, we all put on the heavenly face that will be ours hereafter, and for a brief lightning space our friends behold us as we shall look when this mortal has put on immortality. On Arthur Hallam's brow and eyes this heavenly light, so fugitive on other human faces, rested habitually, as if he was thinking and seeing in heaven.

Of all those very remarkable young men, John Sterling was by far the most brilliant and striking in his conversation, and the one of whose future eminence we should all of us have augured most confidently. But though his life was cut off prematurely, it was sufficiently prolonged to disprove this estimate of his powers. The extreme vividness of his look, manner, and speech gave a wonderful impression of latent vitality and power; perhaps some of this lambent, flashing brightness may have been but the result of the morbid physical conditions of his existence, like the flush on his cheek and the fire in his eye; the over stimulated and excited intellectual activity, the offspring of disease, mistaken by us for morning instead of sunset splendor, promise of future light and heat instead of prognostication of approaching darkness and decay. It certainly has always struck me as singular that Sterling, who in his life accomplished so little and left so little of the work by which men are generally pronounced to be gifted with exceptional ability, should have been the subject of two such interesting biographies as those written of him by Julius Hare and Carlyle. I think he must have been one of those persons in whom genius makes itself felt and acknowledged chiefly through the medium of personal intercourse; a not infrequent thing, I think, with women, and perhaps men, wanting the full

vigor of normal health. I suppose it is some failure not so much in the power possessed as in the power of producing it in a less evanescent form than that of spoken words, and the looks that with such organizations are more than the words themselves. Sterling's genius was his *Wesen*, himself, and he could detach no portion of it that retained anything like the power and beauty one would have expected. After all, the world has twice been moved (once intellectually and once morally), as never before or since, by those whose spoken words, gathered up by others, are all that remain of them. Personal influence is the strongest and the most subtle of powers, and Sterling impressed all who knew him as a man of undoubted genius; those who never knew him will perhaps always wonder why.

My life was rather sad at this time: my brother's failure at college was a source of disappointment and distress to my parents; and I, who admired him extremely, and believed in him implicitly, was grieved at his miscarriage and his absence from England; while the darkening prospects of the theater threw a gloom over us all. My hitherto frequent interchange of letters with my dear friend H —— S—— had become interrupted and almost suspended by the prolonged and dangerous illness of her brother; and I was thrown almost entirely upon myself, and was finding my life monotonously dreary, when events occurred that changed its whole tenor almost suddenly, and determined my future career with less of deliberation than would probably have satisfied either my parents or myself under less stringent circumstances.

It was in the autumn of 1829, my father being then absent on a professional tour in Ireland, that my

mother, coming in from walking one day, threw herself into a chair and burst into tears. She had been evidently much depressed for some time past, and I was alarmed at her distress, of which I begged her to tell me the cause. "Oh, it has come at last," she answered; "our property is to be sold. I have seen that fine building all covered with placards and bills of sale; the theater must be closed, and I know not how many hundred poor people will be turned adrift without employment!" I believed the theater employed regularly seven hundred persons in all its different departments, without reckoning the great number of what were called supernumeraries, who were hired by the night at Christmas, Easter, and on all occasions of any specially showy spectacle. Seized with a sort of terror, like the Lady of Shallott, that "the curse had come upon me," I comforted my mother with expressions of pity and affection, and, as soon as I left her, wrote a most urgent entreaty to my father that he would allow me to act for myself, and seek employment as a governess, so as to relieve him at once at least of the burden of my maintenance. I brought this letter to my mother, and begged her permission to send it, to which she consented; but, as I afterward learned, she wrote by the same post to my father, requesting him not to give a positive answer to my letter until his return to town. The next day she asked me whether I seriously thought I had any real talent for the stage. My school-day triumphs in Racine's "Andromaque" were far enough behind me, and I could only answer, with as much perplexity as good faith, that I had not the slightest idea whether I had or not. She begged me to learn some part and say it to her, that she might form some opinion of my power, and I chose Shakespeare's Portia, then, as now, my ideal of a

perfect woman—the wise, witty woman, loving with all her soul and submitting with all her heart to a man whom everybody but herself (who was the best judge) would have judged her inferior; the laughter-loving, light-hearted, true-hearted, deep-hearted woman, full of keen perception, of active efficiency, of wisdom prompted by love, of tenderest unselfishness, of generous magnanimity; noble, simple, humble, pure; true, dutiful, religious, and full of fun; delightful above all others, the woman of women. Having learned it by heart, I recited Portia to my mother, whose only comment was, "There is hardly passion enough in this part to test any tragic power. I wish you would study Juliet for me." Study to me then, as unfortunately long afterward, simply meant to learn by heart, which I did again, and repeated my lesson to my mother, who again heard me without any observation whatever. Meantime my father returned to town and my letter remained unanswered, and I was wondering in my mind what reply I should receive to my urgent entreaty, when one morning my mother told me she wished me to recite Juliet to my father; and so in the evening I stood up before them both, and with indescribable trepidation repeated my first lesson in tragedy.

They neither of them said anything beyond "Very well,—very nice, my dear," with many kisses and caresses, from which I escaped to sit down on the stairs half-way between the drawing-room and my bedroom, and get rid of the repressed nervous fear I had struggled with while reciting, in floods of tears. A few days after this my father told me he wished to take me to the theater with him to try whether my voice was of sufficient strength to fill the building; so thither I went. That strange-looking place, the stage, with its racks of pasteboard and canvas—streets,

forests, banqueting-halls, and dungeons—drawn apart on either side, was empty and silent; not a soul was stirring in the indistinct recesses of its mysterious depths, which seemed to stretch indefinitely behind me. In front, the great amphitheater, equally empty and silent, wrapped in its gray holland covers, would have been absolutely dark but for a long, sharp, thin shaft of light that darted here and there from some height and distance far above me, and alighted in a sudden, vivid spot of brightness on the stage. Set down in the midst of twilight space, as it were, with only my father's voice coming to me from where he stood hardly distinguishable in the gloom, in those poetical utterances of pathetic passion I was seized with the spirit of the thing; my voice resounded through the great vault above and before me, and, completely carried away by the inspiration of the wonderful play, I acted Juliet as I do not believe I ever acted it again, for I had no visible Romeo, and no audience to thwart my imagination; at least, I had no consciousness of any, though in truth I had one. In the back of one of the private boxes, commanding the stage but perfectly invisible to me, sat an old and warmly attached friend of my father's, Major D——, a man of the world—of London society,—a passionate lover of the stage, an amateur actor of no mean merit, one of the members of the famous Cheltenham dramatic company, a first-rate critic in all things connected with art and literature, a refined and courtly, courteous gentleman; the best judge, in many respects, that my father could have selected, of my capacity for my profession and my chance of success in it. Not till after the event had justified my kind old friend's prophecy did I know that he had witnessed that morning's performance, and joining

my father at the end of it had said, "Bring her out at once; it will be a great success." And so three weeks from that time I was brought out, and it was a "great success." Three weeks was not much time for preparation of any sort for such an experiment, but I had no more, to become acquainted with my fellow actors and actresses, not one of whom I had ever spoken with or seen—off the stage—before; to learn all the technical *business*, as it is called, of the stage; how to carry myself toward the audience, which was not—but was to be—before me; how to concert my movements with the movements of those I was acting with, so as not to impede or intercept their efforts, while giving the greatest effect of which I was capable to my own.

I do not wonder, when I remember this brief apprenticeship to my profession, that Mr. Macready once said that I did not know the elements of it. Three weeks of morning rehearsals of the play at the theater, and evening consultations at home as to colors and forms of costume, what I should wear, how my hair should be dressed, etc., etc.,—in all which I remained absolutely passive in the hands of others, taking no part and not much interest in the matter,—ended in my mother's putting aside all suggestions of innovation like the adoption of the real picturesque costume of mediæval Verona (which was, of course, Juliet's proper dress), and determining in favor of the traditional stage costume for the part, which was simply a dress of plain white satin with a long train, with short sleeves and a low body; my hair was dressed in the fashion in which I usually wore it; a girdle of fine paste brilliants, and a small comb of the same, which held up my hair, were the only theatrical parts of the dress, which was as perfectly simple and as absolutely unlike anything

Juliet ever wore as possible.

Poor Mrs. Jameson made infinite protests against this decision of my mother's, her fine artistic taste and sense of fitness being intolerably shocked by the violation of every propriety in a Juliet attired in a modern white satin ball dress amid scenery representing the streets and palaces of Verona in the fourteenth century, and all the other characters dressed with some reference to the supposed place and period of the tragedy. Visions too, no doubt, of sundry portraits of Raphael, Titian, Giorgione, Bronzino,—beautiful alike in color and fashion,—vexed her with suggestions, with which she plied my mother; who, however, determined as I have said, thinking the body more than raiment, and arguing that the unincumbered use of the person, and the natural grace of young arms, neck, and head, and unimpeded movement of the limbs (all which she thought more compatible with the simple white satin dress than the picturesque mediæval costume) were points of paramount importance. My mother, though undoubtedly very anxious that I should look well, was of course far more desirous that I should act well, and judged that whatever rendered my dress most entirely subservient to my acting, and least an object of preoccupation and strange embarrassment to myself, was, under the circumstances of my total inexperience and brief period of preparation, the thing to be chosen, and I am sure that in the main she judged wisely. The mere appendage of a train—three yards of white satin—following me wherever I went, was to me a new, and would have been a difficult experience to most girls. As it was, I never knew, after the first scene of the play, what became of my train, and was greatly amused when Lady Dacre told me, the next morning, that as soon as my

troubles began I had snatched it up and carried it on my arm, which I did quite unconsciously, because I found something in the way of *Juliet's feet*.

I have often admired the consummate good sense with which, confronting a whole array of authorities, historical, artistical, æsthetical, my mother stoutly maintained in their despite that nothing was to be adopted on the stage that was in itself ugly, ungraceful, or even curiously antiquated and singular, however correct it might be with reference to the particular period, or even to authoritative portraits of individual characters of the play. The passions, sentiments, actions, and sufferings of human beings, she argued, were the main concern of a fine drama, not the clothes they wore. I think she even preferred an unobtrusive indifference to a pedantic accuracy, which, she said, few people appreciated, and which, if anything, rather took the attention from the acting than added to its effect, when it was really fine.

She always said, when pictures and engravings were consulted, "Remember, this presents but one view of the person, and does not change its position: how will this dress look when it walks, runs, rushes, kneels, sits down, falls, and turns its back?" I think an edge was added to my mother's keen, rational, and highly artistic sense of this matter of costume because it was the special hobby of her "favorite aversion," Mr. E——, who had studied with great zeal and industry antiquarian questions connected with the subject of stage representations, and was perpetually suggesting to my father improvements on the old ignorant careless system which prevailed under former managements.

It is very true that, as she said, Garrick acted Macbeth in a full court suit of scarlet,—knee-breeches, powdered wig, pigtail, and all; and Mrs. Siddons acted the Grecian Daughter in piles of powdered curls, with a forest of feathers on the top of them, high-heeled shoes, and a portentous hoop; and both made the audience believe that they looked just as they should do. But for all that, actors and actresses who were neither Garrick nor Mrs. Siddons were not less like the parts they represented by being at least dressed as they should be; and the fine accuracy of the Shakespearean revivals of Mr. Macready and Charles Kean was in itself a great enjoyment; nobody was ever told to *omit* the tithing of mint and cummin, though other matters were more important; and Kean's Othello would have been the grand performance it was, even with the advantage of Mr. Fechter's clever and picturesque "getting up" of the play, as a frame to it; as Mademoiselle Rachel's wonderful fainting exclamation of "Oh, mon cher Curiace!" lost none of its poignant pathos, though she knew how every fold of her drapery fell and rested on the chair on which she sank in apparent unconsciousness. Criticising a portrait of herself in that scene, she said to the painter, "Ma robe ne fait pas ce pli la; elle fait, au contraire, celui-ci." The artist, inclined to defend his picture, asked her how, while she was lying with her eyes shut and feigning utter insensibility, she could possibly tell anything about the plaits of her dress. "Allez-y-voir," replied Rachel; and the next time she played Camille, the artist was able to convince himself by more careful observation that she was right, and that there was probably no moment of the piece at which this consummate artist was not aware of the effect produced by every line and fold of the

exquisite costume, of which she had studied and prepared every detail as carefully as the wonderful movements of her graceful limbs, the intonations of her awful voice, and the changing expressions of her terribly beautiful countenance.

In later years, after I became the directress of my own stage costumes, I adopted one for Juliet, made after a beautiful design of my friend, Mrs. Jameson, which combined my mother's *sine qua non* of simplicity with a form and fashion in keeping with the supposed period of the play.

My frame of mind under the preparations that were going forward for my *début* appears to me now curious enough. Though I had found out that I could act, and had acted with a sort of frenzy of passion and entire self-forgetfulness the first time I ever uttered the wonderful conception I had undertaken to represent, my going on the stage was absolutely an act of duty and conformity to the will of my parents, strengthened by my own conviction that I was bound to help them by every means in my power. The theatrical profession was, however, utterly distasteful to me, though *acting* itself, that is to say, dramatic personation, was not; and every detail of my future vocation, from the preparations behind the scenes to the representations before the curtain, was more or less repugnant to me. Nor did custom ever render this aversion less; and liking my work so little, and being so devoid of enthusiasm, respect, or love for it, it is wonderful to me that I ever achieved *any* success in it at all. The dramatic element inherent in my organization must have been very powerful, to have enabled me without either study of or love for my profession to do anything worth anything in it.

But this is the reason why, with an unusual gift and many unusual advantages for it, I did really so little; why my performances were always uneven in themselves and perfectly unequal with each other, never complete as a whole, however striking in occasional parts, and never at the same level two nights together; depending for their effect upon the state of my nerves and spirits, instead of being the result of deliberate thought and consideration,—study, in short, carefully and conscientiously applied to my work; the permanent element which preserves the artist, however inevitably he must feel the influence of moods of mind and body, from ever being at their mercy.

I brought but one half the necessary material to the exercise of my profession, that which nature gave me; and never added the cultivation and labor requisite to produce any fine performance in the right sense of the word; and, coming of a family of *real* artists, have never felt that I deserved that honorable name.

A letter written at this time to Miss S—— shows how comparatively small a part my approaching ordeal engrossed my thoughts.

JAMES STREET, September 24, 1829,

MY DEAREST H——,

Your letter grieved me very much, but it did not surprise me; of your brother's serious illness I had heard from my cousin, Horace Twiss. But is there indeed cause for the terrible anxiety you express? I know how impossible it is to argue with the apprehensions of affection, and should have

forborne this letter altogether, but that I felt very deeply your kindness in writing to me at such a time, and that I would fain assure you of my heart-felt sympathy, however unavailing it may be. To you who have a steadfast anchor for your hopes, I ought not, perhaps, to say, "Do not despond." Yet, dearest H——, do not despond: is there *any* occasion when despair is justified? I know how lightly all soothing counsel must be held, in a case of such sorrow as yours, but among fellow-Christians such words still have some significance; for the most unworthy of that holy profession may point unfalteringly to the only consolations adequate to the need of those far above them in every endowment of mind and heart and religious attainment. Dear H——, I hardly know how to tell you how much I feel for you, how sincerely I hope your fears may prove groundless, and how earnestly I pray that, should they prove prophetic, you may be enabled to bear the affliction, to meet which I doubt not strength will be given you. This is all I dare say; those who love you best will hardly venture to say more. To put away entirely the idea of an evil which one may be called upon at any moment to encounter would hardly be wise, even if it were possible, in this world where every happiness one enjoys is but a loan, the repayment of which may be exacted at the very moment, perhaps, when we are forgetting in its possession the precarious tenure by which alone it is ours.

My dear father and mother have both been

very unwell; the former is a little recovered, but the latter is still in a sad state of bodily suffering and mental anxiety. Our two boys are well and happy, and I am very well and not otherwise than happy. I regret to say Mrs. Henry Siddons will leave London in a very short time; this is a great loss to me. I owe more to her than I can ever repay; for though abundant pains had been bestowed upon me previously to my going to her, it was she who caused to spring whatever scattered seeds of good were in me, which almost seemed as if they had been cast into the soil in vain.

My dear H——, I am going on the stage: the nearest period talked of for my *début* is the first of October, at the opening of the theater; the furthest, November; but I almost think I should prefer the nearest, for it is a very serious trial to look forward to, and I wish it were over. Juliet is to be my opening part, but not to my father's Romeo; there would be many objections to that; he will do Mercutio for me. I do not enter more fully upon this, because I know how few things can be of interest to you in your present state of feeling, but I wished you not to find the first notice of my entrance on the stage of life in a newspaper. God bless you, dearest H——, and grant you better hopes.

Your most affectionate

FANNY.

My father not acting Romeo with me deprived me of the most poetical and graceful stage lover of his day;

but the public, who had long been familiar with his rendering of the part of Romeo, gained as much as I lost, by his taking that of Mercutio, which has never since been so admirably represented, and I dare affirm will never be given more perfectly. The graceful ease, and airy sparkling brilliancy of his delivery of the witty fancies of that merry gentleman, the gallant defiance of his bearing toward the enemies of his house, and his heroically pathetic and humorous death-scene, were beyond description charming. He was one of the best Romeos, and incomparably *the* best Mercutio, that ever trod the English stage.

My father was Miss O'Neill's Romeo throughout her whole theatrical career, during which no other Juliet was tolerated by the English public. This amiable and excellent woman was always an attached friend of our family, and one day, when she was about to take leave of me, at the end of a morning visit, I begged her to let my father have the pleasure of seeing her, and ran to his study to tell him whom I had with me. He followed me hastily to the drawing-room, and stopping at the door, extended his arms towards her, exclaiming, "Ah, Juliet!" Lady Becher ran to him and embraced him with a pretty, affectionate grace, and the scene was pathetical as well as comical, for they were both white-haired, she being considerably upward of sixty and he of seventy years old; but she still retained the slender elegance of her exquisite figure, and he some traces of his pre-eminent personal beauty.

My mother had a great admiration and personal regard for Lady Becher, and told me an anecdote of her early life which transmitted those feelings of hers to me. Lord F——, eldest son of the Earl of E——, a

personally and mentally attractive young man, fell desperately in love with Miss O'Neill, who was (what the popular theatrical heroine of the day always is) the realization of their ideal to the youth, male and female, of her time, the stage star of her contemporaries. Lord F——'s family had nothing to say against the character, conduct, or personal endowments of the beautiful, actress who had enchanted, to such serious purpose as marriage, the heir of their house; but much, reasonably and rightly enough, against marriages disproportionate to such a degree as that, and the objectionable nature of the young woman's peculiar circumstances and public calling. Both Miss O'Neill, however, and Lord F—— were enough in earnest in their mutual regard to accept the test of a year's separation and suspension of all intercourse. She remained to utter herself in Juliet to the English public, and her lover went and travelled abroad, both believing in themselves and each other. No letters or communication passed between them; but toward the end of their year of probation vague rumors came flying to England of the life of dissipation led by the young man, and of the unworthy companions with whom he entertained the most intimate relations. After this came more explicit tales of positive entanglement with one particular person, and reports of an entire devotion to one object quite incompatible with the constancy professed and promised to his English mistress.

Probably aware that every effort would, till the last, be made by Lord F——'s family to detach them from each other, bound by her promise to hold no intercourse with him, but determined to take the verdict of her fate from no one but himself, Miss O'Neill obtained a brief leave of absence from her theatrical duties, went with her brother and sister to

Calais, whence she travelled alone to Paris (poor, fair Juliet! when I think of her, not as I ever knew her, but such as I know she must then have been, no more pathetic image presents itself to my mind), and took effectual measures to ascertain beyond all shadow of doubt the bitter truth of the evil reports of her fickle lover's mode of life. His devotion to one lady, the more respectable form of infidelity which must inevitably have canceled their contract of love, was not indeed true, and probably the story had been fabricated because the mere general accusation of profligacy might easily have been turned into an appeal to her mercy, as the result of reckless despondency and of his utter separation from her; and a woman in her circumstances might not have been hard to find who would have persuaded herself that she might overlook "all that," reclaim her lover, and be an Earl's wife. Miss O'Neill rejoined her family at Calais, wrote to Lord F——'s father, the Earl of E——, her final and irrevocable rejection of his son's suit, fell ill of love and sorrow, and lay for some space between life and death for the sake of her unworthy lover; rallied bravely, recovered, resumed her work,—her sway over thousands of human hearts,—and, after lapse of healing and forgiving and forgetting time, married Sir William Wrixon Becher.

The peculiar excellence of her acting lay in the expression of pathos, sorrow, anguish,—the sentimental and suffering element of tragedy. She was expressly devised for a representative victim; she had, too, a rare endowment for her special range of characters, in an easily excited, superficial sensibility, which caused her to cry, as she once said to me, "buckets full," and enabled her to exercise the (to most men) irresistible influence of a beautiful

woman in tears. The power (or weakness) of abundant weeping without disfigurement is an attribute of deficient rather than excessive feeling. In such persons the tears are poured from their crystal cups without muscular distortion of the rest of the face. In proportion to the violence or depth of emotion, and the acute or profound sensibility of the temperament, is the disturbance of the countenance. In sensitive organizations, the muscles round the nostrils and lips quiver and are distorted, the throat and temples swell, and a grimace, which but for its miserable significance would be grotesque, convulses the whole face. Men's tears always seem to me as if they were pumped up from their heels, and strained through every drop of blood in their veins; women's, to start as under a knife stroke, direct with a gush from their heart, abundant and beneficent; but again, women of the temperament I have alluded to above have fountains of lovely tears behind their lovely eyes, and their weeping, which is indescribably beautiful, is comparatively painless, and yet pathetic enough to challenge tender compassion. I have twice seen such tears shed, and never forgotten them: once from heaven-blue eyes, and the face looked like a flower with pearly dewdrops sliding over it; and again, once from magnificent, dark, uplifted orbs, from which the falling tears looked like diamond rain-drops by moonlight.

Miss O'Neill was a supremely touching, but neither a powerful nor a passionate actress. Personally, she was the very beau ideal of feminine weakness in its most attractive form—delicacy. She was tall, slender, elegantly formed, and extremely graceful; her features were regular and finely chiseled, and her hair beautiful; her eyes were too light, and her eyebrows and eyelashes too pale for expression; her

voice wanted variety and brilliancy for comic intonation, but was deep and sonorous, and of a fine pathetic and tragic quality.

It was not an easy matter to find a Romeo for me, and in the emergency my father and mother even thought of my brother Henry's trying the part. He was in the first bloom of youth, and really might be called beautiful; and certainly, a few years later, might have been the very ideal of a Romeo. But he looked too young for the part, as indeed he was, being three years my junior. The overwhelming objection, however, was his own insuperable dislike to the idea of acting, and his ludicrous incapacity for assuming the faintest appearance of any sentiment. However, he learned the words, and never shall I forget the explosion of laughter which shook my father, my mother, and myself, when, after hearing him recite the balcony scene with the most indescribable mixture of shy terror and nervous convulsions of suppressed giggling, my father threw down the book, and Henry gave vent to his feelings by clapping his elbows against his sides and bursting into a series of triumphant cock-crows—an expression of mental relief so ludicrously in contrast with his sweet, sentimental face, and the part he had just been pretending to assume, that I thought we never should have recovered from the fits it sent us into. We were literally all crying with laughter, and a more farcical scene cannot be imagined. This, of course, ended all idea of that young chanticleer being my Romeo; and yet the young rascal was, or fancied he was, over head and ears in love at this very time, and an exquisite sketch Hayter had just made of him might with the utmost propriety have been sent to the exhibition with no other title than "Portrait of a Lover."

The part of Romeo was given to Mr. Abbot, an old-established favorite with the public, a very amiable and worthy man, old enough to have been my father, whose performance, not certainly of the highest order, was nevertheless not below inoffensive mediocrity. But the public, who were bent upon doing more than justice to me, were less than just to him; and the abuse showered upon his Romeo, especially by my more enthusiastic admirers of the male sex, might, I should think, have embittered his stage relations with me to the point of making me an object of detestation to him, all through our theatrical lives. A tragicomic incident was related to me by one of the parties concerned in it, which certainly proved that poor Mr. Abbot was quite aware of the little favor his Romeo found with my particular friends. One of them, the son of our kind and valued friends the G——s, an excellent, good-hearted, but not very wise young fellow, invariably occupied a certain favorite and favorable position in the midst of the third row of the pit every night that I acted. There were no stalls or reserved seats then, though not long after I came out the majority of the seats in the orchestra were let to spectators, and generally occupied by a set of young gentlemen whom Sir Thomas Lawrence always designated as my "body guard." This, however, had not yet been instituted, and my friend G—— had often to wait long hours, and even to fight for the privilege of his peculiar seat, where he rendered himself, I am sorry to say, not a little ludicrous, and not seldom rather obnoxious to everybody in his vicinity, by the vehement demonstrations of his enthusiasm—his frantic cries of "bravo," his furious applause, and his irrepressible exclamations of ecstasy and agony during the whole play. He became as familiar to the

public as the stage lamps themselves, and some of his immediate neighbors complained rather bitterly of the incessant din and clatter of his approbation, and the bruises, thumps, contusions, and constant fears which his lively sentiments inflicted upon them. This *fanatico* of mine, walking home from the theater one night with two other like-minded individuals, indulged himself in obstreperous abuse of poor Mr. Abbot, in which he was heartily joined by his companions. Toward Cavendish Square the broad, quiet streets rang with the uproarious mirth with which they recapitulated his "damnable faces," "strange postures," uncouth gestures, and ungainly deportment; imitation followed imitation of the poor actor's peculiar declamation, and the night became noisy with the shouts of mingled derision and execration of his critics; when suddenly, as they came to a gas-light at the corner of a crossing, a solitary figure which had been preceding them, without possibility of escape, down the long avenue of Harley Street, where G—— lived, turned abruptly round, and confronted them with Mr. Abbot's unimpressive countenance. "Gentlemen," he said, "no one can be more aware than myself of the defects of my performance of Romeo, no one more conscious of its entire unworthiness of Miss Kemble's Juliet; but all I can say is, that I do not act the part by my own choice, and shall be delighted to resign it to either of you who may feel more capable than I am of doing it justice." The young gentlemen, though admiring me "not wisely, but too well," were good-hearted fellows, and were struck with the manly and moderate tone of Mr. Abbot's rebuke, and shocked at having unintentionally wounded the feelings of a person who (except as Romeo), was every way deserving of their respect. Of course they could not swallow all

their foolish words, and Abbot bowed and was gone before they could stutter an apology. I have no doubt that his next appearance as Romeo was hailed with some very cordial, remorseful applause, addressed to him personally as some relief to their feelings, by my indiscreet partisans. My friend G——, not very long after this theatrical passion of his, became what is sometimes called "religious," and had thoughts of going into the Church, and giving up the play-house. He confided to my mother, who was his mother's intimate friend, and of whom he was very fond, his conscientious scruples, which she in no wise combated; though she probably thought more moderation in going to the theater, and a little more self-control when there, might not, in any event, be undesirable changes in his practice, whether his taking holy orders cut him off entirely from what was then his principal pleasure, or not. One night, when the venerable Prebend of St. Paul's, her old friend, Dr. Hughes, was in her box with her, witnessing my performance (which my mother never failed to attend), she pointed out G——, *scrimmaging* about, as usual, in his wonted place in the pit, and said, "There is a poor lad who is terribly disturbed in his own mind about the very thing he is doing at this moment. He is thinking of going into the Church, and more than half believes that he ought to give up coming to the play." "That depends, I should say," replied dear old Dr. Hughes, "upon his own conviction in the matter, and nothing else; meantime, pray give him my compliments, and tell him *I* have enjoyed the performance to-night extremely."

Mr. Abbot was in truth not a bad actor, though a perfectly uninteresting one in tragedy; he had a good figure, face, and voice, the carriage and appearance

of a well-bred person, and, in what is called genteel comedy, precisely the air and manner which it is most difficult to assume, that of a gentleman. He had been in the army, and had left it for the stage, where his performances were always respectable, though seldom anything more. Wanting passion and expression in tragedy, he naturally resorted to vehemence to supply their place, and was exaggerated and violent from the absence of all dramatic feeling and imagination. Moreover, in moments of powerful emotion he was apt to become unsteady on his legs, and always filled me with terror lest in some of his headlong runs and rushes about the stage he should lose his balance and fall; as indeed he once did, to my unspeakable distress, in the play of "The Grecian Daughter," in which he enacted my husband, Phocion, and flying to embrace me, after a period of painful and eventful separation, he completely overbalanced himself, and swinging round with me in his arms, we both came to the ground together. "Oh, Mr. Abbot!" was all I could ejaculate; he, poor man, literally pale green with dismay, picked me up in profound silence, and the audience kindly covered our confusion, and comforted us by vehement applause, not, indeed, unmixed with laughter. But my friends and admirers were none the more his after that exploit; and I remained in mortal dread of his stage embraces for ever after, steadying myself carefully on my feet, and bracing my whole figure to "stand fast," whenever he made the smallest affectionate approach toward me. It is not often that such a piece of awkwardness as this is perpetrated on the stage, but dramatic heroines are nevertheless liable to sundry disagreeable difficulties of a very unromantic nature. If a gentleman in a ball-room places his hand round a

lady's waist to waltz with her, she can, without any shock to the "situation," beg him to release the end spray of her flowery garland, or the floating ribbons of her head-dress, which he may have imprisoned; but in the middle of a scene of tragedy grief or horror, of the unreality of which, by dint of the effort of your imagination, you are no longer conscious, to be obliged to say, in your distraction, to your distracted partner in woe, "Please lift your arm from my waist, you are pulling my head down backwards," is a distraction, too, of its kind.

The only occasion on which I ever acted Juliet to a Romeo who looked the part was one when Miss Ellen Tree sustained it. The acting of Romeo, or any other man's part by a woman (in spite of Mrs. Siddons's Hamlet), is, in my judgment, contrary to every artistic and perhaps natural propriety, but I cannot deny that the stature "more than common tall," and the beautiful face, of which the fine features were too marked in their classical regularity to look feeble or even effeminate, of my fair female lover made her physically an appropriate representative of Romeo. Miss Ellen Tree looked beautiful and not unmanly in the part; she was broad-shouldered as well as tall, and her long limbs had the fine proportions of the huntress Diana; altogether, she made a very "pretty fellow," as the saying was formerly, as all who saw her in her graceful performance of Talfourd's "Ion" will testify; but assumption of that character, which in its ideal classical purity is almost without sex, was less open to objection than that of the fighting young Veronese noble of the fourteenth century. She fenced very well, however, and acquitted herself quite manfully in her duel with Tybalt; the only hitch in the usual "business" of the part was between herself and me, and I do not imagine the public, for one

night, were much aggrieved by the omission of the usual clap-trap performance (part of Garrick's interpolation, which indeed belongs to the original story, but which Shakespeare's true poet's sense had discarded) of Romeo's plucking Juliet up from her bier and rushing with her, still stiff and motionless in her death-trance, down to the foot-lights. This feat Miss Tree insisted upon attempting with me, and I as stoutly resisted all her entreaties to let her do so. I was a very slender-looking girl, but very heavy for all that. (A friend of mine, on my first voyage to America, lifting me from a small height, set me down upon the deck, exclaiming, "Oh, you solid little lady!" and my cousin, John Mason, the first time he acted Romeo with me, though a very powerful, muscular young man, whispered to me as he carried my corpse down the stage with a fine semblance of frenzy, "Jove, Fanny, you are a lift!") Finding that all argument and remonstrance was unavailing, and that Miss Tree, though by no means other than a good friend and fellow-worker of mine, was bent upon performing this gymnastic feat, I said at last, "If you attempt to lift or carry me down the stage, I will kick and scream till you set me down," which ended the controversy. I do not know whether she believed me, but she did not venture upon the experiment.

I am reminded by this recollection of my pleasant professional fellowship with Miss Ellen Tree of a curious instance of the unprincipled, flagrant recklessness with which scandalous gossip is received and circulated in what calls itself the best English society.

In Mr. Charles Greville's "Memoirs," he makes a statement that Miss Tree was never engaged at Covent Garden. The play-bills and the newspapers of

the day abundantly contradicted this assertion (at the time he entered it in his diary), and, of course, the discreditable motive assigned for the *fact*.

I cannot help thinking that, had Mr. Greville lived, much of the voluminous record he kept of persons and events would have been withheld from publication. He told me, not long before his death, that he had no recollection whatever of the contents of the earlier volumes of his MS. journal which he had lent me to read; and it is infinitely to be regretted, if he did not look over them before they were published, that the discretion he exercised (or delegated) in the omission of certain passages was not allowed to prevail to the exclusion of others. Such partial omissions would not indeed alter the whole tone and character of the book, but might have mitigated the shock of painful surprise with which it was received by the society he described, and by no one more than some of those who had been on terms of the friendliest intimacy with him and who had repeatedly heard him assert that his journal would never be published in the lifetime of any one mentioned in it.

I consider that I was quite justified in using even this naughty child's threat to prevent Miss Tree from doing what might very well have ended in some dangerous and ludicrous accident; nor did I feel at all guilty toward her of the species of malice prepense which Malibran exhibited toward Sontag, when they sang in the opera of "Romeo and Juliet," on the first occasion of their appearing together during their brilliant public career in England. Malibran's mischievousness partook of the force and versatility of her extraordinary genius, and having tormented poor Mademoiselle Sontag with every inconceivable

freak and caprice during the whole rehearsal of the opera, at length, when requested by her to say in what part of the stage she intended to fall in the last scene, she, Malibran, replied that she "really didn't know," that she "really couldn't tell;" sometimes she "died in one place, sometimes in another, just as it happened, or the humor took her at the moment." As Sontag was bound to expire in loving proximity to her, and was, I take it, much less liable to spontaneous inspiration than her fiery rival, this was by no means satisfactory. She had nothing like the original genius of the other woman, but was nevertheless a more perfect artist. Wanting weight and power and passion for such parts as Norma, Medea, Semiramide, etc., she was perfect in the tenderer and more pathetic parts of Amina, Lucia di Lammermoor, Linda di Chamouni; exquisite in the Rosina and Carolina of the "Barbiere" and "Matrimonio Segreto;" and, in my opinion, quite unrivaled in her Countess, in the "Nozze," and, indeed, in all rendering of Mozart's music, to whose peculiar and pre-eminent genius hers seemed to me in some degree allied, and of whose works she was the only interpreter I ever heard, gifted alike with the profound German understanding of music and the enchanting Italian power of rendering it. Her mode of uttering sound, of putting forth her voice (the test which all but Italians, or most carefully Italian-trained singers, fail in), was as purely unteutonic as possible. She was one of the most perfect singers I ever heard, and suggests to my memory the quaint praise of the gypsy vocal performance in the ballad of "Johnny Faa"—

"They sang so sweet,
So very *complete*,"

She was the first Rosina I ever heard who introduced into the scene of the music-lesson "Rhodes Air," with the famous violin variations, which she performed by way of a *vocalise*, to the utter amazement of her noble music-master, I should think, as well as her audience. Mademoiselle Nilsson is the only prima donna since her day who has at all reminded me of Sontag, who was lovely to look at, delightful to listen to, good, amiable, and charming, and, compared with Malibran, like the evening star to a comet.

Defeated by Malibran's viciousness in rehearsing her death-scene, she resigned herself to the impromptu imposed upon her, and prepared to follow her Romeo, wherever *she* might choose to die; but when the evening came, Malibran contrived to die close to the foot-lights and in front of the curtain; Sontag of necessity followed, and fell beside her there; the drop came down, and there lay the two fair corpses in full view of the audience, of course unable to rise or move, till a couple of stage footmen, in red plush breeches, ran in to the rescue, took the dead Capulet and Montague each by the shoulders, and dragged them off at the side scenes; the Spanish woman in the heroism of her maliciousness submitting to this ignominy for the pleasure of subjecting her gentle German rival to it.

Madame Malibran was always an object of the greatest interest to me, not only on account of her extraordinary genius, and great and various gifts, but because of the many details I heard of her youth from M. de la Forest, the French consul in New York, who knew her as Marie Garcia, a wild and wayward but most wonderful girl, under her father's tyrannical and harsh rule during the time they spent in the United States. He said that there was not a piece of

furniture in their apartment that had not been thrown by the father at the daughter's head, in the course of the moral and artistic training he bestowed upon her: it is perhaps wonderful that success in either direction should have been the result of such a system; but, upon the whole, the singer seems to have profited more than the woman from it, as might have been expected. Garcia was an incomparable artist, actor, and singer (no such Don Giovanni has ever been heard or seen since), and bestowed upon all his children the finest musical education that ever made great natural gifts available to the utmost to their possessors. I suppose it was from him, too, that Marie derived with her Spanish blood the vehement, uncontrollable nature of which M. de la Forest told me he had witnessed such extraordinary exhibitions in her girlhood. He said she would fly into passions of rage, in which she would set her teeth in the sleeve of her silk gown, and tear and rend great pieces out of the thick texture as if it were muslin; a test of the strength of those beautiful teeth, as well as of the fury of her passion. She then would fall rigid on the floor, without motion, breath, pulse, or color, though not fainting, in a sort of catalepsy of rage.

Her marriage with the old French merchant Malibran was speedily followed by their separation; he went to France, leaving his divine devil of a wife in New York, and during his absence she used to write letters to him, which she frequently showed to M. de la Forest, who was her intimate friend and adviser, and took a paternal interest in all her affairs. These epistles often expressed so much cordial kindness and warmth of feeling toward her husband, that M. de la Forest, who knew her separation from him to have been entirely her own act and choice, and any decent agreement and harmonious life between them

absolutely impossible, was completely puzzled by such professions toward a man with whom she was determined never to live, and occasionally said to her, "What do you mean? Do you wish your husband to come here to you? or do you contemplate going to him? In short, what is your intention in writing with all this affection to a man from whom you have separated yourself?" Upon this view of her epistle, which did not appear to have struck her, M. de la Forest said, she would (instead of rewriting it) tack on to it, with the most ludicrous inconsistency, a sort of revocatory codicil, in the shape of a postscript, expressing her decided desire that her husband should remain where he was, and her own explicit determination never again to enter into any more intimate relations with him than were compatible with a correspondence from opposite sides of the Atlantic, whatever personal regard or affection for him her letter might appear to express to the contrary notwithstanding.

To my great regret I only saw her act once, though I heard her sing at concerts and in private repeatedly. My only personal encounter with her took place in a curious fashion. My father and myself were acting at Manchester, and had just finished performing the parts of Mr. and Mrs. Beverley, one night, in "The Gamester." On our return from the theater, as I was slowly and in considerable exhaustion following my father up the hotel stairs, as we reached the landing by our sitting-room, a door immediately opposite to it flew open, and a lady dressed like Tilburina's Confidante, all in white muslin, rushed out of it, and fell upon my father's breast, sobbing out hysterically, "Oh, Mr. Kembel, my deare, deare Mr. Kembel!" This was Madame Malibran, under the effect of my father's performance of the Gamester, which she had

just witnessed. "Come, come," quoth my father (who was old enough to have been hers, and knew her very well), patting her consolingly on the back, "Come now, my dear Madame Malibran, compose yourself; don't now, Marie, don't, my dear child!" all which was taking place on the public staircase, while I looked on in wide-eyed amazement behind. Madame Malibran, having suffered herself to be led into our room, gradually composed herself, ate her supper with us, expressed herself with much kind enthusiasm about my performance, and gave me a word of advice as to not losing any of my height (of which I had none to spare) by stooping, saying very amiably that, being at a disadvantage as to her own stature, she had never wasted a quarter of an inch of it. This little reflection upon her own proportions must have been meant as a panacea to my vanity for her criticism of my deportment. My person was indeed of the shortest; but she had the figure of a nymph, and was rather above than below middle height. There was in other respects some likeness between us; she was certainly not really handsome, but her eyes were magnificent, and her whole countenance was very striking.

The first time I ever saw her sister, Madame Viardot, she was sitting with mine, who introduced me to her; Pauline Viardot continued talking, now and then, however, stopping to look fixedly at me, and at last exclaimed, "Mais comme elle ressemble à ma Marie!" and one evening at a private concert in London, having arrived late, I remained standing by the folding-doors of the drawing-room, while Lablache finished a song which he had begun before I came in, at the end of which he came up to me and said, "You cannot think how you frightened me, when first I saw you standing in that doorway; you looked so

absolutely like Malibran, que je ne savais en vérité pas ce que c'était." Malibran's appearance was a memorable event in the whole musical world of Europe, throughout which her progress from capital to capital was one uninterrupted triumph; the enthusiasm, as is general in such cases, growing with its further and wider spread, so that at Venice she was allowed, in spite of old-established law and custom, to go about in a gold and crimson gondola, as fine as the Bucentaur itself, instead of the floating hearses that haunt the sea-paved thoroughfares, and that did not please her gay and magnificent taste.

Her *début* in England was an absolute conquest of the nation; and when it was shocked by the news of her untimely death, hundreds of those unsympathetic, unæsthetic, unenthusiastic English people put mourning on for the wonderfully gifted young woman, snatched away in the midst of her brilliant career. Madame Malibran composed some charming songs, but her great reputation derives little of its luster from them,—that great reputation already a mere tradition.

At a challenge I would not decline, I ventured upon the following harsh and ungraceful but literal translation of some of the stanzas from Alfred de Musset's fine lament for Malibran. My poetical competitor produced an admirable version of them, and has achieved translations of other of his verses, as perfect as translations can be; a literary feat of extraordinary difficulty, with the works of so essentially national a writer, a genius so peculiarly French, as De Musset.

"Oh, Maria Felicia! the painter and bard
Behind them, in dying, leave undying

heirs.
The night of oblivion their memory spares,
And their great eager souls, other action debarred,
Against death, against time, having valiantly warred,
Though struck down in the strife, claim its trophies as theirs.

"In the iron engraved, one his thought leaves enshrined;
With a golden-sweet cadence another's entwined
Makes for ever all those who shall hear it his friends.
Though he died, on the canvas lives Raphael's mind;
And from death's darkest doom till this world of ours ends,
The mother-clasped infant his glory defends.

"As the lamp guards the flame, so the bare, marble halls
Of the Parthenon keep, in their desolate space,
The memory of Phidias enshrined in their walls.
And Praxiteles' child, the young Venus, yet calls
From the altar, where, smiling, she still holds her place,
The centuries conquered to worship her grace.

"Thus from age after age, while new life they receive,

To rest at God's feet the old glories are gone;
And the accents of genius their echoes still weave
With the great human voice, till their speech is but one.
And of thee, dead but yesterday, all thy fame leaves
But a cross in the dim chapel's darkness, alone.

"A cross and oblivion, silence, and death!
Hark! the wind's softest sob; hark! the ocean's deep breath!
Hark! the fisher boy singing his way o'er the plains!
Of thy glory, thy hope, thy young beauty's bright wreath,
Not a trace, not a sigh, not an echo remains."

Those Garcia sisters were among the most remarkable people of their day, not only for their peculiar high artistic gifts, their admirable musical and dramatic powers, but for the vivid originality of their genius and great general cultivation. Malibran danced almost as well as she sang, and once took a principal part in a ballet. She drew and painted well, as did her sister Pauline Viardot, whose spirited caricatures of her friends, and herself were admirable specimens both of likenesses and of humorous talent in delineating them. Both sisters conversed brilliantly, speaking fluently four languages, and executed the music of different nations and composers with a perception of the peculiar character of each that was extraordinary. They were mistresses of all the different schools of religious,

dramatic, and national compositions, and Gluck, Jomelli, Pergolesi, Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Rossini, Bellini, Scotch and Irish melodies, Neapolitan canzonette, and the popular airs of their own country, were all rendered by them with equal mastery.

To resume my story (which is very like that of the knife-grinder). When I returned to the stage, many years after I had first appeared on it, I restored the beautiful end of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" as he wrote it (in spite of Garrick and the original story), thinking it mere profanation to intrude sharp discords of piercing agony into the divine harmony of woe with which it closes.

> "Thus with a kiss I die,"
> "Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead,"

are full enough of bitter-sweet despair for the last chords of that ineffable, passionate strain—the swoon of sorrow ending that brief, palpitating ecstasy, the proper, dirge-like close to that triumphant hymn of love and youth and beauty. All the frantic rushing and tortured writhing and uproar of noisy anguish of the usual stage ending seemed utter desecration to me; but Garrick was an actor, the first of actors, and his death-scene of the lovers and ending of the play is much more theatrically effective than Shakespeare's.

The report of my approaching appearance on the stage excited a good deal of interest among the acquaintances and friends of my family, and occasioned a renewal of cordial relations which had formerly existed, but ceased for some time, between

Sir Thomas Lawrence and my father and mother.

Lawrence's enthusiastic admiration for my uncle John and Mrs. Siddons, testified by the numerous striking portraits in which he has recorded their personal beauty and dramatic picturesqueness, led to a most intimate and close friendship between the great painter and the eminent actors, and, subsequently, to very painful circumstances, which estranged him for years from all our family, and forbade all renewal of the relations between himself and Mrs. Siddons which had been so cruelly interrupted.

While frequenting her house upon terms of the most affectionate intimacy, he proposed to her eldest daughter, my cousin Sarah, and was accepted by her. Before long, however, he became deeply dejected, moody, restless, and evidently extremely and unaccountably wretched. Violent scenes of the most painful emotion, of which the cause was inexplicable and incomprehensible, took place repeatedly between himself and Mrs. Siddons, to whom he finally, in a paroxysm of self-abandoned misery, confessed that he had mistaken his own feelings, and that her younger daughter, and not the elder, was the real object of his affection, and ended by imploring permission to transfer his addresses from the one to the other sister. How this extraordinary change was accomplished I know not; but only that it took place, and that Maria Siddons became engaged to her sister's faithless lover. To neither of them, however was he destined ever to be united; they were both exceedingly delicate young women, with a tendency to consumption, which was probably developed and accelerated in its progress in no small measure by all the bitterness and complicated

difficulties of this disastrous double courtship.

Maria, the youngest, an exceedingly beautiful girl, died first, and on her death-bed exacted from her sister a promise that she would never become Lawrence's wife; the promise was given, and she died, and had not lain long in her untimely grave when her sister was laid in it beside her. The death of these two lovely and amiable women broke off all connection between Sir Thomas Lawrence and my aunt, and from that time they never saw or had any intercourse with each other.

CHAPTER XII.

It was years after these events that Lawrence, meeting my father accidentally in the street one day, stopped him and spoke with great feeling of his sympathy for us all in my approaching trial, and begged permission to come and see my mother and become acquainted with me, which he accordingly did; and from that time till his death, which occurred but a few months later, he was unwearied in acts of friendly and affectionate kindness to me. He came repeatedly to consult with my mother about the disputed point of my dress, and gave his sanction to her decision upon it. The first dress of Belvidera, I remember, was a point of nice discussion between them. Plain black velvet and a lugubrious long vail were considered my only admissible wear, after my husband's ruin; but before the sale of our furniture, it was conceded that I might relieve the somber

Venetian patrician's black dress with white satin puffs and crimson linings and rich embroidery of gold and pearl; moreover, before our bankruptcy, I was allowed (not, however, without serious demur on the part of Lawrence) to cover my head with a black hat and white feather, with which, of course, I was enamored, having never worn anything but my hair on my head before, and feeling an unspeakable accession of dignity in this piece of attire. I begged hard to be allowed to wear it through the tragedy, but this, with some laughter at my intense desire for it, was forbidden, and I was reduced after the first scene of the play to my own unadorned locks, which I think greatly strengthened my feeling of the abject misery into which I had fallen.

When in town, Lawrence never omitted one of my performances, always occupying the stage box, and invariably sending me the next morning a letter, full of the most detailed and delicate criticism, showing a minute attention to every inflection of my voice, every gesture, every attitude, which, combined with expressions of enthusiastic admiration, with which this discriminating and careful review of my performance invariably terminated, was as strong a dose of the finest flattery as could well have been offered to a girl of my age, on the very first step of her artistic career. I used to read over the last of these remarkable criticisms, invariably, before going to the theater, in order to profit by every suggestion of alteration or hint of improvement they contained; and I was in the act of reperusing the last I ever received from him, when my father came in and said, "Lawrence is dead."

I had been sitting to him for some time previously for a pencil sketch, which he gave my mother; it was

his last work, and certainly the most beautiful of his drawings. He had appointed a day for beginning a full-length, life-size portrait of me as Juliet, and we had seen him only a week before his death, and, in the interval, received a note from him, merely saying he was rather indisposed. His death, which was quite unexpected, created a very great public sensation, and there was something sufficiently mysterious about its circumstances to give rise to a report that he had committed suicide.

The shock of this event was terrible to me, although I have sometimes since thought it was fortunate for me rather than otherwise. Sir Thomas Lawrence's enthusiastically expressed admiration for me, his constant kindness, his sympathy in my success, and the warm interest he took in everything that concerned me, might only have inspired me with a grateful sense of his condescension and goodness. But I was a very romantic girl, with a most excitable imagination, and such was to me the melancholy charm of Lawrence's countenance, the elegant distinction of his person, and exquisite refined gentleness of his voice and manner, that a very dangerous fascination was added to my sense of gratitude for all his personal kindness to me, and my admiration for his genius; and I think it not at all unlikely that, had our intercourse continued, and had I sat to him for the projected portrait of Juliet, in spite of the forty years' difference in our ages, and my knowledge of his disastrous relations with my cousins, I should have become in love with him myself, and been the fourth member of our family whose life he would have disturbed and embittered. His sentimentality was of a peculiar mischievous order, as it not only induced women to fall in love with him, but enabled him to persuade himself that

he was in love with them, and apparently with more than one at a time.

While I was sitting to him for the beautiful sketch he gave my mother, one or two little incidents occurred that illustrated curiously enough this superficial pseudo-sensibility of his. On one occasion, when he spent the evening with us, my mother had made me sing for him; and the next day, after my sitting, he said in a strange, hesitating, broken manner, as if struggling to control some strong emotion, "I have a very great favor to beg of you; the next time I have the honor and pleasure of spending the evening with you, will you, if Mrs. Kemble does not disapprove of it, sing this song for me?" He put a piece of music into my hand, and immediately left us without another word. On our way home in the carriage, I unrolled the song, the title of which was, "These few pale Autumn Flowers." "Ha!" said my mother, with, I thought, rather a peculiar expression, as I read the words; but she added no further comment. Both words and music were plaintive and pathetic, and had an original stamp in the melancholy they expressed.

The next time Lawrence spent the evening with us I sang the song for him. While I did so, he stood by the piano in a state of profound abstraction, from which he recovered himself, as if coming back from very far away, and with an expression of acute pain on his countenance, he thanked me repeatedly for what he called the great favor I had done him.

At the end of my next sitting, when my mother and myself had risen to take leave of him, he said, "No, don't go yet,—stay a moment,—I want to show you something—if I can;" and he moved restlessly about,

taking up and putting down his chalks and pencils, and standing, and sitting down again, as if unable to make up his mind to do what he wished. At length he went abruptly to an easel, and, removing from it a canvas with a few slight sketches on it, he discovered behind it the profile portrait of a lady in a white dress folded simply across her bosom, and showing her beautiful neck and shoulders. Her head was dressed with a sort of sibylline turban, and she supported it upon a most lovely hand and arm, her elbow resting on a large book, toward which she bent, and on the pages of which her eyes were fixed, the exquisite eyelid and lashes hiding the eyes. "Oh, how beautiful! oh, who is it!" exclaimed I. "A—a lady," stammered Lawrence, turning white and red, "toward whom—for whom—I entertained the profoundest regard." Thereupon he fled out of the room. "It is the portrait of Mrs. W——," said my mother; "she is now dead; she was an exceedingly beautiful and accomplished woman, the authoress of the words and music of the song Sir Thomas Lawrence asked you to learn for him."

The great painter's devotion to this lovely person had been matter of notoriety in the London world. Strangely enough, but a very short time ago I discovered that she was the kinswoman of my friend Miss Cobb's mother, of whom Miss Cobb possessed a miniature, in which the fashion of dress and style of head-dress were the same as those in the picture I saw, and in which I also traced some resemblance to the beautiful face which made so great an impression on me. Not long after this Mrs. Siddons, dining with us one day, asked my mother how the sketch Lawrence was making of me was getting on. After my mother's reply, my aunt remained silent for some time, and then, laying her hand on my father's arm,

said, "Charles, when I die, I wish to be carried to my grave by you and Lawrence." Lawrence reached his grave while she was yet tottering on the brink of hers.

After my next sitting, my mother, thinking he might be gratified by my aunt's feeling toward him, mentioned her having dined with us. He asked eagerly of her health, her looks, her words, and my mother telling him of her speech about him, he threw down his pencil, clasped his hands, and, with his eyes full of tears and his face convulsed, exclaimed, "Good God! did she say that?"

When my likeness was finished, Lawrence showed it to my mother, who, though she had attended all my sittings, had never seen it till it was completed. As she stood silently looking at it, he said, "What strikes you? what do you think?" "It is very like Maria," said my mother, almost involuntarily, I am sure, for immediately this strange man fell into one of these paroxysms of emotion, and became so agitated as scarcely to be able to speak; and at last, with a violent effort, said, "Oh, she is very like her; she is very like them all!"

In spite of these emotions which I heard and saw Sir Thomas Lawrence express, I know positively that at his death a lady, who had been an intimate acquaintance of our family for many years, put on widow's weeds for him, in the full persuasion that had he lived he would have married her, and that, the mutual regard they entertained for each other warranted her assuming the deepest mourning for him. Not the least curious part of the emotional demonstrations I have described, was the contrast which they formed to Sir Thomas Lawrence's

habitual demeanor, which was polished and refined, but reserved to a degree of coldness, and as indicative of reticent discretion and imperturbable self-control as became a man who lived in such high social places, and frequented the palaces of royalty and the boudoirs of the great rival beauties of the English aristocracy. On my twentieth birthday, which occurred soon after my first appearance, Lawrence sent me a magnificent proof-plate of Reynolds's portrait of my aunt as the "Tragic Muse," beautifully framed, and with this inscription: "This portrait, by England's greatest painter, of the noblest subject of his pencil, is presented to her niece and worthy successor, by her most faithful humble friend and servant, Lawrence." When my mother saw this, she exclaimed at it, and said, "I am surprised he ever brought himself to write those words—her 'worthy successor.'" A few days after, Lawrence begged me to let him have the print again, as he was not satisfied with the finishing of the frame. It was sent to him, and when it came back he had effaced the words in which he had admitted *any* worthy successor to his "Tragic Muse;" and Mr. H——, who was at that time his secretary, told me that Lawrence had the print lying with that inscription in his drawing-room for several days before sending it to me, and had said to him, "Cover it up; I cannot bear to look at it."

One day, at the end of my sitting, Lawrence showed me a lovely portrait of Mrs. Inchbald, of whom my mother, as we drove home, told me a number of amusing anecdotes. She was very beautiful, and gifted with original genius, as her plays and farces and novels (above all, the "Simple Story") testify; she was not an actress of any special merit, but of respectable mediocrity. She stuttered habitually, but her delivery was never impeded by this defect on the

stage; a curious circumstance, not uncommon to persons who have that infirmity, and who can read and recite without suffering from it, though quite unable to speak fluently. Mrs. Inchbald was a person of a very remarkable character, lovely, poor, with unusual mental powers and of irreproachable conduct. Her life was devoted to the care of some dependent relation, who from sickness was incapable of self-support. Mrs. Inchbald had a singular uprightness and unworldliness, and a childlike directness and simplicity of manner, which, combined with her personal loveliness and halting, broken utterance, gave to her conversation, which was both humorous and witty, a most peculiar and comical charm. Once, after traveling all day in a pouring rain, on alighting at her inn, the coachman, dripping all over with wet, offered his arm to help her out of the coach, when she exclaimed, to the great amusement of her fellow-travelers, "Oh, no, no! y-y-y-you will give me m-m-m-my death of c-c-c-cold; do bring me a-a-a-a *dry* man." An aristocratic neighbor of hers, with whom she was slightly acquainted, driving with his daughter in the vicinity of her very humble suburban residence, overtook her walking along the road one very hot day, and, stopping his carriage, asked her to let him have the pleasure of taking her home; when she instantly declined, with the characteristic excuse that she had just come from the market gardener's: "And, my lord, I-I-I have my pocket f-f-full of onions,"—an unsophisticated statement of facts which made them laugh extremely. At the first reading of one of her pieces, a certain young lady, with rather a lean, lanky figure, being proposed to her for the part of the heroine, she indignantly exclaimed, "No, no, no; I-I-I-I won't have that s-s-s-stick of a girl! D-d-d-do

give me a-a-a girl with *bumps!*" Coming off the stage one evening, she was about to sit down by Mrs. Siddons in the green-room, when suddenly, looking at her magnificent neighbor, she said, "No, I won't s-s-s-sit by you; you're t-t-t-too handsome!"—in which respect she certainly need have feared no competition, and less with my aunt than any one, their style of beauty being so absolutely dissimilar. Somebody speaking of having oysters for supper, much surprise was excited by Mrs. Inchbald's saying that she had never eaten one. Questions and remonstrances, exclamations of astonishment, and earnest advice to enlarge her experience in that respect, assailed her from the whole green-room, when she finally delivered herself thus: "Oh no, indeed! I-I-I-I never, never could! What! e-e-e-eat the eyes and t-t-t-the nose, the teeth a-a-a-and the toes, the a-a-a-all of a creature!" She was an enthusiastic admirer of my uncle John, and the hero of her "Simple Story," Doriforth, is supposed to have been intended by her as a portrait of him. On one occasion, when she was sitting by the fireplace in the green-room, waiting to be called upon the stage, she and Miss Mellon (afterward Mrs. Coutts and Duchess of St Albans) were laughingly discussing their male friends and acquaintances from the matrimonial point of view. My uncle John, who was standing near, excessively amused, at length jestingly said to Mrs. Inchbald, who had been comically energetic in her declarations of who she could or would, or never could or would, have married, "Well, Mrs. Inchbald, would you have had me?" "Dear heart!" said the stammering beauty, turning her sweet sunny face up to him, "I'd have j-j-j-jumped at you!"

One day Lawrence took us, from the room where I generally sat to him, into a long gallery where were

a number of his pictures, and, leading me by the hand, desired me not to raise my eyes till he told me. On the word of command I looked up, and found myself standing close to and immediately underneath, as it were, a colossal figure of Satan. The sudden shock of finding myself in such proximity to this terrible image made me burst into nervous tears. Lawrence was greatly distressed at the result of his experiment, which had been simply to obtain a verdict from my unprepared impression of the power of his picture. A conversation we had been having upon the subject of Milton and the character of Satan had made him think of showing this picture to me. I was too much agitated to form any judgment of it, but I thought I perceived through its fierce and tragical expression some trace of my uncle's face and features, a sort of "more so" of the bitter pride and scornful melancholy of the banished Roman in the Volscian Hall. Lawrence's imagination was so filled with the poetical and dramatic suggestions which he derived from the Kemble brother and sister, that I thought a likeness of them lurked in this portrait of the Prince of Darkness; and perhaps he could scarcely have found a better model for his archfiend than my uncle, to whom his mother occasionally addressed the characteristic reproof, "Sir, you are as proud as Lucifer!" (He and that remarkable mother of his must really have been a good deal like Coriolanus and Volumnia.) To console me for the fright he had given me, Lawrence took me into his drawing-room —that beautiful apartment filled with beautiful things, including his magnificent collection of original drawings by the old masters, and precious gems of old and modern art—the treasure-house of all the exquisite objects of beauty and curiosity that he had gathered together during his whole life, and

that (with the exception of Raphael's and Michael Angelo's drawings, now in the museum at Oxford) were so soon, at his most unexpected death, to be scattered abroad and become, in separate, disjointed portions, the property of a hundred different purchasers. Here, he said, he hoped often to persuade my father and mother and myself to pass our unengaged evenings with him; here he should like to make my brother John, of whom I had spoken enthusiastically to him, free of his art collections; and, adding that he would write to my mother to fix the day for my first sitting for Juliet, he put into my hands a copy of the first edition of Milton's "Paradise Lost." I never entered that room or his house, or saw him again; he died about ten days after that.

Lawrence did not talk much while he took his sketch of me, and I remember very little that passed between him and my mother but what was purely personal. I recollect he told me that I had a double row of eyelashes, which was an unusual peculiarity. He expressed the most decided preference for satin over every other material for painting, expatiating rapturously on the soft, rich folds and infinitely varied lights and shadows which that texture afforded above all others. He has dressed a great many of his female portraits in white satin. He also once said that he had been haunted at one time with the desire to paint a blush, that most enchanting "incident" in the expression of a woman's face, but, after being driven nearly wild with the ineffectual endeavor, had had to renounce it, never, of course, he said, achieving anything but a *red face*. I remember the dreadful impression made upon me by a story he told my mother of Lady J—— (George the Fourth's Lady J——), who, standing before her drawing-room looking-glass, and unaware that he

was in the rooms, apostrophized her own reflection with this reflection: "I swear it would be better to go to hell at once than live to grow old and ugly."

Lawrence once said that we never dreamed of ourselves as younger than we were; that even if our dreams reproduce scenes and people and circumstances of our youth and childhood we were always represented, by our sleeping imagination, at our present age. I presume he spoke of his own experience, and I cannot say that I recollect any instance in mine that contradicts this theory. It seems curious, if it is true, that in the manifold freaks of our sleeping fancy self-consciousness should still exist to a sufficient degree to preserve unaltered one's own conditions of age and physical appearance. I wonder whether this is really the common experience of people's dreams? Frederick Maurice told me a circumstance in curious opposition to this theory of Lawrence's. A young woman whom he knew, of more than usual mental and moral endowments, married a man very much her inferior in mind and character, and appeared to him to deteriorate gradually but very perceptibly under his influence. "As the husband is, the wife is," etc. Toward the middle of her life she told him that at one time she had carried on a double existence in her sleeping and waking hours, her dreams invariably taking her back to the home and period of her girlhood, and that she resumed this dream-life precisely where she left it off, night after night, for a considerable period of time,—poor thing!—perhaps as long as the roots of the young nobler self survived below the soil of a baser present existence. This story seemed to me always very pathetic. It must have been dismal to lose that dream life by degrees, as the real one ate more and more into her nature.

Of Lawrence's merit as a painter an unduly favorable estimate was taken during his life, and since his death his reputation has suffered an undue depreciation. Much that he did partook of the false and bad style which, from the deeper source of degraded morality, spread a taint over all matters of art and taste, under the vicious influence of the "first gentleman of Europe," whose own artistic preferences bore witness, quite as much as the more serious events of his life, how little he deserved the name. Hideous Chinese pagoda pavilions, with grotesque and monstrous decorations, barbarous alike in form and in color; mean and ugly low-roomed royal palaces, without either magnificence or simplicity; military costumes, in which gold and silver lace were plastered together on the same uniform, testified to the perverted perception of beauty and fitness which presided in the court of George the Fourth. Lawrence's own portrait of him, with his corpulent body girthed in his stays and creaseless coat, and his heavy falling cheek supported by his stiff stock, with his dancing-master's leg and his frizzled barber's-block head, comes as near a caricature as a flattered likeness of the original (which was a caricature) dares to do. To have had to paint that was enough to have vulgarized any pencil. The defect of many of Lawrence's female portraits was a sort of artificial, sentimental *elegantism*. Pictures of the fine ladies of that day they undoubtedly were; pictures of *great* ladies, never; and, in looking at them, one sighed for the exquisite simple grace and unaffected dignity of Reynolds's and Gainsborough's noble and gentle women.

The lovely head of Lady Nugent, the fine portrait I have mentioned of Mrs. W——, the splendid one of

Lady Hatherton, and the noble picture of my grandmother, are among the best productions of Lawrence's pencil; and several of his men's portraits are in a robust and simple style of art worthy of the highest admiration. His likeness of Canning (which, by the bye, might have passed for his own, so great was his resemblance to the brilliant statesman) and the fine portrait he painted for Lord Aberdeen, of my uncle John, are excellent specimens of his best work. He had a remarkable gift of producing likenesses at once striking and favorable, and of always seizing the finest expression of which a face was capable; and none could ever complain that Lawrence had not done justice to the very best look they ever wore. Lawrence's want of conscience with regard to the pictures which he undertook and never finished, is difficult to account for by any plausible explanation. The fact is notorious, that in various instances, after receiving the price of a portrait, and beginning it, he procrastinated, and delayed, and postponed the completion, until, in more than one case, the blooming beauty sketched upon his canvas had grown faded and wrinkled before the image of her youthful loveliness had been completed.

The renewal of intercourse between Lawrence and my parents, so soon to be terminated by his death, was the cause to me of a loss which I shall never cease to regret. My father had had in his library for years (indeed, as long as I remember) a large volume of fine engravings of the masterpieces of the great Italian painters, and this precious book of art we were occasionally allowed to look at for an hour of rare delight; but it belonged to Sir Thomas Lawrence, and had accidentally been kept for this long space of time in my father's possession. One of my mother's first acts, on again entering into friendly relations

with Lawrence, was to restore this piece of property to him; a precipitate act of honesty which I could not help deploring, especially when, so soon after this deed of rash restitution, his death brought those beautiful engravings, with all the rest of his property, to the hammer.

There is no early impression stronger in my mind than that of some of those masterpieces, which, together with Winckelmann's fine work on classical art (our familiarity with which I have elsewhere alluded to), were among the first influences of the sort which I experienced. Nor can I ever be too grateful that, restricted as were my parents' means of developing in us the highest culture, they were still such as, combined with their own excellent taste and judgment, preserved us from that which is far worse than ignorance, a liking for anything vulgar or trivial. That which was merely pretty, in music, painting, or poetry, was never placed on the same level in our admiration with that which was fine; and though, from nature as well as training, we enjoyed with great zest every thing that could in any sense be called good, our enthusiasm was always reserved for that which was best, an incalculable advantage in the formation of a fine taste and critical judgment. A noble ideal beauty was what we were taught to consider the proper object and result of all art. In their especial vocation this tendency caused my family to be accused of formalism and artificial pedantry; and the so-called "classical" school of acting, to which they belonged, has frequently since their time been unfavorably compared with what, by way of contrast, has been termed the realistic or natural style of art. I do not care to discuss the question, but am thankful that my education preserved me from accepting mere imitation of

nature as art, on the stage or in the picture gallery; and that, without destroying my delight in any kind of beauty, it taught me a decided preference for that which was highest and noblest.

All being in due preparation for my coming out, my rehearsals were the only interruption to my usual habits of occupation, which I pursued very steadily in spite of my impending trial. On the day of my first appearance I had no rehearsal, for fear of over-fatigue, and spent my morning as usual, in practicing the piano, walking in the inclosure of St. James's Park opposite our house, and reading in "Blunt's Scripture Characters" (a book in which I was then deeply interested) the chapters relating to St. Peter and Jacob. I do not know whether the nervous tension which I must have been enduring strengthened the impression made upon me by what I read, but I remember being quite absorbed by it, which I think was curious, because certainly such subjects of meditation were hardly allied to the painful undertaking so immediately pressing upon me. But I believe I felt imperatively the necessity of moderating my own strong nervous emotion and excitement by the fulfillment of my accustomed duties and pursuits, and above all by withdrawing my mind into higher and serener regions of thought, as a respite and relief from the pressure of my alternate apprehensions of failure and hopes of success. I do not mean that it was at all a matter of deliberate calculation or reflection, but rather an instinct of self-preservation, which actuated me: a powerful instinct which has struggled and partially prevailed throughout my whole life against the irregular and passionate vehemence of my temperament, and which, in spite of a constant tendency to violent excitement of mind and feeling,

has made me a person of unusually systematic pursuits and monotonous habits, and been a frequent subject of astonishment, not unmixed with ridicule, to my friends, who have not known as well as myself what wholesomeness there was in the method of my madness. And I am persuaded that religion and reason alike justify such a strong instinctive action in natures which derive a constant moral support, like that of the unobserved but all-sustaining pressure of the atmosphere, from the soothing and restraining influence of systematic habits of monotonous regularity. Amid infinite anguish and errors, existence may preserve a species of outward symmetry and harmony from this strong band of minute observance keeping down and assisting the mind to master elements of moral and mental discord and disorder, for the due control of which the daily and hourly subjection to recurring rules is an invaluable auxiliary to higher influences. The external practice does not supply but powerfully supplements the internal principle of self-control.

My mother, who had left the stage for upward of twenty years, determined to return to it on the night of my first appearance, that I might have the comfort and support of her being with me in my trial. We drove to the theater very early, indeed while the late autumn sunlight yet lingered in the sky; it shone into the carriage, upon me, and as I screened my eyes from it, my mother said, "Heaven smiles on you, my child." My poor mother went to her dressing-room to get herself ready, and did not return to me for fear of increasing my agitation by her own. My dear aunt Dall and my maid and the theater dresser performed my toilet for me, and at length I was placed in a chair, with my satin train carefully laid over the back of it; and there I sat, ready for execution, with the

palms of my hands pressed convulsively together, and the tears I in vain endeavored to repress welling up into my eyes and brimming slowly over, down my rouged cheeks—upon which my aunt, with a smile full of pity, renewed the color as often as these heavy drops made unsightly streaks in it. Once and again my father came to the door, and I heard his anxious "How is she?" to which my aunt answered, sending him away with words of comforting cheer. At last, "Miss Kemble called for the stage, ma'am!" accompanied with a brisk tap at the door, started me upright on my feet, and I was led round to the side scene opposite to the one from which I saw my mother advance on the stage; and while the uproar of her reception filled me with terror, dear old Mrs. Davenport, my nurse, and dear Mr. Keely, her Peter, and half the *dramatis personæ* of the play (but not my father, who had retreated, quite unable to endure the scene) stood round me as I lay, all but insensible, in my aunt's arms. "Courage, courage, dear child! poor thing, poor thing!" reiterated Mrs. Davenport. "Never mind 'em, Miss Kemble!" urged Keely, in that irresistibly comical, nervous, lachrymose voice of his, which I have never since heard without a thrill of anything but comical association; "never mind 'em! don't think of 'em, any more than if they were so many rows of cabbages!" "Nurse!" called my mother, and on waddled Mrs. Davenport, and, turning back, called in her turn, "Juliet!" My aunt gave me an impulse forward, and I ran straight across the stage, stunned with the tremendous shout that greeted me, my eyes covered with mist, and the green baize flooring of the stage feeling as if it rose up against my feet; but I got hold of my mother, and stood like a terrified creature at bay, confronting the huge theater full of gazing human beings. I do not think a

word I uttered during this scene could have been audible; in the next, the ball-room, I began to forget myself; in the following one, the balcony scene, I had done so, and, for aught I knew, I was Juliet; the passion I was uttering sending hot waves of blushes all over my neck and shoulders, while the poetry sounded like music to me as I spoke it, with no consciousness of anything before me, utterly transported into the imaginary existence of the play. After this, I did not return into myself till all was over, and amid a tumultuous storm of applause, congratulation, tears, embraces, and a general joyous explosion of unutterable relief at the fortunate termination of my attempt, we went home. And so my life was determined, and I devoted myself to an avocation which I never liked or honored, and about the very nature of which I have never been able to come to any decided opinion. It is in vain that the undoubted specific gifts of great actors and actresses suggest that all gifts are given for rightful exercise, and not suppression; in vain that Shakespeare's plays urge their imperative claim to the most perfect illustration they can receive from histrionic interpretation: a *business* which is incessant excitement and factitious emotion seems to me unworthy of a man; a business which is public exhibition, unworthy of a woman.

At four different periods of my life I have been constrained by circumstances to maintain myself by the exercise of my dramatic faculty; latterly, it is true, in a less painful and distasteful manner, by reading, instead of acting. But though I have never, I trust, been ungrateful for the power of thus helping myself and others, or forgetful of the obligation I was under to do my appointed work conscientiously in every respect, or unmindful of the precious good

regard of so many kind hearts that it has won for me; though I have never lost one iota of my own intense delight in the act of rendering Shakespeare's creations; yet neither have I ever presented myself before an audience without a shrinking feeling of reluctance, or withdrawn from their presence without thinking the excitement I had undergone unhealthy, and the personal exhibition odious.

Nevertheless, I sat me down to supper that night with my poor, rejoicing parents well content, God knows! with the issue of my trial; and still better pleased with a lovely little Geneva watch, the first I had ever possessed, all encrusted with gold work and jewels, which my father laid by my plate and I immediately christened Romeo, and went, a blissful girl, to sleep with it under my pillow.

BUCKINGHAM GATE, JAMES STREET, December 14th.

DEAREST ——,

I received your letter this morning, before I was out of my room, and very glad I was to get it. You would have heard from me again ere this, had it not been that, in your present anxious state of mind respecting your brother, I did not like to demand your attention for my proceedings. My trial is over, and, thank heaven! most fortunately. Our most sanguine wishes could hardly have gone beyond the result, and at the same time that I hail my success as a source of great happiness to my dear father and mother, I almost venture to hope that the interest which has been excited in the public may tend to revive once more the decaying

dramatic art. You say it is a very fascinating occupation; perhaps it is, though it does not appear to me so, and I think it carries with it drawbacks enough to operate as an antidote to the vanity and love of admiration which it can hardly fail to foster. The mere embodying of the exquisite ideals of poetry is a great enjoyment, but after that, or rather *for* that, comes in ours, as in all arts, the mechanical process, the labor, the refining, the controlling the very feeling one has, in order to manifest it in the best way to the perception of others; and when all, that intense feeling and careful work can accomplish, is done, an actor must often see those points of his performance which are most worthy of approbation overlooked, and others, perhaps crude in taste or less true in feeling, commended; which must tend much, I think, to sober the mind as to the value of applause. Above all, the constant consciousness of the immeasurable distance between a fine conception and the best execution of it, must in acting, as in all art, be a powerful check to vanity and self-satisfaction.

As to the mere excitement proceeding from the public applause of a theater, I am sure you will believe me when I say I do not think I shall ever experience it. But should I reckon too much upon my own steadiness, I have the incessant care and watchfulness of my dear mother to rely on, and I do rely on it as an invaluable safeguard, both to the purity and good taste of all that I may do on the stage, and the quiet and soberness of my

mind under all this new excitement. She has borne all her anxieties wonderfully well, and I now hope she will reap some repayment for them. My dear father is very happy; indeed, we have all cause for heartfelt thankfulness when we think what a light has dawned upon our prospects, lately so dismal and overcast. My own motto in all this must be, as far as possible, "Beget a temperance in all things." I trust I shall be enabled to rule myself by it, and in the firm hope that my endeavor to do what is right will be favored and assisted, I have committed myself, nothing doubting, to the stormy sea of life. Dearest H——, the papers will give you a detailed account of my *début*; I only wish to assure you that I have not embraced this course without due dread of its dangers, and a firm determination to watch, as far as in me lies, over its effect upon my mind. It is, after all, but lately, you know, that I have become convinced that fame and gratified ambition are not the worthiest aims for one's exertions. With affectionate love, believe me ever your fondly attached

FANNY.

I most sincerely hope that your brother's health is improving, and if we do not meet sooner, I shall now look forward to Dublin as our *point de réunion*; that will not be the least of the obligations I shall owe this happy turn of affairs.

I do not know whence I derived the deep impression I expressed in this letter of the moral dangers of the

life upon which I was entering; certainly not from my parents, to whom, of course, the idea that actors and actresses could not be respectable people naturally did not occur, and who were not troubled, I am sure, as I then was, with a perception of the more subtle evils of their calling. I had never heard the nature of it discussed, and was absolutely without experience of it, but the vapid vacuity of the last years of my aunt Siddons's life had made a profound impression upon me,—her apparent deadness and indifference to everything, which I attributed (unjustly, perhaps) less to her advanced age and impaired powers than to what I supposed the withering and drying influence of the overstimulating atmosphere of emotion, excitement, and admiration in which she had passed her life; certain it is that such was my dread of the effect of my profession upon me, that I added an earnest petition to my daily prayers that I might be defended from the evil influence I feared it might exercise upon me.

As for my success, there was, I believe, a genuine element in it, for puffing can send upward only things that have a buoyant, rising quality in themselves; but there was also a great feeling of personal sympathy for my father and mother, of kindly indulgence for my youth, and of respectful recollection of my uncle and aunt; and a very general desire that the fine theater where they had exercised their powers should be rescued, if possible, from its difficulties. All this went to make up a result of which I had the credit.

Among my experiences of that nauseous ingredient in theatrical life, puffery, some have been amusing enough. The last time that I gave public readings in

America, the management of them was undertaken by a worthy, respectable person, who was not, I think, exceptionally addicted to the devices and charlatanism which appear almost inseparable from the business of public exhibition in all its branches. At the end of our first interview for the purpose of arranging my performances, as he was taking his leave he said, "Well, ma'am, I think everything is quite in a nice train. I should say things are in a most favorable state of preparation; we've a delightful article coming out in the ——." Here he mentioned a popular periodical. "Ah, indeed?" said I, not quite apprehending what my friend was aiming at. "Yes, really, ma'am, I should say first-rate, and I thought perhaps we might induce you to be good enough to help us a little with it." "Bless me!" said I, more and more puzzled, "how can I help you?" "Well, ma'am, with a few personal anecdotes, perhaps, if you would be so kind." "Anecdotes?" said I (with three points of interrogation). "What do you mean? What about?" "Why, ma'am" (with a low bow), "about Mrs. Kemble, of course." Now, my worthy agent's remuneration was to consist of a certain proportion of the receipts of the readings, and, that being the case, I felt I had no right absolutely to forbid him all puffing advertisements and decently legitimate efforts to attract public attention and interest to performances by which he was to benefit. At the same time, I also felt it imperatively necessary that there should be some limit to these proceedings, if I was to be made a party to them. I therefore told him that, as his interest was involved in the success of the readings, I could not forbid his puffing them to some extent, as, if I did, he might consider himself injured. "But," said I, while refusing the contribution of any personal anecdotes to his forthcoming article, "take care what

you do in that line, for if you overdo it in the least, I will write an article, myself, on my readings, showing up all their faults, and turning them into ridicule as I do not believe any one else either would or could. So puff just as quietly as you can." I rather think my agent left me with the same opinion of my competency in business that Mr. Macready had expressed as to my proficiency in my profession, namely, that "I did not know the rudiments of it."

Mr. Mitchell, who from the first took charge of all my readings in England, and was the very kindest, most considerate, and most courteous of all managers, on one occasion, complaining bitterly to my sister of the unreasonable objection I had to all laudatory advertisements of my readings, said to her, with a voice and countenance of the most rueful melancholy, and with the most appealing pathos, "Why, you know, ma'am, it's really dreadful; you know, Mrs. Kemble won't even allow us to say in the bills, *these celebrated readings*; and you know, ma'am, it's really impossible to do with less; indeed it is! Why, ma'am, you know even Morrison's pills are always advertised as *these celebrated pills!*"—an illustration of the hardships of his case which my sister repeated to me with infinite delight.

When I saw the shop-windows full of Lawrence's sketch of me, and knew myself the subject of almost daily newspaper notices; when plates and saucers were brought to me with small figures of me as Juliet and Belvidera on them; and finally, when gentlemen showed me lovely buff-colored neck-handkerchiefs which they had bought, and which had, as I thought, pretty lilac-colored flowers all over them, which proved on nearer inspection to be minute copies of Lawrence's head of me, I not unnaturally, in the

fullness of my inexperience, believed in my own success.

I have since known more of the manufacture of public enthusiasm and public triumphs, and, remembering to how many people it was a matter of vital importance that the public interest should be kept alive in me, and Covent Garden filled every night I played, I have become more skeptical upon the subject.

Seeing lately a copy of my play of "Francis the First," with (to my infinite astonishment) "tenth edition" upon it, I said to a friend, "I suppose this was a bit of bookseller's puffery; or did each edition consist of three copies?" He replied, "Oh, no, I think not; you have forgotten the *furor* there was about you when this came out." At twenty I believed it *all*; at sixty-eight I find it difficult to believe *any* of it.

It is certain, however, that I played Juliet upward of a hundred and twenty times running, with all the irregularity and unevenness and immature inequality of which I have spoken as characteristics which were never corrected in my performances. My mother, who never missed one of them, would sometimes come down from her box and, folding me in her arms, say only the very satisfactory words, "Beautiful, my dear!" Quite as often, if not oftener, the verdict was, "My dear, your performance was not fit to be seen! I don't know how you ever contrived to do the part decently; it must have been by some knack or trick which you appear to have entirely lost the secret of; you had better give the whole thing up at once than go on doing it so disgracefully ill." This was awful, and made my heart sink down into my shoes, whatever might have been the fervor of

applause with which the audience had greeted my performance.

My life now became settled in its new shape. I acted regularly three times a week; I had no rehearsals, since "Romeo and Juliet" went on during the whole season, and so my mornings were still my own. I always dined in the middle of the day (and invariably on a mutton-chop, so that I might have been a Harrow boy, for diet); I was taken by my aunt early to the theater, and there in my dressing-room sat through the entire play, when I was not on the stage, with some piece of tapestry or needlework, with which, during the intervals of my tragic sorrows, I busied my fingers; my thoughts being occupied with the events of my next scene and the various effects it demanded. When I was called for the stage, my aunt came with me, carrying my train, that it might not sweep the dirty floor behind the scenes; and after spreading it out and adjusting its folds carefully, as I went on, she remained at the side scene till I came off again, then gathered it on her arm, and, folding a shawl around me, escorted me back to my dressing-room and tapestry; and so my theatrical evenings were passed. My parents would not allow me to go into the green-room, where they thought my attention would be distracted from my business, and where I might occasionally meet with undesirable associates. My salary was fixed at thirty guineas a week, and the Saturday after I came out I presented myself for the first and last time at the treasury of the theater to receive it, and carried it, clinking, with great triumph, to my mother, the first money I ever earned.

It would be difficult to imagine anything more radical than the change which three weeks had made

in the aspect of my whole life. From an insignificant school-girl, I had suddenly become an object of general public interest. I was a little lion in society, and the town talk of the day. Approbation, admiration, adulation, were showered upon me; every condition of my life had been altered, as by the wand of a fairy. Instead of the twenty pounds a year which my poor father squeezed out of his hard-earned income for my allowance, out of which I bought (alas, with how much difficulty, seeing how many other things I would buy!) my gloves and shoes, I now had an assured income, as long as my health and faculties were unimpaired, of at least a thousand a year; and the thirty guineas a week at Covent Garden, and much larger remuneration during provincial tours, forever forbade the sense of destitution productive of the ecstasy with which, only a short time before I came out, I had found wedged into the bottom of my money drawer in my desk a sovereign that I had overlooked, and so had sorrowfully concluded myself penniless till next allowance day. Instead of trudging long distances afoot through the muddy London streets, when the hire of a hackney-coach was matter of serious consideration, I had a comfortable and elegant carriage; I was allowed, at my own earnest request, to take riding lessons, and before long had a charming horse of my own, and was able to afford the delight of giving my father one, the use of which I hoped would help to invigorate and refresh him. The faded, threadbare, turned, and dyed frocks which were my habitual wear were exchanged for fashionably made dresses of fresh colors and fine texture, in which I appeared to myself transfigured. Our door was besieged with visitors, our evenings bespoken by innumerable invitations; social civilities

and courtesies poured in upon us from every side in an incessant stream; I was sought and petted and caressed by persons of conventional and real distinction, and every night that I did not act I might, if my parents had thought it prudent to let me do so, have passed in all the gayety of the fashionable world and the great London season. So much cordiality, sympathy, interest, and apparent genuine good-will seemed to accompany all these flattering demonstrations, that it was impossible for me not to be touched and gratified,—perhaps, too, unduly elated. If I was spoiled and my head turned, I can only say I think it would have needed a strong head not to be so; but God knows how pitiful a preparation all this tinsel, sudden success, and popularity formed for the duties and trials of my after-life.

CHAPTER XIII.

Among the persons whom I used to see behind the scenes were two who, for different reasons, attracted my attention: one was the Earl of W——, and the other the Rev. A.F. C——. I was presented to Lord and Lady W—— in society, and visited them more than once at their place near Manchester. But before I had made Lord W——'s acquaintance, he was an object of wondering admiration to me, not altogether unmixed with a slight sense of the ridiculous, only because it passed my comprehension how any real, live man could be so exactly like the description of a particular kind of man, in a particular kind of book.

There was no fault to find with the elegance of his appearance and his remarkable good looks; he certainly was the beau ideal of a dandy,—with his slender, perfectly dressed figure, his pale complexion, regular features, fine eyes, and dark, glossy waves of hair, and the general aristocratic distinction of his whole person,—and was so like the Earl of So-and-So, in the fashionable novel of the day, that I always longed to ask him what he did at the end of the "third volume," and "whether he or Sir Reginald married Lady Geraldine." But why this exquisite *par excellence* should always have struck me as slightly absurd, I cannot imagine. The Rev. A.F. C —— was the natural son of William IV. and Mrs. Jordan, and vicar of Maple Durham; when first I came out, this young gentleman attended every one of my performances, first in one of the stage boxes and afterward in a still nearer position to the stage, one of the orchestra reserved seats. Thence, one night, he disappeared, and, to my surprise, I saw him standing at one of the side scenes during the whole play. My mother remarking at supper his non-attendance in his usual place, my father said that he had come to him at the beginning of the play, and asked, for his mother's sake, to be allowed occasionally to present himself behind the scenes. My father said this reference to Mrs. Jordan had induced him to grant the request so put, though he did not think the back of the scenes a very proper haunt for a gentleman of his cloth. There, however, Mr. F. C—— came, and evening after evening I saw his light kid gloves waving and gesticulating about, following in a sort of sympathetic dumb show the gradual development of my distress, to the end of the play. My father, at his request, presented him to me, but as I never remained behind the scenes or went

into the green-room, and as he could not very well follow me upon the stage, our intercourse was limited to silent bows and courtesies, as I went on and off, to my palace in Verona, or from Friar Laurence's cell. Mr. F. C—— appeared to me to have slightly mistaken his vocation: that others had done so for him was made more manifest to me by my subsequent acquaintance with him. I encountered him one evening at a very gay ball given by the Countess de S——. Almost as soon as I came into the room he rushed at me, exclaiming, "Oh, do come and dance with me, that's a dear good girl." The "dear good girl" had not the slightest objection to dancing with anybody, dancing being then my predominant passion, and a chair a perfectly satisfactory partner if none other could be come by. While dancing, I was unpleasantly struck with the decidedly unreverend tone of my partner's remarks. Clergymen danced in those days without reproach, but I hope that even in those days of dancing clerks they did not often talk so very much to match the tripping of the light fantastic toe. My amazement reached its climax when, seeing me exchange signs of amicable familiarity with some one across the room, Mr. F. C —— said, "Who are you nodding and smiling to? Oh, your father. You are very fond of him, ain't you?" To my enthusiastic reply in the affirmative, he said, "Ah, yes; just so. I dare say you are." And then followed an expression of his filial disrespect for the highest personage in the realm, of such a robust significance as fairly took away my breath. Surprised into a momentary doubt of my partner's sobriety, I could only say, "Mr. F. C——, if you do not change your style of conversation I must sit down and leave you to finish the dance alone." He confounded himself in repeated apologies and entreaties that I would finish

the dance with him, and as I could not find a word to say to him, he went on eagerly to excuse himself by a short sketch of his life, telling me that he had not been bred to the Church and had the greatest disinclination to taking orders; that he had been trained as a sailor, the navy being the career that he preferred above all others, but that in consequence of the death of a brother he had been literally taken from on board ship, and, in spite of the utmost reluctance on his part, compelled to go into the Church. "Don't you think it's a hard case?" reiterated he, as I still found it difficult to express my opinion either of him or of his "case," both appearing to me equally deplorable. At length I suggested that, since he had adopted the sacred calling he professed, perhaps it would be better if he conformed to it at least by outward decency of language and decorum of demeanor. To this he assented, adding with a sigh, "But, you see, some people have a natural turn for religion; you have, for instance, I'm sure; but you see I have not." This appeared to me incontrovertible. Presently, after a pause, he asked me if I would write a sermon for him, which tribute to my talent for preaching, of which he had just undergone a sample, sent me into fits of laughter, though I replied with some indignation, "Certainly not; I am not a proper person to write sermons, and you ought to write your own!" "Yes," said he, with rather touching humility, "but you see I can't,—not good ones, at least. I'm sure you could, and I wish you would write one for me; Mrs. N—— has." This statement terminated the singular conversation, which had been the accompaniment to a quadrille. The vicar of Maple Durham is dead; had he lived he would doubtless have become a bishop; his family had already furnished its contingent to the army and navy, in

Lord E. and Lord A.F. C——, and the living of Maple Durham had to be filled and he to be provided for; and whenever the virtues of the Established Church system are under discussion, I try to forget this, and one or two similar instances I have known of its vices as it existed in those days. But that was near "fifty years since," and such a story as that of my poor sailor-parson friend could hardly be told now. Nor could one often now in any part of England find the fellow of my friend H. D——, who was also the predestined incumbent of a family living. He was passionately fond of hunting; and, clinging to his beloved "pink" even after holy orders had made it rather indecorous wear, used to huddle on his sacred garments of office at week-day solemnities of marrying or burying, and, having accomplished his clerical duties, rapidly divest himself of his holy robes, and bloom forth in unmitigated scarlet and buckskins, while the temporary cloud of sanctity which had obscured them was rapidly rolled into the vestry closet.

I confess to having heard with sincere sympathy the story of a certain excellent clergyman of Yorkshire breeding, who, finding it impossible to relinquish his hunting, carried it on simultaneously with the most exact and faithful discharge of his clerical duties until, arriving at length at the high dignity of the archbishopric of York, though neither less able for, nor less devoted to, his favorite pursuit, thought it expedient to abandon it and ride to hounds no more. He still rode, however, harder, farther, faster, and better than most men, but conscientiously avoided the hunting-field. Coming accidentally, one day, upon the hounds when they had lost the scent, and trotting briskly away, after a friendly acknowledgment of the huntsman's salutation, he

presently caught sight of the fox, when, right reverend prelate as he was, he gave a "view halloo" to be heard half the county over, and fled in the opposite direction at a full gallop, while the huntsman, in an ecstasy, cheered on his pack with an exclamation of "That's gospel truth, if ever I heard it!"

A.F. C—— was pleasant-looking, though not handsome, like the royal family of England, whose very noble *port de tête* he had, with a charming voice that, my father said, came to him from his mother.

I have spoken of my being allowed to take riding lessons, and of purchasing a horse, which was not only an immense pleasure to me, but, I believe, a very necessary means of health and renovation, in the life of intense and incessant excitement which I was leading.

For some time after my first coming out I lost my sleep almost entirely, and used to lie wide awake the greater part of the night. With more use of my new profession this nervous wakefulness wore off; but I was subject to very frequent and severe pains in the side, which any strong emotion almost invariably brought on, and which were relieved by nothing but exercise on horseback. The refreshment of this panacea for bodily and mental ailments was always such to me, that often, returning from balls where I had danced till daylight, I used to feel that if I could have an hour's gallop in the fresh morning air, I should be revived beyond all sleep that I could then get.

Once only I was allowed to test my theory, and I found that the result answered my expectations entirely. I had been acting in Boston every night for

a whole week, and on Saturday night had acted in two pieces, and was to start at one o'clock in the morning for New York, between which and Boston there was no railroad in those days. I was not feeling well, and was much exhausted by my hard work, but I was sure that if I could only begin my journey on horseback instead of in the lumbering, rolling, rocking, heavy, straw-and-leather-smelling "Exclusive Extra" (that is, private stage-coach), I should get over my fatigue and the rest of the journey with some chance of not being completely knocked up by it. After much persuasion my father consented, and after the two pieces of our farewell night, to a crowded, enthusiastic house, all the excitement of which of course told upon me even more than the actual exertion of acting, I had some supper, and at one o'clock, with our friend, Major M——, and ——, got on horseback, and rode out of Boston. Major M —— rode with us only about three miles, and then turned back, leaving us to pursue our road to Dedham, seven miles farther, where the carriage, with my father and aunt, was to meet us.

The thermometer stood at seventeen degrees below zero; it was the middle of a Massachusetts winter, and the cold intense. The moon was at the full, and the night as bright as day; not a stone but was visible on the iron-hard road, that rang under our horses' hoofs. The whole country was sheeted with snow, over which the moon threw great floods of yellow light, while here and there a broken ridge in the smooth, white expanse turned a sparkling, crystalline edge up to the lovely splendor. It was wonderfully beautiful and exhilarating, though so cold that my vail was all frozen over my lips, and we literally hardly dared utter a word for fear of swallowing scissors and knives in the piercing air, which,

however, was perfectly still and without the slightest breath of wind. So we rode hard and fast and silently, side by side, through the bright, profound stillness of the night, and never drew rein till we reached Dedham, where the carriage with my father and aunt had not yet arrived. Not a soul was stirring, and not a sound was heard, in the little New England village; the country tavern was fast shut up; not a light twinkled from any window, or thread of smoke rose from any chimney; every house had closed its eyes and ears, and gone to sleep. We had ridden the whole way as fast as we could, and had kept our blood warm by the violent exercise, but there was every danger, if we sat many minutes on our saddles in the piercing cold, that we should be all the worse instead of the better for that circumstance. Mr. —— rode along the houses, looking for some possible shelter, and at last, through the chink of a shutter, spying a feeble glimmer of light, dismounted, and, knocking, asked if it were possible for me to be admitted there for a few minutes, till the carriage, which could not be far distant, came up. He was answered in the affirmative, and I jumped down from my saddle, and ran into the friendly refuge, while he paced rapidly to and fro before the house, leading the horses, to keep himself and them alike from freezing; a man was to come on the coach-box with the driver, to take them back to Boston. On looking round I found myself in a miserable little low room, heated almost to suffocation by an iron stove, and stifling with the peculiar smell of black dye-stuffs. Here, by the light of two wretched bits of candle, two women were working with the utmost dispatch at mourning-garments for a funeral which was to take place that day, in a few hours. They did not speak to me after making room for me near the

stove, and the only words they exchanged with each other were laconic demands for scissors, thread, etc.; and so they rapidly plied their needles in silence, while I, suddenly transported from the cold brightness without into this funereal, sweltering atmosphere of what looked like a Black Hole made of crape and bombazine, watched the lugubrious occupation of the women as if I was in a dream, till the distant rumbling of wheels growing more and more distinct, I took leave of my temporary hostesses with many thanks (they were poor New England workwomen, by whom no other species of acknowledgment would have been received), and was presently fast asleep in the corner of the carriage, and awoke only long after to feel rested and refreshed, and well able to endure the fatigue of the rest of the journey. In spite of this fortunate result, I do not now, after a lapse of forty years, think the experiment one that would have answered with many young women's constitutions, though there is no sort of doubt that the nervous energy generated by any pleasurable emotion is in itself a great preservative from unfavorable influences.

My riding-master was the best and most popular teacher in London—Captain Fozzard—or, as he was irreverently called among his young Amazons, "Old Fozzard." When my mother took me to the riding school, he recalled, with many compliments, her own proficiency as an equestrian, and said he would do his best to make me as fine a horsewoman as she had been. He certainly did his best to improve a very good seat, and a heavy, defective hand with which nature had endowed me; the latter, however, was incorrigible, and so, though I was always a fearless horsewoman, and very steady in my saddle, I never possessed the finer and more exquisite part of the

accomplishment of riding, which consists in the delicate and skillful management of a horse's mouth. Fozzard's method was so good that all the best lady riders in London were his pupils, and one could tell one of them at a glance, by the perfect squareness of the shoulders to the horse's head, which was one invariable result of his teaching. His training was eminently calculated to produce that result, and to make us all but immovable in our saddles. Without stirrup, without holding the reins, with our arms behind us, and as often as not sitting left-sided on the saddle, to go through violent plunging, rearing, and kicking lessons, and taking our horses over the bar, was a considerable test of a firm seat, and in all these special feats I became a proficient.

One day, when I had gone to the school more for exercise than a lesson, and was taking a solitary canter in the tan for my own amusement, the little door under the gallery opened, and Fozzard appeared, introducing a middle-aged lady and a young girl, who remained standing there while he advanced toward me, and presently began to put me through all my most crucial exercises, apparently for their edification. I was always delighted to go through these particular feats, which amused me excessively, and in which I took great pride. So I sat through them all, till, upon a sign from the elder lady, Fozzard, with extreme deference, opened the door and escorted them forth, and then returning to dismount me, informed me that I had given a very satisfactory sample of his teaching to the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria, the latter of whom was to be placed under his tuition forthwith.

This was the first time I ever saw the woman who holds the most exalted position in the world, the

Queen of England, who has so filled that supreme station that her name is respected wherever it is heard abroad, and that she is regarded by her own people with a loyal love such as no earthly dignity but that of personal worthiness can command.

JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE.

DEAREST H——,

The kind exertion you made in writing to me so soon after leaving London deserved an earlier acknowledgment; but when I tell you that every day since Christmas I have fully purposed writing to you, and have not been able to do so before to-day, I hope you will excuse the delay, and believe me when I assure you that not only the effort you made in going to the theater, but your seeing me at all, are appreciated by me as very strong marks of your affection for me.

Now let me say something to you about Lady C—— L——'s criticism of my performance. In the first place, nothing is easier than to criticise by comparison, and hardly anything much more difficult than to form a correct judgment of any work of art (be it what it may) upon the foundation of abstract principles and fundamental rules of taste and criticism; for this sort of analysis is really a study. Comparison is the criticism of the multitude, and I almost wonder at its being resorted to by a woman of such ability as Lady C——. I only say this by the way, for to be compared with either Mrs. Siddons or Miss O'Neill is above my expectation. They were both professional actresses, which I can hardly yet claim to be; women who had for years studied the mechanical part of their art, and rendered themselves proficients in their business; while although I have certainly had many advantages, in hearing

the stage and acting constantly, tastefully, and thoughtfully discussed, I am totally inexperienced in all the minor technical processes, most necessary for the due execution of any dramatic conception. As to my aunt Siddons—look at her, H——; look at her fine person, her beautiful face; listen to her magnificent voice; and supposing that I were as highly endowed with poetical dramatic imagination as she was (which I certainly am not), is it likely that there can ever be a shadow of comparison between her and myself, even when years may have corrected all that is at present crude and imperfect in my efforts?

This is my sole reply to her ladyship. To you, dearest H——, I can add that I came upon the stage quite uncertain as to the possession of any talent for it whatever; I do not think I am now deceived as to the quantity I can really lay claim to, by the exaggerated praises of the public, who have been too long deprived of any female object of special interest on the boards to be very nice about the first that is presented to them; nor am I unconscious of the amount of work that will be requisite to turn my abilities to their best use. Wait; have patience; by and by, I hope, I shall do better. It is very true that to be the greatest actress of my day is not the aim on which my happiness depends. But having embraced this career, I think I ought not to rest satisfied with any degree of excellence short of what my utmost endeavor will enable me to attain in it....

My print, or rather the print of me, from Sir Thomas Lawrence's drawing, is out. He has promised you one, so I do not. There are also coming out a series of sketches by Mr. Hayter, from my Juliet, with a species of *avant propos* written by Mrs. Jameson; this will interest you, and I will send you a copy of it when it is published.

I will tell you a circumstance of much anxious hope to us all just now, but as the result is yet uncertain, do not mention it. We have a species of offer of a living for my brother John, who, you know, is going into the Church. This is a consummation devoutly to be wished, and I most sincerely hope we may not be disappointed. He is still in Germany, very happy and very metaphysical; should we obtain this living, however, I suppose he would return immediately. Independently of my wish to see him again, I shall be glad when he leaves Germany I think; but I have not time for what I think about Germany to-day, and you must be rather tired of

Yours most affectionately,

F. A. K.

Mr. Hayter's graceful sketches of me in Juliet were lithographed and published with Mrs. Jameson's beautifully written but too flattering notice of my performance; the original drawings were purchased by Lord Ellesmere. The second part assigned to me by the theater authorities was Belvidera, in Otway's "Venice Preserved." I had never read the play until I learned my part, nor seen it until I acted it. It is, I

believe, one of the longest female parts on the stage. But I had still my school-girl capacity for committing quickly to memory, and learned it in three hours. Acting it was a very different matter. I was no longer sustained by the genius of Shakespeare, no longer stimulated by the sublime passion and exquisite poetry. Juliet was a reality to me, a living individual woman, whose nature I could receive, as it were, into mine at once, without effort, comprehending and expressing it. Belvidera seemed to me a sort of lay figure in a tragic attitude, a mere, "female in general," without any peculiar or specific characteristics whatever; placed as Belvidera is in the midst of sordidly painful and coarsely agonizing circumstances, there was nothing in the part itself that affected my feelings or excited my imagination; and the miserable situations into which the poor creature was thrown throughout the piece revolted me, and filled me with disgust for the men she had to do with, without inspiring me with any sympathy for her. In this piece, too, I came at once into the unfavorable light of full comparison with my aunt's performance of the part, which was one of her famous ones. A friend of hers and mine, my dear and excellent William Harness, said that seeing me was exactly like looking at Mrs. Siddons through the diminishing end of an opera glass. My personal likeness to her, in spite of my diminutive size and irregular features, was striking, and of course suggested, to those who remembered her, associations which were fatal to my satisfactory performance of the part. I disliked the play and the character of Belvidera, and I am sure I must have played it very indifferently.

I remember one circumstance connected with my first performance of it which proved how painfully

the unredeemed horror and wretchedness of the piece acted upon my nerves and imagination. In the last scene, where poor Belvidera's brain gives way under her despair, and she fancies herself digging for her husband in the earth, and that she at last recovers and seizes him, I intended to utter a piercing scream; this I had not of course rehearsed, not being able to scream deliberately in cold blood, so that I hardly knew, myself, what manner of utterance I should find for my madness. But when the evening came, I uttered shriek after shriek without stopping, and rushing off the stage ran all round the back of the scenes, and was pursuing my way, perfectly unconscious of what I was doing, down the stairs that led out into the street, when I was captured and brought back to my dressing-room and my senses.

The next piece in which I appeared was Murphy's "Grecian Daughter;" a feeble and inflated composition, as inferior in point of dramatic and poetical merit to Otway's "Venice Preserved," as that is to any of Shakespeare's masterpieces. It has situations of considerable effect, however, and the sort of parental and conjugal interest that infallibly strikes sympathetic chords in the *pater familias* bosom of an English audience. The choice of the piece had in it, in my opinion, an ingredient of bad taste, which, objectionable as it seemed to me, had undoubtedly entered into the calculation of the management, as likely to increase the effect and success of the play; I mean the constant reference to Euphrasia's filial devotion, and her heroic and pious efforts in behalf of her old father—incidents in the piece which were seized upon and applied to my father and myself by the public, and which may have perhaps added to the feeling of the audience, as they

certainly increased my dislike for the play. Here, too, I again encountered the formidable impression which Mrs. Siddons had produced in the part, of which, in spite of the turbid coldness and stilted emphasis of the style, she had made a perfect embodiment of heroic grandeur and classical grace. My Euphrasia was, I am sure, a pitiful picture of an antique heroine, in spite of Macdonald's enthusiasm for the "attitude" in the last scene, and my cousin Horace Twiss's comical verdict of approbation, that it was all good, but especially the scene where "you tip it the tyrant."

JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE, January 17, 1830.

DEAREST H——,

Although my mind is much occupied just now with a new part in which I appear to-morrow, I take advantage of the bodily rest this day affords me to write you a few lines, which I fear I might not find time for again as soon as I wish. There was enough in your last letter, dear H——, to make me melancholy, independently of the question which you ask respecting my picture in Juliet, and which the papers have by this time probably answered to you.

Sir Thomas Lawrence is dead. The event has been most distressing, and most sudden and unexpected to us. It really seemed as though we had seen him but the day before we heard of it; and indeed, it was but a few days since my mother had called on him, and since he had written to me a long letter on the subject of my Belvidera, full of refined

taste and acute criticism, as all his letters to me were. It was a great shock; indeed, so much so, that absolute amazement for a little time prevented my feeing all the regret I have since experienced about it. Nor was it till I sat down to write to Cecilia, to request her to prevent any sudden communication of the event to my aunt Siddons, that I felt it was really true, and found some relief in crying. I had to act Belvidera that same night, and it was with a very heavy heart that I repeated those passages in which poor Sir Thomas Lawrence had pointed out alterations and suggested improvements. He is a great loss to me, individually. His criticism was invaluable to me. He was a most attentive observer; no shade of feeling or slightest variation of action or inflection of voice escaped him; his suggestions were *always* improvements, conveyed with the most lucid clearness; and, as you will easily believe, his strictures were always sufficiently tempered with refined flattery to have disarmed the most sensitive self-love. My Juliet and Belvidera both owe much to him, and in this point of view alone his loss is irreparable to me. It is some matter of regret, too, as you may suppose, that we can have no picture of me by him, but this is a more selfish and less important motive of sorrow than my loss of his advice in my profession. I understand that my aunt Siddons was dreadfully shocked by the news, and cried, "And have I lived to see him go before me!" ... His promise to send you a print from his drawing of me, dearest H——,

he cannot perform, but I will be his executor in this instance, and if you will tell me how it can be conveyed to you, I will send you one.

This letter, my dearest H——, which was begun on Sunday, I now sit down to finish on Tuesday evening, and cannot do better, I think, than give you a full account of our last night's success; for a very complete success it was, I am happy to say. Murphy's play of "The Grecian Daughter" I suppose you know; or if you do not, your state is the more gracious, for certainly anything more flat, poor, and trashy I cannot well conceive. It had been, you know, a great part of my aunt Siddons's, and nothing better proves her great dramatic genius than her having clothed so meager a part in such magnificent proportions as she gave to it, and filled out by her own poetical conception the bare skeleton Mr. Murphy's Euphrasia presented to her. This frightened me a great deal; Juliet and Belvidera scarcely anybody can do ill, but Euphrasia I thought few people could do well, and I feared I was not one of them. Moreover, the language is at once so poor and so bombastic that I took double the time in getting the part by rote I should have taken for any part of Shakespeare's. My dress was beautiful; I think I will tell it you. You know you told me even an account of hat and feathers would interest you. My skirt was made immensely full and with a long train; it was of white merino, almost as fine as cashmere, with a rich gold Grecian border. The drapery which covered my

shoulders (if you wish to look for the sort of costume in engravings, I give you its classical name, *peplum*) was made of the same material beautifully embroidered, leaving my arms quite free and uncovered. I had on flesh-colored silk gloves, of course. A bright scarlet sash with heavy gilt acorns, falling to my feet, scarlet sandals to match, and a beautiful Grecian head-dress in gold, devised by my mother, completed the whole, which really had a very classical effect, the fine material of which my dress was formed falling with every movement into soft, graceful folds.

I managed to keep a good heart until I heard the flourish of drums and trumpets, in the midst of which I had to rush on the stage, and certainly when I did come on my appearance must have been curiously in contrast with the "prave 'ords" I uttered, for I felt like nothing but a hunted hare, with my eyes starting from my head, my "nostrils all wide," and my limbs trembling to such a degree that I could scarcely stand. The audience received me very kindly, however, and after a little while I recovered my breath and self-possession, and got on very comfortably, considering that, what with nervousness and the short time they had had to study them in, none of the actors were perfect in their parts. My father acted Evander, which added, no doubt, to the interest of the situation. The play went off admirably, and I dare say it will be of some service to me, but I fear it is too dull and poor in itself, despite all that can be done for

it, to be of much use to the theater. One of my great difficulties in the play was to produce some striking effect after stabbing Dionysius, which was a point in which my aunt always achieved a great triumph. She used to fall on her knees as if deprecating the wrath of heaven for what she had done, and her mode of performing this was described to me. But, independently of my anxiety to avoid any imitation that might induce a comparison that could not but be fatally to my disadvantage, I did not (to you I may venture to confess it) feel the situation in the same manner. Euphrasia had just preserved her father's life by a deed which, in her own estimation and that of her whole nation, entitled her to an immortal dwelling in the Elysian fields. The only feeling, therefore, that I can conceive as checking for a moment her exultation would be the natural womanly horror at the sight of blood and physical suffering, the expression of which seems to me not only natural to her, as of the "feminine gender," but not altogether superfluous to reconcile an English audience to so unfeminine a proceeding as stabbing a man. To conciliate all this I adopted the course of immediately dropping the arm that held the dagger, and with the other veiling my eyes with the drapery of my dress, which answered better my own idea of the situation, and seemed to produce a great effect. My dearest H——, this is a long detail, but I think it will interest you and perhaps amuse your niece; if, however, it wearies your spirits, tell me so, and another time I

will not confine my communications so much to my own little-corner of life.

Cecilia dined with us on Sunday, but was very far from well. I have not seen my aunt Siddons since Sir Thomas Lawrence's death. I almost dread doing so: she must have felt so much on hearing it; he was for many years so mixed up with those dearest to her, and his memory must always recall theirs. I hear Campbell means to write his life. His letters to me will perhaps be published in it. Had I known they were likely to be so used, I would have preserved them all. As it is, it is the merest chance that all of them are not destroyed; for, admirable as they were in point of taste and critical judgment, some of them seemed to me such mere specimens of refined flattery that, having extracted the advice likely to be profitable to me, I committed the epistles themselves to the flames, which probably would have been the ultimate destination of them all; but now they have acquired a sad value they had not before, and I shall keep them as relics of a man of great genius and, in many respects, I believe, a truly amiable person.

The drawing, which is, you know, my mother's property, is safe in Mr. Lane's hands, and will be restored to us on Saturday. The funeral takes place to-morrow; my father, I believe, will attend; neither my mother nor myself can muster courage to witness it, although we had places offered to us. It is to take place in St. Paul's, for Westminster Abbey is full. All the beautiful

unfinished portraits which filled his rooms will be returned imperfect to their owners, and I wonder who will venture to complete them, for he has certainly not left his like behind him. Reports have been widely spread that his circumstances were much embarrassed, but I fancy when all his effects are sold there will be a small surplus. He behaved with the utmost liberality about his drawing of me, for he gave it to my mother, and would not accept of any remuneration for the copyright of the print from Mr. Lane —who, it is said, made three hundred pounds by the first impressions taken from it —saying that he had had so much pleasure in the work that he would not take a farthing for either time or trouble.

We are all tolerably well; I am quite so, and rejoice daily in that strength of constitution which, among other of my qualifications, entitles me to the appellation of "Shetland pony."

How are you all? How is E——? Tell her all about me, because it may amuse her. I wish you could have seen me, dear H——, in my Greek dress; I really look very well in it, and taller than usual, in consequence of all the long draperies; moreover, I "stood grandly" erect, and put off the "sidelong stoop" in favor of a more heroic and statue-like deportment. Oh, H——, I am exceedingly happy, *et pour peu de chose*, perhaps you will think: my father has given me leave to have riding lessons, so that I shall be in right earnest "an angel on horseback," and when I

come to Ardgillan (and it won't be long first) I shall make you mount upon a horse and gallop over the sand with me; won't you, my dear? Believe me ever your affectionate

FANNY.

The words in inverted commas at the end of this letter had reference to some strictures Miss S—— had made upon my carriage, and to a family joke against me in consequence of my having once said, in speaking of my desire to ride, that I should not care to be an angel in heaven unless I could be an "angel on horseback." My invariable description of a woman riding was "a happy woman," and after much experience of unhappiness, certainly not dissipated by equestrian exercise, I still agree with Wordsworth that "the horse and rider are a happy pair." After acting the Grecian Daughter for some time I altered my attitude in the last scene, after the murder of Dionysius, more to my own satisfaction: instead of dropping the arm that held the dagger by my side, I raised the weapon to heaven, as if appealing to the gods for justification and tendering them, as it were, the homage of my deed; of course I still continued to vail my eyes and turn my head away from the sight of my victim.

JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE, Saturday,
February 20th.

DEAREST H——,

I need hardly apologize to you for my long silence, for I am sure that you will have understood it to have proceeded from no want of inclination on my part to answer your last, but from really not having had half

an hour at my command in which to do so. I have thought, too (although that has not prevented my writing), much upon the tenor of your letter, and the evident depression it was written in, and I hardly know how to resolve: whether I ought not to forbear wearying you with matters which every way are discordant with your own thoughts and feelings, or whether it is better, by inducing you to answer me, to give you some motive, however trifling, for exertion. Dearest H——, if the effort of writing to me is too painful to you, do not do it. I give you a most disinterested counsel, for I have told you more than once how much I prize your letters, and you know it is true. Still, I do not think my "wish is father to my thought" when I say that I think it is not good for you to lose entirely even such an interest as I am to you. I say "even such an interest," because I believe your trouble must have rendered me and my pursuits, for the present at least, less likely than they have been to occupy a place in your thoughts. But 'tis for you to decide; if my letters weary or annoy you, tell me so, dear H——, and I will not write to you until you can "follow my paces" better. If you do not like to make the exertion of answering me, I will still continue to let you know my proceedings, and take it for granted that you will not cease to love me and think of me. Dear H——, I shall see you this summer again; you, and yours, whom I love for your sake. I shall go on with this letter, because if you are inclined for a gossip you can read it; and if not, it may perhaps

amuse your invalid. I have been uncommonly gay, for me, this winter, and I dare say shall continue to be so, as it does not disagree with me, and I am so fond of dancing that a quadrille renders palatable what otherwise would be, I think, disagreeable enough—the manner in which society is now organized. I was at a very large party the other night, at the poet Campbell's, where every material for a delightful evening—good rooms, pretty women, clever men—was brought into requisition to make what, after all, appeared to me nothing but a wearisome, hot crowd. The apartments were overfilled: to converse with anybody for five minutes was impossible. If one stood up one was squeezed to death, and if one sat down one was stifled. I, too (who was the small lioness of the evening), was subjected to a most disagreeable ordeal, the whole night being stared at from head to foot by every one that could pass within staring distance of me. You probably will wonder at this circumstance distressing a young person who three times a week exhibits herself on the stage to several hundred people, but there I do not distinguish the individual eyes that are fixed on me, and my mind is diverted from the annoyances of my real situation by the distressful circumstances of my feigned one. Moreover, to add to my sorrows, at the beginning of the evening a lady spilled some coffee over a beautiful dress which I was wearing for the first time. Now I will tell you what consolations I had to support me under

these trials; first, the self-approving consciousness of the smiling fortitude with which I bore my gown's disaster; secondly, a lovely nosegay, which was presented to me; and lastly, at about twelve o'clock, when the rooms were a little thinned, a dance for an hour which sent me home perfectly satisfied with my fate. By the bye, I asked Campbell if he knew any method to preserve my flowers from fading, to which he replied, "Give them to me, and I will immortalize them." I did so, and am expecting some verses from him in return.

On Thursday next I come out in Mrs. Beverley; I am much afraid of it. The play wants the indispensable attribute of all works of art—imagination; it is a most touching story, and Mrs. Beverley is a most admirable creature, but the story is such as might be read in a newspaper, and her character has its like in many an English home. I think the author should have idealized both his incidents and his heroine a little, to produce a really fine play. Mrs. Beverley is not one shade inferior to Imogen in purity, in conjugal devotion, and in truth, but while the one is to all intents and purposes a model wife, a poet's touch has made of the other a divine image of all that is lovely and excellent in woman; and yet, certainly, Imogen is quite as *real* a conception as Mrs. Beverley. The absence of the poetical element in the play prevents my being enthusiastic about my part, and I am the more nervous about it for that reason; when I am excited I feel that I can excite

others, but in this case—However, we shall see; I may succeed with it better than I expect, and perhaps my audience may like to see me as a quiet, sober lady, after the Belvideras and Juliets and Euphrasias they have hitherto seen me represent. I will tell you my dress: it is a silver gray silk, and a white crape hat with drooping feathers. I think it will be very pretty. My father acts Beverley with me, which will be a great advantage to me.

Oh! I must tell you of a delightful adventure which befell me the other night while I was acting in "The Grecian Daughter." Mr. Abbot, who personates my husband, Phocion, at a certain part of the play where we have to embrace, thought fit to clasp me so energetically in his arms that he threw me down, and fell down himself. I fell seated, with all my draperies in most modest order, which was very fortunate, but certainly I never was more frightened or confused. However, I soon recovered my presence of mind, and helped my better half on with his part, for he was quite aghast, poor man, at his own exploit, and I do believe would have been standing with his eyes and mouth wide open to this moment, if I had not managed to proceed with the scene somehow and anyhow.

I gave the commission for your print of me, dear H——, to Colnaghi, and I hope you will like it, and that the more you look at it the stronger the likeness will appear to you. Was my brother John returned from Germany,

when last I wrote to you? I forget. However, he has just left us to take his degree at Cambridge, previous to being ordained. Henry, too, returned yesterday to Paris, so that the house is in mourning for its liveliest inmates. I continue quite well, and indeed I think my work agrees with me; or if I am a little tired with acting, why, a night's dancing soon sets me right again. T—— B —— is in town, and came to see me the other day. I like her; she is a gentle, nice person; she is going back in a week to Cassiobury. How I wish you and I had wings, and that Heath Farm belonged to us! It is coming to the time of year when we first became acquainted; and, besides all its associations of kindly feeling and affectionate friendship, your image is connected in my mind with all the pleasantest things in nature—the spring, May blossoms, glow-worms, "bright hill and bosky dell;" and it dates from somewhere "twixt the last violet and the earliest rose," which is not a quotation, though I have put it in inverted commas, but something that just came to the tip of my pen and looks like poetry. I must leave off now, for I got leave to stay at home to-night to write to you instead of going to the opera, with many injunctions that I would go to bed early; so, now it is late, I must do so. Good-by, dearest H——; believe me ever

Yours most affectionately,

F. A. K.

P.S.—This is my summer tour—Bath,

> Edinburgh, Dublin, Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham. I am Miss *Fanny* Kemble, because Henry Kemble's daughter, my uncle Stephen's granddaughter, is Miss Kemble by right of birth.

The lady who spoiled my pretty cream-colored poplin dress by spilling coffee on the front of it, instantly, in the midst of her vehement self-upbraidings and humble apologies for her awkwardness, adopted a very singular method of appeasing my displeasure and soothing my distress, by deliberately pouring a spoonful of coffee upon the front breadth of her own velvet gown. My amazement at this proceeding was excessive, and it neither calmed my wrath nor comforted my sorrow, but exasperated me with a sense of her extreme folly and her conviction of mine. The perpetrator of this singular act of atonement was the beautiful Julia, eldest daughter of the Adjutant-General, Sir John Macdonald, and the lady whom the Duke of Wellington pronounced the handsomest woman in London; a verdict which appeared to me too favorable, though she certainly was one of the handsomest women in London. An intimate acquaintance subsisted between her family and ours for several years, and I was indebted to Sir John Macdonald's assistance, most kindly exerted in my behalf, for the happiness of giving my youngest brother his commission in the army, which Sir John enabled me to purchase in his own regiment; and I was indebted to the great liberality of Mr. John Murray, the celebrated publisher, for the means of thus providing for my brother Henry. The generous price (remuneration I dare not call it) which he gave me for my play of "Francis the First" obtained for me

my brother's commission.

JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE, March 9th.

DEAREST H——,

I have been so busy all this day, signing benefit tickets, that I hardly feel as if I could write anything but "25th March, F. A. K." Our two last letters crossed on the road, and yours was so kind an answer to mine, which you had not yet received, that I feel no further scruple in breaking in upon you with the frivolity of my worldly occupations and proceedings.

I was sorry that the newspapers should give you the first account of my Mrs. Beverley, but my time is so taken up with "an infinite deal of nothing" that I have not had an hour to call my own till this evening, and this evening is my only unengaged one for nearly three weeks to come.

The papers will probably have set your mind at ease as to the result of my appearance in "The Gamester;" but although they have forestalled me in the sum total of the account, there are some small details which may perhaps interest you, of which they can give you no knowledge. I shall talk to you much of myself, dearest H——, and hope it will not weary you; that precious little self is just now so fully occupied with its own affairs that I have little else to talk of. [I probably also felt much as our kind and most comical friend Dessauer used, when he emphatically declared, "Mais, je m'interesse

extrêmement à ce qui me regarde."]

I do not think I ever spent a more miserable day than the one in which I acted Mrs. Beverley for the first time. Stage nervousness, my father and mother both tell me, increases instead of diminishing with practice; and certainly, as far as my own limited experience goes, I find it so. The first hazard, I should say, was not half so fearful as the last; and though on the first night that I ever stood upon the stage I thought I never could be more frightened in my life, I find that with each new part my fear has augmented in proportion as previous success would have rendered it more damaging to fail. A stumble at starting would have been bad enough, and might have bruised me; but a fall from the height to which I have been raised might break my neck, or at any rate cripple me for life. I do not believe that to fail in a part would make me individually unhappy for a moment; but so much of real importance to others, so much of the most serious interests and so much of the feelings of those most dear to me, is involved in the continuance of my good fortune, that I am in every way justified in dreading a failure. These considerations, and their not unnatural result, a violent headache and side-ache, together with no very great liking for the part (interesting as it is, it is so perfectly prosaic), had made me so nervous that the whole of the day was spent in fits of crying; and when the curtain drew up, and I was "discovered," I'm sure I must have looked as jaded and tear-worn as poor Mrs. Beverley

ever did. However, all went well with me till the last act, when my father's acting and my own previous state of nervousness combined to make my part of the tragedy anything but feigning; I sobbed so violently that I could hardly articulate my words, and at the last fell upon the dead body of Beverley with a hysterical cry that had all the merit of pure nature, if none other, to recommend it. Fortunately the curtain fell then, and I was carried to my dressing-room to finish my fit in private. The last act of that play gives me such pains in my arms and legs, with sheer nervous distress, that I am ready to drop down with exhaustion at the end of it; and this reminds me of the very difficult question which you expect me to answer, respecting the species of power which is called into play in the act, so called, of *acting*.

I am the worst reasoner, analyzer, and metaphysician that ever was born; and therefore whatever I say on the subject can be worth very little, as a reply to your question, but may furnish you with some data for making a theory about it for yourself.

It appears to me that the two indispensable elements of fine acting are a certain amount of poetical imagination and a power of assumption, which is a good deal the rarer gift of the two; in addition to these, a sort of vigilant presence of mind is necessary, which constantly looks after and avoids or removes the petty obstacles that are perpetually destroying the imaginary illusion, and

reminding one in one's own despite that one is not really Juliet or Belvidera. The curious part of acting, to me, is the sort of double process which the mind carries on at once, the combined operation of one's faculties, so to speak, in diametrically opposite directions; for instance, in that very last scene of Mrs. Beverley, while I was half dead with crying in the midst of the real grief, created by an entirely unreal cause, I perceived that my tears were falling like rain all over my silk dress, and spoiling it; and I calculated and measured most accurately the space that my father would require to fall in, and moved myself and my train accordingly in the midst of the anguish I was to feign, and absolutely did endure. It is this watchful faculty (perfectly prosaic and commonplace in its nature), which never deserts me while I am uttering all that exquisite passionate poetry in Juliet's balcony scene, while I feel as if my own soul was on my lips, and my color comes and goes with the intensity of the sentiment I am expressing; which prevents me from falling over my train, from setting fire to myself with the lamps placed close to me, from leaning upon my canvas balcony when I seem to throw myself all but over it. In short, while the whole person appears to be merely following the mind in producing the desired effect and illusion upon the spectator, both the intellect and the senses are constantly engrossed in guarding against the smallest accidents that might militate against it; and while representing things absolutely imaginary, they are taking

accurate cognizance of every real surrounding object that can either assist or mar the result they seek to produce. This seems to me by far the most singular part of the process, which is altogether a very curious and complicated one. I am glad you got my print safe; it is a very beautiful thing (I mean the drawing), and I am glad to think that it is like me, though much flattered. I suppose it is like what those who love me have sometimes seen me, but to the majority of my acquaintance it must appear unwarrantably good-looking. The effect of it is much too large for me, but when my mother ventured to suggest this to Lawrence, he said that that was a peculiarity of his drawings, and that he thought persons familiar with his style would understand it.

My dearest H——, you express something of regret at my necessity (I can hardly call it choice) of a profession. There are many times when I myself cannot help wishing it might have been otherwise; but then come other thoughts: the talent which I possess for it was, I suppose, given to me for some good purpose, and to be used. Nevertheless, when I reflect that although hitherto my profession has not appeared to me attractive enough to engross my mind, yet that admiration and applause, and the excitement springing therefrom, may become necessary to me, I resolve not only to watch but to pray against such a result. I have no desire to sell my soul for anything, least of all for sham fame, mere notoriety. Besides, my mind has such far deeper enjoyment in other pursuits; the

happiness of reading Shakespeare's heavenly imaginations is so far beyond all the excitement of acting them (white satin, gas lights, applause, and all), that I cannot conceive a time when having him in my hand will not compensate for the absence of any amount of public popularity. While I can sit obliviously curled up in an armchair, and read what he says till my eyes are full of delicious, quiet tears, and my heart of blessed, good, quiet thoughts and feelings, I shall not crave that which falls so far short of any real enjoyment, and hitherto certainly seems to me as remote as possible from any real happiness.

This enviable condition of body and mind was mine while studying Portia in "The Merchant of Venice," which is to be given on the 25th for my benefit. I shall be much frightened, I know, but I delight in the part; indeed, Portia is my favoritest of all Shakespeare's women. She is so generous, affectionate, wise, so arch and full of fun, and such a true lady, that I think if I could but convey her to my audience as her creator has conveyed her to me, I could not fail to please them much. I think her speech to Bassanio, after his successful choice of the casket, the most lovely, tender, modest, dignified piece of true womanly feeling that was ever expressed by woman.

I certainly ought to act that character well, I do so delight in it; I know nothing of my dress. But perhaps I shall have some opportunity of writing to you again before it

is acted. Now all I have to say must be packed close, for I ought to be going to bed, and I have no more paper. I have taken two riding lessons and like it much, though it makes my bones ache a little. I go out a great deal, and that I like very much whenever there is dancing, but not else. My own home spoils me for society; perhaps I ought not to say it, but after the sort of conversation I am used to the usual jargon of society seems poor stuff; but you know when I am dancing I am "o'er all the ills of life victorious." John has taken his degree and will be back with us at Easter; Henry has left us for Paris; A—— is quite well, and almost more of a woman than I am; my father desires his love to you, to which I add mine to your eldest niece and your invalid, and remain ever your affectionately attached

F. A. K.

BLACKHEATH.

MY DEAREST H——,

I was exceedingly glad to receive your letter. You ask me for my own criticism on my Portia; you know that I think I am able to do myself tolerably impartial justice, which may be a great mistake; but whether it is or not, I request you will believe the following account in preference to any other report, newspaper or letter, public or private, whatever.

In the first place, on my benefit night (my

first appearance in the part) I was so excessively nervous about it, and so shaken with the tremendous uproar the audience made with their applause, that I consider that performance entirely out of the pale of criticism, and quite unworthy of it. I was *frightened* flAT to a degree I could hardly have believed possible after my previous experience.

I am happy to think that I improve in the part, and sincerely hope that I shall continue to do so for some time. The principal defect of my acting in it is that it wants point—brilliancy. I do not do the trial scene one bit better or worse than the most mediocre actress would, and although the comic scenes are called delightful by people whose last idea of comedy was borrowed from Miss C —— or Miss F——, my mother says (and I believe her) they are very *vapid*. The best thing I do in the play (and I think it is the best thing I do at all, except Juliet's balcony scene) is the scene of the caskets, with Bassanio, and this I think I do *well*. But the scene is of so comparatively subdued, quiet, and uneffective a nature that I think the occupants of the stage boxes and the first three rows of the pit must be the only part of the audience who know anything about my acting of that portion of the play. I like the part better than any I have yet played. I delight in the poetry, and my heart goes with every sentiment Portia utters. I have a real satisfaction in acting it, which is more than I can say for anything else I have yet had to do. Juliet, with the exception of the balcony

scene, I act; but I feel as if I *were* Portia—and how I wish I were! It is not a part that is generally much liked by actresses, or that excites much enthusiasm in the public; there are no violent situations with which to (what is called) "bring the house down." Even the climax of the piece, the trial scene, I should call, as far as Portia is concerned, rather grand and impressive than strikingly or startlingly effective; and with the exception of that, the whole character is so delicate, so nicely blended, so true, and so free from all exaggeration, that it seems to me hardly fit for a theater, much less one of our immense houses, which require acting almost as *splashy* and coarse in color and outline as the scene-painting of the stage is obliged to be. Covent Garden is too large a frame for that exquisite, harmonious piece of portrait painting. This is a long lecture, but I hope it will not be an uninteresting one to you; and now let me tell you something of my dresses, which cost my poor mother sad trouble, and were really beautiful. My first was an open skirt of the palest pink levantine, shot with white and the deepest rose-color (it was like a gown made of strawberries and cream), the folds of which, as the light fell upon them, produced the most beautiful shades of shifting hues possible. The under-dress was a very pale blue satin, brocaded with silver, of which my sleeves were likewise made; the fashion of the costume was copied from sundry pictures of Titian and Paul Veronese —the pointed body, cut square over the bosom and shoulders, with a full white

muslin shirt drawn round my neck, and wide white sleeves within the large blue and silver brocade ones. *Comprenez-vous* all this? My head was covered with diamonds (*not real*; I'm anxious for my character), and what delighted me much more was that I had jewels in the roses of my shoes. I think if I had been Portia I never would have worn any ornaments but two large diamonds in my shoe bows. You see, it shows a pretty good stock of diamonds and a careless superiority to such possessions to wear them on one's feet. Now pray don't laugh at me, I was so enchanted with my fine shoes! This was my first dress; the second was simply the doctor's black gown, with a curious little authentic black velvet hat, which was received with immense applause when I put it on; I could hardly keep my countenance at the effect my hat produced. My third dress, my own favorite, was made exactly like the first, the ample skirt gathered all round into the stomacher body; the material was white satin, trimmed with old point lace and Roman pearls, with a most beautiful crimson velvet hat, a perfect Rubens, with one sweeping white feather falling over it....

We are spending our holiday of Passion week here for the sake of a little quiet and fresh air; we had intended going to Dover, but were prevented. You ask me after my mother: she is pretty well now, but her health is extremely uncertain, and her spirits, which are likewise very variable, have so much influence over it that her condition fluctuates constantly; she has been very well,

though, for the last few days. London, I think, never agrees with her, and we have been racketing to such a degree that quiet had become not only desirable but necessary. Thank you for wishing me plenty of dancing. I have abundance of it, and like it extremely; but I fear I am very unreasonable about it, for my conscience smote me the other day when I came to consider that the night before, although my mother had stayed at a ball with me till three in the morning, I was by no means gracious in my obedience to her request that I should spare myself for my work. You see, dear H——, I am much the same as ever, still as foolishly fond of dancing, and still, I fear, almost as far from "begetting a temperance in all things" as when you and I wandered about Heath Farm together.

We met with a comical little adventure the other evening. We were wandering over the common, and encountered two gypsies. I always had desired to have my fortune told, so A—— and I each seized hold of a sibyl and listened to our fates.

After predicting to me all manner of good luck and two lovers, and foretelling that I should marry blue eyes (which I will not), the gypsy went up to my father, and began, "Pray, sir, let me tell your fortune: you have been much wronged, sir, kept out of your rights, sir, and what belonged to you, sir,—and that by them as you thought was your friends, sir." My father turned away laughing, but my mother, with a face of

amazed and amazing credulity, put her hand in her pocket, exclaiming, "I must give her something for that, though!" Isn't that delicious?

Oh, H——! how hard it is to do right and be good! But to be sure, "if to do were as easy as to know what were good to be done," etc. How I wish I could have an hour's talk with you! I have so much to say, and I have neither time nor paper to say it in; so I must leave off.

Good-by, God bless you; pray look forward to the pleasure of seeing me, and believe me ever

Your affectionate

F. A. K.

The house where I used to visit at Lea, in the neighborhood of Blackheath, was a girls' school, kept by ladies of the name of Grimani, in which my aunt Victoire Decamp was an assistant governess. These ladies were descended from a noble Venetian family, of which the Reverend Julian Young, their nephew, has given an account in his extremely interesting and amusing memoir of his father; his mother, Julia Grimani, being the sister of my kind friends, the directresses of the Blackheath school. One of these, Bellina Grimani, a charming and attractive woman, who was at one time attached to the household of the ill-fated and ill-conducted Caroline of Brunswick, Princess of Wales, died young and single. The elder Miss Grimani married a Mr. H—— within a few years. Though I have never in the intervening fifty years met with them, I have seen two ladies who

were nieces of Miss Grimani, and pupils in her school when I was a small visitor there. My principal recollections connected with the place were the superior moral excellence of one of these damsels, E —— B——, who was held up before my unworthy eyes as a model of school-girl virtue, at once to shame and encourage me; Bellina Grimani's sweet face and voice; some very fine cedar trees on the lawn, and a picture in the drawing-room of Prospero with his three-year-old Miranda in a boat in the midst of a raging sea, which work of art used to shake my childish bosom with a tragical passion of terror and pity, invariably ending in bitter tears. I was much spoiled and very happy during my visits to Lea, and had a blissful recollection of the house, garden, and whole place that justified my regret in not being able, while staying at Blackheath fifteen years after, to find or identify it.

CHAPTER XIV.

JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE, May 2d.
MY DEAREST H——,

I received your kind letter the other night (that is, morning) on my return from a ball, and read your reflections on dissipation with an attention heightened by the appropriate comment of a bad headache and abject weariness from top to toe with dancing. The way in which people *prosecute* their pleasures in this good town of London is certainly

amazing; and we are (perforce) models of moderation, compared with most of our acquaintance. I met at that very ball persons who had been to one and two parties previously, and were leaving that dance to hurry to another. Independently of the great fatigue of such a life, it seems to me so strange that when people are enjoying themselves to their hearts' content in one place, they cannot be satisfied to remain there until they wish to return home, but spend half the night in the streets, running from one house to another, working their horses to death, and wasting the precious time when they might be DANCING. You see my folly is not so great but that I have philosophy to spare for my neighbors. Let me tell you again, dear H——, how truly I rejoice in your niece's restored health. The spring, too, is the very time for such a resurrection, when every day and every hour, every cloud and every flower, offer inexhaustible matter for the capabilities of delight thus regained. Indeed, "the drops on the trees are the most beautiful of all!" [E —— T——'s exclamation during one of her first drives after the long imprisonment of her nervous malady.] A wonderful feeling of renewed hope seems to fill the heart of all created things in the spring, and even here in this smoky town it finds its way to us, inclosed as we are by brick walls, dusty streets, and all things unlovely and unnatural! I stood yesterday in the little court behind our house, where two unhappy poplars and a sycamore tree were shaking

their leaves as if in surprise at the acquisition and to make sure they had them, and looked up to the small bit of blue sky above them with pleasurable spring tears in my eyes. How I wish I were rich and could afford to be out of town now! I always dislike London, and this lovely weather gives me a sort of *mal du pays* for the country. My dearest H ——, you must not dream of leaving Ardgillan just when I am coming to see you; that would be indeed a disappointment. My father is not at home at this moment, but I shall ask him before I close this letter the exact time when we shall be in Dublin. I look forward with much pleasure to making my aunt Dall known to you. She is, I am happy to say, coming with me, for indeed she is in some sense my "all the world." You have often heard me speak of her, but it is difficult for words to do justice to one whose whole life is an uninterrupted stream of usefulness, goodness, and patient devotion to others. I know but one term that, as the old writers say, "delivers" her fully, and though it is not unfrequently applied, I think she is the only person I know who really deserves it; she is *absolutely unselfish*. I am sure, dear H——, you will excuse this panegyric, though you do not know how well it is deserved; the proof of its being so is that there is not one of us but would say the same of aunt Dall.

My father's benefit took place last Wednesday, when I acted Isabella; the house was crowded, and the play very successful; I think I played it well, and I take credit to myself for so doing, for I dislike both play

and part extremely. The worst thing I do in it is the soliloquy when I am about to stab Biron, and the best, my death. My dresses were very beautiful, and I am exceedingly glad the whole thing is over. I suppose it will be my last new part this season. I am reading with great pleasure a purified edition, just published, of the old English dramatists; the work, as far as my ignorance of the original plays will enable me to judge, seems very well executed, and I owe the editor many thanks for some happy hours spent with his book. I have just heard something which annoys me not a little: I am to prepare to act Mrs. Haller. I know very well that nobody was ever at liberty in this world to do what they liked and that only; but when I know with what task-like feeling I set about most of my work, I am both amused and provoked when people ask me if I do not delight in acting. I have not an idea what to do with that part; however, I must apply myself to it, and try; such mawkish sentiment, and such prosaic, commonplace language seem to me alike difficult to feel and to deliver.

My dear H——, I shall be in Ireland the whole month of July. I am coming first to Dublin, and shall afterward go to Cork. You really must not be away when I come, for if you are, I won't come, which is good Irish, isn't it? I do not feel as you do, at all, about the sea. Instead of depressing my spirits, it always raises them; it seems to me as if the vast power of the great element communicated itself to me. I feel *strong*, as I run by the side of the big waves, with

something of their strength, and the same species of wild excitement which thunder and lightning produce in me always affects me by the sea-shore. I never saw the sea but once violently agitated, and then I was so well pleased with its appearance that I took a boat and went out into the bustle, singing with all my might, which was the only vent I could find for my high spirits; it is true that I returned in much humiliation, very seasick, after a short "triumph of Galatea" indeed.

You ask me in one of your last why I do not send you verses any more, as I used to do, and whether I still write any. So here I send you some which I improvised the other day in your honor, and which, written hurriedly as they were, will not, I think, stand the test of any very severe criticism:—

Whene'er I recollect the happy time
When you and I held converse sweet together,
There come a thousand thoughts of sunny weather,
Of early blossoms, and the young year's prime.
Your memory lives for ever in my mind,
With all the fragrant freshness of the spring,
With odorous lime and silver hawthorn twined,
And mossy rest and woodland wandering.
There's not a thought of you but brings along

Some sunny glimpse of river, field,
and sky;
Your voice sets words to the sweet
blackbird's song,
And many a snatch of wild old
melody;
And as I date it still our love arose
'Twixt the last violet and the
earliest rose.

I never go anywhere without a book wherein I may scratch my valuable ideas, and therefore when we meet I will show you my present receptacle. I take great delight in writing, and write less incorrectly than I used to do. I have not time now to go on with this letter, and as I am anxious you should know when to expect us, I shall not defer it in the hope of making it more amusing, though I fear it is rather dull. But you will not mind that, and will believe me ever your affectionate

FANNY KEMBLE.

The arrangement of Massinger for the family library by my friend the Reverend Alexander Dyce, the learned Shakespearean editor and commentator, was my first introduction to that mine of dramatic wealth which enriched the literature of England in the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, and culminated in the genius of Shakespeare. It is by comparison with them, his contemporaries, that we arrive at a just estimate of his supremacy. I was so enchanted with these plays of Massinger's, but more especially with the one called "The Maid of Honor," that I never rested till I had obtained from the

management its revival on the stage. The part of Camiola is the only one that I ever selected for myself. "The Maid of Honor" succeeded on its first representation, but failed to attract audiences. Though less defective than most of the contemporaneous dramatic compositions, the play was still too deficient in interest to retain the favor of the public. The character of Camiola is extremely noble and striking, but that of her lover so unworthy of her that the interest she excites personally fails to inspire one with sympathy for her passion for him. The piece in this respect has a sort of moral incoherency, which appears to me, indeed, not an infrequent defect in the compositions of these great dramatic pre-Shakespearites. There is a want of psychical verisimilitude, a disjointed abruptness, in their conceptions, which, in spite of their grand treatment of separate characters and the striking force of particular passages, renders almost every one of their plays inharmonious as a whole, however fine and powerful in detached parts. Their selection of abnormal and detestable subjects is a distinct indication of intellectual weakness instead of vigor; supreme genius alone perceives the beauty and dignity of human nature and human life in their common conditions, and can bring to the surface of vulgar, every-day existence the hidden glory that lies beneath it.

The strictures contained in these girlish letters on the various plays in which I was called to perform the heroines, of course partake of the uncompromising nature of all youthful verdicts. Hard, sharp, and shallow, they never went lower than the obvious surface of things, and dealt easily, after the undoubting youthful fashion, with a main result, without any misgiving as to conflicting causes or

painful anxiety about contradictory component parts. At the beginning of life, the ignorant moral and intellectual standard alike have definite form and decided color; time, as it goes on, dissolves the outline into vague indistinctness, and reveals lights and shades so various and innumerable, that toward the end of life criticism grows diffident, opinion difficult, and positive judgment almost impossible.

My first London season was now drawing to an end, and preparations were begun for a summer tour in the provinces. There had been some talk of my beginning with Brighton, but for some reason or other this fell through.

BATH, May 31, 1830.

MY DEAR H——,

I have owed you an answer, and a most grateful one, for some time past, for your kindness in writing me so long a letter as your last; but when I assure you that, what with leave-taking, trying on dresses, making purchases, etc., etc., and all the preparations for our summer tour, this is the first moment in which I have been able to draw a long breath for the last month, I am sure you will forgive me, and believe, notwithstanding my long silence, that I was made very happy indeed by your letter. I bade Covent Garden and my dear London audience farewell on Friday last, when I acted Lady Townley for the first time. The house was crammed, and as the proprietors had fixed that night for a second benefit which they gave me, I was very glad that it was so. I was very nicely dressed, and to my own fancy acted well,

though I dare say my performance was a little flat occasionally. But considering my own physical powers, and the immense size of the theatre, I do not think I should have done better on the whole by acting more broadly; though I suppose it would have been more effective, I should have had to sacrifice something of repose and refinement to make it so. I was very sorry to leave my London audience: they welcomed my first appearance; they knew the history of our shipwrecked fortunes, and though perhaps not one individual amongst them would go a mile out of his way to serve us, there exists in them, taken collectively, a kind feeling and respect for my father, and an indulgent good-will toward me, which I do not hope to find elsewhere. I like Bath very much; I have not been here since I was six years old, when I spent a year here in hopes of being *bettered* by my aunt, Mrs. Twiss. A most forlorn hope it was. I suppose in human annals there never existed a more troublesome little brat than I was for the few years after my first appearance on this earthly stage.

This town reminds me a little of Edinburgh. How glad I shall be to see Edinburgh once more! I expect much pleasure, too, from the pleasure of my aunt Dall, who some years ago spent some very happy time in Edinburgh, and who loves it from association. And then, dear H——, I am looking forward to seeing you once more; I shall be with you somewhere in the beginning of June. I have had my first rehearsal here this morning, "Romeo and

Juliet;" the theatre is much smaller than Covent Garden, which rather inconveniences me, as a novelty, but the audience will certainly benefit by it. My fellow-laborers amuse me a good deal; their versions of Shakespeare are very droll. I wonder what your Irish ones will be. I am fortunate in my Romeo, inasmuch as he is one of my cousins; he has the family voice and manner very strongly, and at any rate does not murder the text of Shakespeare. I have no more time to spare now, for I must get my tea and go to the theater. I must tell you, though, of an instance of provincial prudery (delicacy, I suppose I ought to call it) which edified us not a little at rehearsal this morning: the Mercutio, on seeing the nurse and Peter, called out, "A sail, a sail!" and terminated the speech in a significant whisper, which, being literally inaudible, my mother, who was with me on the stage, very innocently asked, "Oh, does the gentleman leave out the shirt and the smock?" upon which we were informed that "body linen" was not so much as to be hinted at before a truly refined Bath audience. How particular we are growing—*in word!* I am much afraid my father will shock them with the speech of that scamp Mercutio in all its pristine purity and precision. Good-by, dear H——. Ever your affectionate

F. A. K.

P.S.—My mother desires to be particularly remembered to you. I want to revive Massinger's "Maid of Honor;" I want to act Camiola.

The necessity for carrying with us into the provinces a sufficient number of various parts, and especially of plays in which my father and myself could fill the principal characters, and so be tolerably independent of incompetent coadjutors, was the reason of my coming out in the play of "The Provoked Husband," before leaving London. The passage in this letter about Lady Townley sufficiently shows how bad my performance of it must have been, and how absolutely in the dark I was with regard to the real style in which the part should be played. The fine lady of my day, with the unruffled insipidity of her *low* spirits (high spirits never came near her) and the imperturbable composure of her smooth insolence, was as unlike the rantipole, racketing high-bred woman of fashion of Sir John Vanbrugh's play as the flimsy elegance of my silver-embroidered, rose-colored tulle dress was unlike the elaborate splendor of her hooped and feathered and high-heeled, patched-and-powdered magnificence, with its falling laces and standing brocades. The part of Lady Townley was not only beyond my powers, but has never been seen on the English stage since the days of Mrs. Abington and Miss Farren, the latter elegant and spirited actress being held by those who had seen both less like the original great lady than her predecessor; while even the Théâtre Français, where consummate study and reverend tradition of elder art still prevail, has lost more and more the secret of *la grande manière* in a gradual descent from the *grande dame* of Mademoiselle Contat to the pretty, graceful *femme comme il faut* of Mademoiselle Plessis; for even the exquisite Célimène of Mademoiselle Mars was but a "pale reflex" of Molière's brilliant coquette, as played by her great instructress, Contat. The truth is, that society no longer possesses or

produces that creature, and a good deal of reading, not of a usual or agreeable kind, would alone make one familiar enough with Lady Townley and her like to enable an actress of the present day to represent her with any verisimilitude. The absurd practice, too, of dressing all the serious characters of the piece in modern costume, and all the comic ones in that of the time at which it was written, renders the whole ridiculously incoherent and manifestly impossible, and destroys it as a picture of the manners of any time; for even stripped of her hoop and powder, and her more flagrant coarseness of speech, Lady Townley is still as unlike, in manners, language, and deportment, any modern lady, as she is unlike the woman of fashion of Hogarth's time, whose costume she has discarded.

The event fully justified my expectation of far less friendly audiences out of London than those I had hitherto made my appeals to. None of the personal interest that was felt for me there existed elsewhere, and I had to encounter the usual opposition, always prepared to cavil, in the provinces, at the metropolitan verdict of merit, as a mere exhibition of independent judgment; and to make good to the expectations of the country critics the highly laudatory reports of the London press, by which the provincial judges scorned to have a decision imposed upon them. Not unnaturally, therefore, I found a much less fervid enthusiasm in my audiences—who were, I dare say, quite justified in their disappointment—and a far less eulogistic tone in the provincial press with regard to my performances. Our houses, however, were always very crowded, which was the essential point, and for my own part I was quite satisfied with the notices and applause which were bestowed on me. My cousin, John

Mason, was the Romeo to whom I have referred in this letter. He was my father's sister's son, and, like so many members of our family, he and one of his brothers and his sister had made the stage their profession. He had some favorable physical qualifications for it: a rather striking face, handsome figure, good voice, and plenty of fire and energy; he was tolerably clever and well-informed, but without either imagination or refinement. My father, who thought there was the making of a good actor in him, was extremely kind to him.

GLASGOW, MONDAY, June 28, 1830.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I believe that you will have felt too well convinced that I had not had a moment to spare, to be surprised at my not having sooner acknowledged your very kind letter; nothing but the incessant occupation of my time would so long have prevented me from doing so, but I embrace the opportunity which the king's death affords me of telling you how much obliged to you I was for writing to me, and writing as you did. I have little news to return you but what concerns myself, but I shall make no coquettish excuses about that, for I really believe 'tis the subject that will interest you most of any I could find. First, then, I am very well, rather tired, and sitting at an inn window, in a dull, dark, handsome square in Glasgow. My fortnight in Edinburgh is over, and a short fortnight it has been, what with rehearsals, riding, sitting for my bust, and acting. The few hurried glimpses I have caught of my

friends have been like dreams, and now that I have parted from them, no more to meet them there certainly, the whole seems to me like mere bewilderment, and I repeat to myself in my thoughts, hardly believing it, that the next time that I visit Edinburgh I shall not find the dear companionship of my cousins nor the fond affection of Mrs. Henry Siddons. This will be a severe loss to me; Edinburgh will, I fear, be without its greatest charm, and it will remain to be proved whether these lovely scenes that I have so admired and delighted in owed all their incomparable fascination to their intrinsic beauty, or to that most pleasurable frame of mind I enjoyed at the same time, the consciousness of the kind regard of the excellent human beings among whom I lived.

You will naturally expect me to say something of my theatrical experiences in the modern Athens. Our houses have been very fine, our audiences (as is their national nature) very cold; but upon the whole I believe they were well pleased with us, notwithstanding the damping influence of the newspapers, which have one and all been unfavorable to me. The deathlike stillness of the audience, as it afforded me neither rest nor stimulus, distressed me a good deal; which, I think I need not tell you, the newspaper criticisms did not. I was surprised, in reading them, to find how very generally their strictures were confined to my external disadvantages,—my diminutive stature and defective features; and that these far-famed northern critics discussed these

rather than what I should have expected them to bestow their consideration upon, the dramatic artist's conception of character, and his (or her) execution of that conception. But had their verdicts been still more severe, I have a sufficient consolation in two notes of Sir Walter Scott's, written to the editor of one of the papers, Ballantyne, his own particular friend, which the latter sent me, and where he bears such testimony to my exertions as I do not care to transcribe, for fear my cheeks should reflect a lasting blush on my paper, but which I keep as a treasure and shall certainly show you with pride and pleasure when we meet.

Among the delightful occurrences of last week, I must record our breakfasting with Walter Scott. I was wonderfully happy. To whom, since Shakespeare, does the reading world owe so many hours of perfect, peaceful pleasure, of blessed forgetfulness of all things miserable and mean in its daily life? The party was a small but interesting one: Sir Walter and his daughter Anne, his old friend Sir Adam Ferguson and Lady Ferguson, and Miss Ferrier, the authoress of "Marriage" and "Inheritance," with both which capital books I hope, for your own sake, you are acquainted. Sir Walter was most delightful, and I even forgot all awful sense of his celebrity in his kind, cordial, and almost affectionate manner toward me. He is exceedingly like all the engravings, pictures, and busts of him with which one is familiar, and it seems strange that so varied and noble an intellect should be expressed in the

features of a shrewd, kindly, but not otherwise striking countenance. He told me several things that interested me very much; among others, his being present at the time when, after much searching, the regalia of Scotland was found locked up in a room in Edinburgh Castle, where, as he said, the dust of centuries had accumulated upon it, and where the ashes of fires lit more than two hundred years before were still lying in the grate. He told me a story that made me cry, of a poor old lady upward of eighty years of age, who belonged to one of the great Jacobite families,—she was a Maxwell,—sending to him at the time the Scottish crown was found, to implore permission to see it but for one instant; which (although in every other case the same petition had been refused) was granted to her in consideration of her great age and the vital importance she seemed to attach to it. I never shall forget his describing her when first she saw it, appearing for a moment petrified at sight of it, and then tottering forward and falling down on her knees, and weeping and wailing over these poor remains of the royalty of her country as if it had been the dead body of her child.

Sir Adam Ferguson is a delightful person, whose quick, bustling manner forms a striking contrast to Walter Scott's quiet tone of voice and deliberate enunciation I have also made acquaintance with Jeffrey, who came and called upon us the other morning, and, I hear, like some of his fellow-townsmen, complains piteously that I am not

> prettier. Indeed, I am very sorry for it, and I heartily wish I were; but I did not think him handsome either, and I wonder why he is not handsomer? though I don't care so much about his want of beauty as he seems to do about mine. But I am running on at a tremendous rate, and quite forget that I have traveled upward of forty miles to-day, and that I promised my mother, whenever I could, to go to bed early. Good-by, my dear Mrs. Jameson. I hope you will be able to make out this scrawl, and to decipher that I am yours affectionately,
>
> F. A. KEMBLE.

Of the proverbial frigidity of the Edinburgh public I had been forewarned, and of its probably disheartening effect upon myself. Mrs. Harry Siddons had often told me of the intolerable sense of depression with which it affected Mrs. Siddons, who, she said, after some of her grandest outbursts of passion, to which not a single expression of applause or sympathy had responded, exhausted and breathless with the effort she had made, would pant out in despair, under her breath, "Stupid people, stupid people!" Stupid, however, they undoubtedly were not, though, as undoubtedly, their want of excitability and demonstrativeness diminished their own pleasure by communicating itself to the great actress and partially paralyzing her powers. That this habitual reserve sometimes gave way to very violent exhibitions of enthusiasm, the more fervent from its general repression, there is no doubt; and I think it was in Edinburgh that my friend, Mr. Harness, told me the whole of the sleep-walking scene in "Macbeth" had once been so vehemently encored that

my aunt was literally obliged to go over it a second time, before the piece was allowed to proceed.

Scott's opinion of my acting, which would, of course, have been very valuable to me, let it have been what it would, was written to his friend and editor (*eheu!*), Ballantyne, who was also the editor of one of the principal Edinburgh papers, in which unfavorable criticisms of my performances had appeared, and in opposition to which Sir Walter Scott told him he was too hard upon me, and that for his part he had seen nothing so good since Mrs. Siddons. This encouraging verdict was courteously forwarded to me by Mr. Ballantyne himself, who said he was sure I would like to possess it. The first time I ever saw Walter Scott, my father and myself were riding slowly down Princes Street, up which Scott was walking; he stopped my father's horse, which was near the pavement, and desired to be introduced to me. Then followed a string of cordial invitations which previous engagements and our work at the theater forbade our accepting, all but the pressing one with which he wound up, that we would at least come and breakfast with him. The first words he addressed to me as I entered the room were, "You appear to be a very good horsewoman, which is a great merit in the eyes of an old Border-man." Every *r* in which sentence was rolled into a combination of double *u* and double *r* by his Border burr, which made it memorable to me by this peculiarity of his pleasant speech. My previous acquaintance with Miss Ferrier's admirable novels would have made me very glad of the opportunity of meeting her, and I should have thought Sir Adam Ferguson delightfully entertaining, but that I could not bear to lose, while listening to any one else, a single word spoken by Walter Scott.

I never can forget, however, the description Sir Adam Ferguson gave me of a morning he had passed with Scott at Abbotsford, which at that time was still unfinished, and, swarming with carpenters, painters, masons, and bricklayers, was surrounded with all the dirt and disorderly discomfort inseparable from the process of house-building. The room they sat in was in the roughest condition which admitted of their occupying it, at all; the raw, new chimney smoked intolerably. Out-of-doors the whole place was one chaos of bricks, mortar, scaffolding, tiles, and slates. A heavy mist shrouded the whole landscape of lovely Tweed side, and distilled in a cold, persistent, and dumb drizzle. Maida, the well-beloved staghound, kept fidgeting in and out of the room, Walter Scott every five minutes exclaiming, "Eh, Adam! the puir brute's just wearying to get out;" or, "Eh, Adam! the puir creature's just crying to come in;" when Sir Adam would open the door to the raw, chilly air for the wet, muddy hound's exit or entrance, while Scott, with his face swollen with a grievous toothache, and one hand pressed hard to his cheek, with the other was writing the inimitably humorous opening chapters of "The Antiquary," which he passed across the table, sheet by sheet, to his friend, saying, "Now, Adam, d'ye think that'll do?" Such a picture of mental triumph over outward circumstances has surely seldom been surpassed: house-builders, smoky chimney, damp draughts, restless, dripping dog, and toothache form what our friend, Miss Masson, called a "concatenation of exteriorities" little favorable to literary composition of any sort; but considered as accompaniments or inspiration of that delightfully comical beginning of "The Antiquary," they are all but incredible.

To my theatrical avocation I have been indebted for

many social pleasures and privileges; among others, for Sir Walter Scott's notice and acquaintance; but among the things it has deprived me of was the opportunity of enjoying more of his honorable and delightful intercourse. A visit to Abbotsford, urged upon us most kindly, is one of the lost opportunities of my life that I think of always with bitter regret. Sir Walter wanted us to go down and spend a week with him in the country, and our professional engagements rendered it impossible for us to do so; and there are few things in my whole life that I count greater loss than the seven days I might have passed with that admirable genius and excellent, kind man, and had to forego. I never saw Abbotsford until after its master had departed from all earthly dwelling-places. I was staying in the neighborhood, at the house of my friend, Mrs. M——, of Carolside, and went thither with her and my youngest daughter. The house was inhabited only by servants; and the housekeeper, whose charge it was to show it, waited till a sufficient number of tourists and sight-seers had collected, and then drove us all together from room to room of the house in a body, calling back those who outstripped her, and the laggers who would fain have fallen a few paces out of the sound of the dreary parrotry of her inventory of the contents of each apartment. There was his writing-table and chair, his dreadnaught suit and thick walking shoes and staff there in the drawing-room; the table, fitted like a jeweler's counter, with a glass cover, protecting and exhibiting all the royal and precious tokens of honor and admiration, in the shape of orders, boxes, miniatures, etc, bestowed on him by the most exalted worshipers of his genius, hardly to be distinguished under the thick coat of dust with which the glass was darkened. Poor Anne Scott's

portrait looked dolefully down on the strangers staring up at her, and, a glass door being open to the garden, Mrs. M—— and myself stepped out for a moment to recover from the miserable impression of sadness and desecration the whole thing produced on us; but the inexorable voice of the housekeeper peremptorily ordered us to return, as it would be, she said (and very truly), quite impossible for her to do her duty in describing the "curiosities" of the house, if visitors took upon themselves to stray about in every direction instead of keeping together and listening to what she was saying. How glad we were to escape from the sort of nightmare of the affair!

I returned there on another occasion, one of a large and merry party who had obtained permission to picnic in the grounds, but who, deterred by the threatening aspect of the skies from gypsying (as had originally been proposed) by the side of the Tweed, were allowed, by Sir Adam Ferguson's interest with the housekeeper, to assemble round the table in the dining-room of Abbotsford. Here, again, the past was so present with me as to destroy all enjoyment, and, thinking how I might have had the great good fortune to sit there with the man who had made the whole place illustrious, I felt ashamed and grieved at being there then, though my companions were all kind, merry, good-hearted people, bent upon their own and each other's enjoyment. Sir Adam Ferguson had grown very old, and told no more the vivid anecdotes of former days; and to complete my mental discomfort, on the wall immediately opposite to me hung a strange picture of Mary Stuart's head, severed from the trunk and lying on a white cloth on a table, as one sees the head of John the Baptist in the charger, in pictures of Herodias's daughter. It was a ghastly presentation of the guillotined head of a

pretty but rather common-looking French woman—a fancy picture which it certainly would not have been my fancy to have presiding over my dinner-table.

Only once after this dreary party of pleasure did I return, many years later, to Abbotsford. I was alone, and the tourist season was over, and the sad autumnal afternoon offering little prospect of my being joined by other sight-seers, I prevailed with the housekeeper, who admitted me, to let me wander about the place, without entering the house; and I spent a most melancholy hour in the garden and in pacing up and down the terrace overlooking the Tweed side. The place was no longer inhabited at all; my ringing at the gate had brought, after much delay, a servant from Mr. Hope's new residence, built at some distance from Scott's house, and from her I learned that the proprietor of Abbotsford had withdrawn to the house he had erected for himself, leaving the poet's dwelling exclusively as a place of pilgrimage for travelers and strangers, with not even a servant residing under its roof. The house abandoned to curious wayfarers; the sons and daughters, the grandson and granddaughter, every member of the founder's family dead; Mr. Hope remarried to a lady of the house of Arundel, and living in a semi-monastic seclusion in a house walled off from the tourist-haunted shrine of the great man whose memory alone was left to inhabit it,—all these circumstances filled me with indescribable sadness as I paced up and down in the gloaming, and thought of the strange passion for founding here a family of the old Border type which had obfuscated the keen, clear brain of Walter Scott, made his wonderful gifts subservient to the most futile object of ambition, driven him to the verge of disgrace and bankruptcy, embittered the evening of his laborious and glorious

career, and finally ended in this,—the utter extinction of the name he had illustrated and the family he had hoped to found. And while his noble works remain to make his memory ever loved and honored, this *Brummagem* mediæval mansion, this mock feudal castle with its imitation baronial hall (upon a diminutive scale) hung round with suits of armor, testifies to the utter perversity of good sense and good taste resulting from this one mental infirmity, this craving to be a Border chieftain of the sixteenth century instead of an Edinburgh lawyer of the nineteenth, and his preference for the distinction of a petty landholder to that of the foremost genius of his age. Mr. Combe, in speaking of this feudal insanity of Scott and the piteous havoc it made of his life, told me that at one time he and Ballantyne, with whom he had entered into partnership, were staving off imminent ruin by indorsing and accepting each other's bills, and carried on that process to the extremest verge compatible with honesty. What a history of astounding success and utter failure!

GLASGOW, July 3, 1830.

You will, ere this, my dear Mrs. Jameson, have received my very tardy reply to your first kind letter. I got your second last night at the theater, just after I *had given away my jewels to Mr. Beverley*. I was much gratified by your profession of affection for me, for though I am not over-desirous of public admiration and approbation, I am anxious to secure the good-will of individuals whose intellect I admire, and on whose character I can with confidence rely. Your letter, however, made me uncomfortable in some

respects; you seem unhappy and perplexed. I am sure you will believe me when I say that, without the remotest thought of intruding on the sacredness of private annoyances and distresses, I most sincerely sympathize in your uneasiness, whatever may be its cause, and earnestly pray that the cloud, which the two or three last times we met in London hung so heavily on your spirits, may pass away. It is not for me to say to you, "Patience," my dear Mrs. Jameson; you have suffered too much to have neglected that only remedy of our afflictions, but I trust Heaven will make it an efficacious one to you, and erelong send you less need of it. I am glad you see my mother often, and very glad that to assist your recollection of me you find interest and amusement in discussing the fitting up of my room with her. Pray do not forget that the drawing you made of the rooms in James Street is mine, and that when you visit me in my new abode it will be pleasant to have that remembrance before us of a place where we have spent some hours very happily together.

What you say of Mrs. N—— only echoes my own thoughts of her. She is a splendid creature, nobly endowed every way; too nobly to become through mere frivolity and foolish vanity the mark of the malice and envy of such *things* as she is surrounded by, and who will all eagerly embrace the opportunity of slandering one so immeasurably their superior in every respect. I do not know much of her, but I feel deeply interested in her; not precisely with the

interest inspired by loving or even liking, but with that feeling of admiring solicitude with which one must regard a person so gifted, so tempted, and in such a position as hers. I am glad that lovely sister of hers is married, though matrimony in that world is not always the securest haven for a woman's virtue or happiness; it is sometimes in that society the reverse of an "honorable estate."

The poor king's death gave me a holiday on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and we eagerly embraced the opportunity its respite afforded us of visiting Loch Lomond and the entrance to Loch Long. As almost my first thought when we reached the lake was, "How can people attempt to describe such places?" I shall not terminate my letter with "smooth expanses of sapphire-tinted waves," or "purple screens of heath-clad hills rising one above another into the cloudless sky." A volume might be written on the mere color of the water, and give no idea of it, though you are the very person whose imagination, aided by all that you've seen, would best realize such a scene from description. It was heavenly, and we had such a perfect day! I prefer, however, the glimpse we had of Loch Long to what we saw of Loch Lomond. I brought away an appropriate nosegay from my trip, a white rose from Dumbarton, in memory of Mary Stuart, an oak branch from Loch Lomond, and a handful of heather, for which I fought with the bees on the rocky shore of Loch Long.

I like my Glasgow audience better than my

> Edinburgh one; they are not so cold. I look for a pleasant audience in your country, for which we set out to-morrow, I believe. My aunt desires to be remembered to you, and so does my father, and bids me add, in answer to your modest doubt, that you are a person to be always remembered with pleasure and esteem. I am glad you did not like my Bath miniature; indeed, it was not likely that you would.
>
> Believe me always yours affectionately,
>
> F. A. K.

During our summer tour my mother, who had remained in London, superintended the preparation of a new house, to which we removed on our return to town. My brother Henry's schooling at Westminster was over, which had been the reason for our taking the house at Buckingham Gate, and, though it had proved a satisfactory residence in many respects, we were glad to exchange it for the one to which we now went, which had many associations that made it agreeable to my father, having been my uncle John's home for many years, and connected with him in the memory of my parents. It was the corner house of Great Russell Street and Montague Place, and, since we left it, has been included in the new court-yard of the British Museum (which was next door to it) and become the librarian's quarters, our friend Panizzi being its first occupant afterward. It was a good, comfortable, substantial house, the two pleasantest rooms of which, to me, were the small apartment on the ground floor, lined with books from floor to ceiling, and my own peculiar lodging in the upper regions,

which, thanks to my mother's kindness and taste, was as pretty a bower of elegant comfort as any young spinster need have desired. There I chiefly spent my time, pursuing my favorite occupations, or in the society of my own especial friends: my dear H—— S ——, when she was in London; Mrs. Jameson, who often climbed thither for an hour's pleasant discussion of her book on Shakespeare; and a lady with whom I now formed a very close intimacy, which lasted till her death, my dear E—— F——.

I had the misfortune to lose the water-color sketches which Mrs. Jameson had made of our two drawing-rooms in James Street, Buckingham Gate. They were very pretty and skillful specimens of a difficult kind of subject, and valuable as her work, no less than as tokens of her regard for me. The beautiful G—— S ——, to whose marriage I have referred, had she not been a sister of her sisters, would have been considered a wit; and, in spite of this, was the greatest beauty of her day. She always reminded me of what an American once said in speaking of a countrywoman of his, that she was so lovely that when she came into the room she took his breath away. While I was in Bath I was asked by a young artist to sit for my miniature. His portrait had considerable merit as a piece of delicate, highly finished workmanship; it was taken in the part of Portia, and engraved; but I think no one, without the label underneath, would have imagined in it even the intention of my portrait. Whether or not the cause lay in my own dissimilar expressions and dissimilar aspects at different times, I do not know; but if a collection was made of the likenesses that have been taken of me, to the number of nearly thirty, nobody would ever imagine that they were intended to represent the same person. Certainly, my

Bath miniature produced a version of my face perfectly unfamiliar to myself and most of my friends who saw it.

CHAPTER XV.

DUBLIN, ——.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I received your third kind letter yesterday morning, and have no more time to-day than will serve to inclose my answer to your second, which reached me and was replied to at Glasgow; owing to your not having given me your address, I had kept it thus long in my desk. You surely said nothing in that letter of yours that the kindest good feeling could take exception to, and therefore need hardly, I think, have been so anxious about its possible miscarriage. However, "Misery makes one acquainted with strange bed-fellows," and I am afraid distrust is one of them. You will be glad, I know, to hear that I have been successful here, and perhaps amused to know that when your letter reached me yesterday, I was going, *en lionne*, to a great dinner-party at Lady Morgan's. You ask me for advice about your Shakespeare work, but advice is what I have no diploma for bestowing; and such suggestions as I might venture, were I sitting by your side with Shakespeare in my hand, and which

might furnish pleasant matter of converse and discussion, are hardly solid enough for transmission by post.

I have been reading the "Tempest" all this afternoon, with eyes constantly dim with those delightful tears which are called up alike by the sublimity and harmony of nature, and the noblest creations of genius. I cannot imagine how you should ever feel discouraged in your work; it seems to me it must be its own perpetual stimulus and reward. Is not Miranda's exclamation, "O brave new world, that has such people in it!" on the first sight of the company of villainous men who ruined her and her father, with the royal old magician's comment, "'Tis new to thee!" exquisitely pathetic? I must go to my work; 'tis "The Gamester" to-night; I wish it were over. Good-by, my dear Mrs. Jameson. Thank you for your kind letters; I value them very much, and am your affectionate

F. KEMBLE.

P.S.—I am very happy here, in the society of an admirable person who is as good as she is highly gifted,—a rare union,—and who, moreover, loves me well, which adds much, in my opinion, to her other merits. I mean my friend Miss S——.

My only reminiscence connected with this dinner at Lady Morgan's is of her kind and comical zeal to show me an Irish jig, performed *secundum artem*, when she found that I had never seen her national dance. She jumped up, declaring nobody danced it as

well as herself, and that I should see it immediately; and began running through the rooms, with a gauze scarf that had fallen from her shoulders fluttering and trailing after her, calling loudly for a certain young member of the viceregal staff, who was among the guests invited to a large evening party after the dinner, to be her partner. But the gentleman had already departed (for it was late), and I might have gone to my grave unenlightened upon the subject of jigs if I had not seen one performed, to great perfection, by some gay young members of a family party, while I was staying at Worsley with my friends Lord and Lady Ellesmere, whose children and guests got up an impromptu ball on the occasion of Lady Octavia Grosvenor's birthday, in the course of which the Irish national dance was performed with great spirit, especially by Lord Mark Kerr and Lady Blanche Egerton. It resembles a good deal the saltarello of the Italian peasants in rhythm and character; and a young Irishman, servant of some friends of mine, covered himself with glory by the manner in which he joined a party of Neapolitan tarantella dancers, merely by dint of his proficiency in his own native jig. A great many years after my first acquaintance with Lady Morgan in Dublin, she renewed our intercourse by calling on me in London, where she was spending the season, and where I was then living with my father, who had become almost entirely deaf and was suffering from a most painful complication of maladies. My relations with the lively and amusing Irish authoress consisted merely in an exchange of morning visits, during one of which, after talking to me with voluble enthusiasm of Cardinal Gonsalvi and Lord Byron, whose portraits hung in her room, and who, she assured me, were her two pre-eminent heroes, she plied me with a

breathless series of pressing invitations to breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, evening parties, to meet everybody in London that I did and did not know, and upon my declining all these offers of hospitable entertainment (for I had at that time withdrawn myself entirely from society, and went nowhere), she exclaimed, "But what in the world do you *do* with yourself in the evening?" "Sit with my father, or remain alone," said I. "Ah!" cried the society-loving little lady, with an exasperated Irish accent, "come out of that *sphare* of solitary self-sufficiency *ye* live in, do! Come to me!" Which objurgation certainly presented in a most ludicrous light my life of very sad seclusion, and sent us both into fits of laughter.

I have alluded to a friendship which I formed soon after my appearance on the stage with Miss E—— F ——. She was the daughter of Mr. F——, for many years member for Tiverton. Miss F—— and I perpetuated a close attachment already traditional between our families, her mother having been Mrs. Siddons's dearest friend. Indeed, for many years of her life, Mrs. F—— seems to me to have postponed the claims even of her husband and children upon her time and attention, to her absolute devotion to her celebrated idol. Mr. F—— was a dutiful member of the House of Commons, and I suppose his boy was at school and his girl too young to demand her mother's constant care and superintendence, at the time when she literally gave up the whole of her existence to Mrs. Siddons during the London season, passing her days in her society and her evenings in her dressing-room at the theater, whenever Mrs. Siddons acted. Miss F—— and myself could not dedicate ourselves with any such absolute exclusiveness to each other. Neither of our mothers would have consented to any such absorbing

arrangement, for which a certain independence of family ties would have been indispensable; but within the limits which our circumstances allowed we were as devoted to each other as my aunt Siddons and Mrs. F—— had been, and our intercourse was as full and frequent as possible. E—— F—— was not pretty, but her face was expressive of both intelligence and sensibility; her figure wanted height, but was slender and graceful; her head was too small for powerful though not far keen and sagacious intellect, or for beauty. The general impression she produced was that of well-born and well-bred refinement, and she was as eager, light, and rapid in her movements as a greyhound, of which elegant animal the whole character of her appearance constantly reminded me.

Mr. F—— had a summer residence close to the picturesque town of Southampton, called Bannisters, the name of which charming place calls up the image of my friend swinging in her hammock under the fine trees of her lawn, or dexterously managing her boat on its tiny lake, and brings back delightful hours and days spent in happy intercourse with her. Mr. F—— had himself planned the house, which was as peculiar as it was comfortable and elegant. A small vestibule, full of fine casts from the antique (among others a rare original one of the glorious Neapolitan Psyche, given to his brother-in-law, Mr. William Hamilton, by the King of Naples), formed the entrance. The oval drawing-room, painted in fresco by Mr. F——, recalled by its Italian scenes their wanderings in the south of Europe. In the adjoining room were some choice pictures, among others a fine copy of one of Titian's Venuses, and in the dining-room an equally good one of his Venus and Adonis. The place of honor, however, in this

room was reserved for a life-size, full-length portrait of Mrs. Siddons, which Lawrence painted for Mrs. F —— and which is now in the National Gallery,—a production so little to my taste both as picture and portrait that I used to wonder how Mrs. F—— could tolerate such a representation of her admirable friend. The principal charm of Bannisters, however, was the garden and grounds, which, though of inconsiderable extent, were so skillfully and tastefully laid out, that their bounds were always invisible. The lawn and shrubberies were picturesquely irregular, and still retained some kindred, in their fine oaks and patches of heather, to the beautiful wild common which lay immediately beyond their precincts. A pretty piece of ornamental water was set in flowering bushes and well-contrived rockery, and in a more remote part of the grounds a little dark pond reflected wild-wood banks and fine overspreading elms and beeches. The small park had some charming clumps and single trees, and there was a twilight walk of gigantic overarching laurels, of a growth that dated back to a time of considerable antiquity, when the place had been part of an ancient monastery. Above all, I delighted in my friend E——'s favorite flower-garden, where her fine eye for color reveled in grouping the softest, gayest, and richest masses of bloom, and where in a bay of mossy turf, screened round with evergreens, the ancient vision of love and immortality, the antique Cupid and Psyche, watched over the fragrant, flowery domain.

Sweet Bannisters! to me for ever a refuge of consolation and sympathy in seasons of trial and sorrow, of unfailing kindly welcome and devoted constant affection; haven of pleasant rest and calm repose whenever I resorted to it! How sad was my

last visit to that once lovely and beloved place, now passed into the hands of strangers, deserted, divided, desecrated, where it was painful even to call up the image of her whose home it once was! The last time I saw Bannisters the grounds were parceled out and let for grazing inclosures to various Southampton townspeople. The house was turned into a boys' boarding-school, and, as I hurried away, the shouts and acclamations of a roaring game of cricket came to me from the inclosure that had been E—— F——'s flower-garden; but though I was crying bitter tears the lads seemed very happy; the fashion of this world passeth away.

Before leaving Dublin for Liverpool, I had the pleasure of visiting my friend Miss S—— in her home, where I returned several times, and was always welcomed with cordial kindness. My last visit there took place during the Crimean war. My friend Mrs. T—— had become a widow, and her second son, now General T——, was with his regiment in the very front of the danger, and also surrounded by the first deadly outbreak of the cholera, which swooped with such fatal fury upon our troops at the opening of the campaign. I can never forget the pathetic earnestness and solemnity of the prayers read aloud by that poor mother for the safety of our army, nor the accent with which she implored God's protection upon those exposed to such imminent peril in the noble discharge of their duty. That son was preserved to that mother, having manfully done his part in the face of the twofold death that threatened him.

There was a slight circumstance attending Mrs. T ——'s household devotions that charmed me greatly, and that I have never seen repeated anywhere else

where I have assisted at family prayers. The servants, as they left the hall, bowed and courtesied to their mistress, who returned their salutation with a fine, old-fashioned courtesy, full of a sweet, kindly grace, that was delightful. This act of civility to her dependents was to me a perfect expression of Mrs. T——'s real antique toryism, as well as of her warm-hearted, motherly kindness of nature.

Ardgillan Castle (I think by courtesy, for it was eminently, peaceful in character, in spite of the turret inhabited by my dear "moping owl," H——) was finely situated on an eminence from which the sea, with the picturesque fishing village of Skerries stretching into it on one side, and the Morne Mountains fading in purple distance beyond its blue waters on the other, formed a beautiful prospect. A pine wood on one side of the grounds led down to the foot of the grassy hill upon which the house stood, and to a charming wilderness called the Dell: a sylvan recess behind the rocky margin of the sea, from which it was completely sheltered, whose hollow depth, carpeted with grass and curtained with various growth of trees, was the especial domain of my dear H——. A crystal spring of water rose in this "bosky dell," and answered with its tiny tinkle the muffled voice of the ocean breaking on the shore beyond. The place was perfectly lovely, and here we sat together and devised, as the old word was, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things above heaven, and things below earth, and things quite beyond ourselves, till we were well-nigh beside ourselves; and it was not the fault of my metaphysical friend, but of my utter inability to keep pace with her mental processes, if our argument did not include every point of that which Milton has assigned to the forlorn disputants of his infernal

regions. My departure from Dublin ended these happy hours of companionship, and I exchanged that academe and my beloved Plato in petticoats for my play-house work at Liverpool. The following letter was in answer to one Mrs. Jameson wrote me upon the subject of a lady whom she had recommended to my mother as a governess for my sister, who was now in her sixteenth year.

LIVERPOOL, August 16, 1830.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

Were it not that I have a great opinion both of your kindness and reasonableness, I should feel rather uncomfortable at the period which has elapsed since I ought to have written to you; but I am very sorry not to have been able sooner to reply to your last kind letter. I shall begin by answering that which interested me most in it, which you will easily believe was what regarded my dear A—— and the person into whose hands she is about to be committed. In proportion to the value of the gem is the dread one feels of the flaws and injuries it may receive in the process of cutting and polishing; and this, of course, not in this case alone, but that of every child who still is parent to the man (or woman). My mother said in one of her letters, "I have engaged a lady to be A——'s governess." Of course the *have* must make the expression of regret or anxiety undesirable, since both are unavailing. I hope it is the lady you spoke of in your letter to me, for I like very much the description you give of her, and in answer to the doubt you express

as to whether *I* could be pleased with a person wanting in superficial brilliancy and refinement of intellect, I can reply unequivocally *yes*. I could be well pleased with such a person for my own companion, if the absence of such qualities were atoned for by sound judgment and sterling principle; and I am certain that such a person is best calculated to undertake the task which she is to perform in our house with good effect. The defect of our home education is that from the mental tendencies of all of us, no less than from our whole mode of life, the more imaginative and refined intellectual qualities are fostered in us in preference to our reasoning powers. We have all excitable natures, and, whether in head or heart, that is a disadvantage. The unrestrained indulgence of feeling is as injurious to moral strength as the undue excess of fancy is to mental vigor. I think young people would always be the better for the influence of persons of strong sense, rather than strong sensibility, who, by fortifying their reason, correct any tendency to that morbid excitability which is so dangerous to happiness or usefulness.

I do not, of course, mean that one can eradicate any element of the original character—that I believe to be impossible; nor is direct opposition to natural tendencies of much use, for that is really cultivating qualities by resistance; but by encouraging other faculties, and by putting aside all that has a tendency to weaken and enervate, the mind will assume a robust and healthy tone,

and the real feelings will acquire strength by being under reasonable control and by the suppression of factitious ones. A——'s education in point of accomplishments and general cultivation of taste and intellect is already fairly advanced; and the lady who is, I hope, now to be her companion and directress will be none the worse for wanting the merely ornamental branches of culture, provided she holds them at their due value, and neither *under* nor *over* estimates them because she is without them. I hope she is gentle and attractive in her manners, for it is essential that one should like as well as respect one's teachers; and should these qualities be added to the character you give of her, I am sure I should like her for a governess very much myself. You see by the room this subject has occupied in my letter how much it fills in my mind; human souls, minds, and bodies are precious and wonderful things, and to fit the whole creature for its proper aim here and hereafter, a solemn and arduous work.

Now to other matters. You reproach me very justly for my stupid oversight; I forgot to tell you which name appeared to me best for your book; the fact is, I flew off into ecstasies about the work itself, and gave you, I believe, a tirade about the "Tempest" instead of the opinion you asked. I agree with you that there is much in the name of a work; it is almost as desirable that a book should be well called as that it should be well written; a promising title-page is like an agreeable face, an inducement to further acquaintance,

and an earnest of future pleasure. For myself, I prefer "Characters of Shakespeare's Women;" it is shorter, and I think will look better than the other in print.

I have been spending a few happy days, previous to my departure from Ireland, in a charming place and in the companionship of a person I love dearly. All my powers of enjoyment have been constantly occupied, and I have had a breathing-time of rest and real pleasure before I recommence my work. Such seasons are like angel's visits, but I suppose one ought to rejoice that they are allowed us at all, rather than complain of their brevity and infrequency. I am getting weary of wandering, and long to be once more settled at home.

What say you to this French revolution? Have not they made good use of their time, that in so few years from their last bloody national convulsion men's minds should so have advanced and expanded in France as to enable the people to overturn the government and change the whole course of public affairs with such comparative moderation and small loss of, life? I was still in Dublin when the news of the recent events in France reached us, and I never witnessed anything so like tipsiness as Lady Morgan's delight at it. I believe she wished herself a Frenchwoman with all her heart, and she declared she would go over as soon as her next work, which is in the hands of the publisher, was out. Were I a man, I should have been well pleased to have been in

France some weeks ago; the rising of the nation against oppression and abuse, and the creating of a new and better state of things without any outbreak of popular excess, must have been a fine thing to see. But as a woman, incapable of mixing personally in such scenes, I would rather have the report of them at a distance than witness them as a mere inactive spectator; for though the loss of life has been comparatively small, considering the great end that has been achieved, it must be horrible to see bloodshed, even that of a single individual. I believe I am a great coward. I shall not close this to-night, but wait till to-morrow, to tell you how my first appearance here goes off.

TUESDAY, August 17th.

We had a very fine house indeed last night, and everything went off remarkably well. I had every reason to be satisfied with the audience, who, though proverbially a cold one, were exceedingly enthusiastic in their applause, which, I suppose, is the best indication that they were satisfied with me. Good-by, my dear Mrs. Jameson; believe me yours ever truly,

F. A. K.

The intention of engaging a governess for my sister was not carried out, and she was taken to Paris and placed under the charge of Mrs. Foster, wife of the chaplain of the British embassy, under whose care she pursued her general education, while with the tuition of the celebrated Bordogni, the first singing-

master of the day, she cultivated her fine voice and developed her musical genius.

The French Revolution of 1830, which placed Louis Philippe of Orleans on the throne, and sent Charles X. to end his days in an obscure corner of Germany, was the first of four revolutions which I have lived to witness; and since then I have often thought of a lady who, during the next political catastrophe, by which Louis Philippe was shaken out of his seat, showing Mrs. Grote the conveniences of a charming apartment in a central part of Paris, said, "Voici mon salon, voici ma salle à manger, et voyez comme c'est commode! De cette fenêtre je vois mes révolutions." The younger Bourbon of the Orleans branch had learned part of the lesson of government (of which even the most intelligent of that race seem destined never to learn the whole) in democratic America and democratic Switzerland. Perhaps it was in these two essentially *bourgeois* countries that he learned the only virtues that distinguished him as the *Roi Bourgeois, par excellence*.

HEATON PARK, September 18, 1830.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

Were it not that I should be ashamed to look you in the face when we meet, which I hope will now be soon, I should be much tempted to defer thanking you for your last kind letter until that period, for I am at this moment in the bustle of three departures. My mother arrived in Manchester this morning, whence my aunt Dall starts to-night for Buckinghamshire, and my father to-morrow morning at seven o'clock for London, and at eight my mother and myself start for

Liverpool. I am most anxious to be there for the opening of the railroad, which takes place on Wednesday. I act in Manchester on Friday, and after that we shall spend some days with Lord and Lady W——, at their seat near there; and then I return to London to begin my winter campaign, when I hope to see you less oppressed with anxiety and vexation than you were when we parted there. And now, what shall I say to you? My life for the last three weeks has been so hurried and busy that, while I have matter for many long letters, I have hardly time for condensation; you know what Madame de Sévigné says, "Si j'avais eu plus de temps, je t'aurais écrit moins longuement." I have been sight-seeing and acting for the last month, and the first occupation is really the more exhausting of the two. I will give you a *carte*, and when we meet you shall call upon me for a detail of any or all of its contents.

I have seen the fine, picturesque old town of Chester; I have seen Liverpool, its docks, its cemetery, its railway, on which I was flown away with by a steam-engine, at the rate of five and thirty miles an hour; I have seen Manchester, power-looms, spinning-jennies, cotton factories, etc.; I have stayed at the pleasant modern mansion of Heaton; I have visited Hopwood Hall, built in the reign of Edward the First, and still retaining its carved old oaken chimneys and paneled chambers and latticed windows, and intricate ups and downs of internal architecture, to present use apparently as purposeless and inconvenient as if one was

living in a cat's-cradle. I have seen a rush-bearing with its classical morris dance, executed in honor of some antique observance by the country folk of Lancashire, with whom this commemoration, but no knowledge of its original significance, remains. I have seen Birmingham, its button-making, pin-making, plating, stamping, etc.; I have seen Aston Hall, an old house two miles from the town, and two hundred from everything in it, where Charles the First slept after the battle of Edge Hill, and whose fine old staircase still retains the marks of Cromwell's cannon,—which house, moreover, possesses an oaken gallery one hundred and odd feet long, hung with old portraits, one of the most delightful apartments imaginable. How I did sin in envy, and long for that nice room to walk up and down and dream and poetize in; but as I know of no earthly way of compassing this desirable acquisition but offering myself in exchange for it to its present possessor (who might not think well of the bargain), *il n'y faut plus penser*. Moreover, as the grapes are sour, I conclude that upon the whole it might not be an advantageous one for me. I am at this moment writing in a drawing-room full of people, at Heaton (Lord W——'s place), taking up my pen to talk to you and laying it down to talk to others. I must now, however, close my double and divided conversation, because I have not brains enough to play at two games at once. I am ever yours, very sincerely,

F. A. K.

While we were acting at Liverpool an experimental trip was proposed upon the line of railway which was being constructed between Liverpool and Manchester, the first mesh of that amazing iron net which now covers the whole surface of England and all the civilized portions of the earth. The Liverpool merchants, whose far-sighted self-interest prompted them to wise liberality, had accepted the risk of George Stephenson's magnificent experiment, which the committee of inquiry of the House of Commons had rejected for the government. These men, of less intellectual culture than the Parliament members, had the adventurous imagination proper to great speculators, which is the poetry of the counting-house and wharf, and were better able to receive the enthusiastic infection of the great projector's sanguine hope that the Westminster committee. They were exultant and triumphant at the near completion of the work, though, of course, not without some misgivings as to the eventual success of the stupendous enterprise. My father knew several of the gentlemen most deeply interested in the undertaking, and Stephenson having proposed a trial trip as far as the fifteen-mile viaduct, they, with infinite kindness, invited him and permitted me to accompany them; allowing me, moreover, the place which I felt to be one of supreme honor, by the side of Stephenson. All that wonderful history, as much more interesting than a romance as truth is stranger than fiction, which Mr. Smiles's biography of the projector has given in so attractive a form to the world, I then heard from his own lips. He was a rather stern-featured man, with a dark and deeply marked countenance; his speech was strongly inflected with his native Northumbrian accent, but the fascination of that story told by himself, while his tame dragon

flew panting along his iron pathway with us, passed the first reading of the "Arabian Nights," the incidents of which it almost seemed to recall. He was wonderfully condescending and kind in answering all the questions of my eager ignorance, and I listened to him with eyes brimful of warm tears of sympathy and enthusiasm, as he told me of all his alternations of hope and fear, of his many trials and disappointments, related with fine scorn how the "Parliament men" had badgered and baffled him with their book-knowledge, and how, when at last they thought they had smothered the irrepressible prophecy of his genius in the quaking depths of Chatmoss, he had exclaimed, "Did ye ever see a boat float on water? I will make my road float upon Chatmoss!" The well-read Parliament men (some of whom, perhaps, wished for no railways near their parks and pleasure-grounds) could not believe the miracle, but the shrewd Liverpool merchants, helped to their faith by a great vision of immense gain, did; and so the railroad was made, and I took this memorable ride by the side of its maker, and would not have exchanged the honor and pleasure of it for one of the shares in the speculation.

LIVERPOOL, August 26th.

MY DEAR H——,

A common sheet of paper is enough for love, but a foolscap extra can alone contain a railroad and my ecstasies. There was once a man, who was born at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, who was a common coal-digger; this man had an immense constructiveness, which displayed itself in pulling his watch to pieces and putting it together again; in making a

pair of shoes when he happened to be some days without occupation; finally—here there is a great gap in my story—it brought him in the capacity of an engineer before a committee of the House of Commons, with his head full of plans for constructing a railroad from Liverpool to Manchester. It so happened that to the quickest and most powerful perceptions and conceptions, to the most indefatigable industry and perseverance, and the most accurate knowledge of the phenomena of nature as they affect his peculiar labors, this man joined an utter want of the "gift of the gab;" he could no more explain to others what he meant to do and how he meant to do it, than he could fly; and therefore the members of the House of Commons, after saying, "There is rock to be excavated to a depth of more than sixty feet, there are embankments to be made nearly to the same height, there is a swamp of five miles in length to be traversed, in which if you drop an iron rod it sinks and disappears: how will you do all this?" and receiving no answer but a broad Northumbrian "I can't tell you how I'll do it, but I can tell you I *will* do it," dismissed Stephenson as a visionary. Having prevailed upon a company of Liverpool gentlemen to be less incredulous, and having raised funds for his great undertaking, in December of 1826 the first spade was struck into the ground. And now I will give you an account of my yesterday's excursion. A party of sixteen persons was ushered, into a large court-yard, where, under cover, stood several

carriages of a peculiar construction, one of which was prepared for our reception. It was a long-bodied vehicle with seats placed across it, back to back; the one we were in had six of these benches, and was a sort of uncovered *char à banc*. The wheels were placed upon two iron bands, which formed the road, and to which they are fitted, being so constructed as to slide along without any danger of hitching or becoming displaced, on the same principle as a thing sliding on a concave groove. The carriage was set in motion by a mere push, and, having received, this impetus, rolled with us down an inclined plane into a tunnel, which forms the entrance to the railroad. This tunnel is four hundred yards long (I believe), and will be lighted by gas. At the end of it we emerged from darkness, and, the ground becoming level, we stopped. There is another tunnel parallel with this, only much wider and longer, for it extends from the place which we had now reached, and where the steam-carriages start, and which is quite out of Liverpool, the whole way under the town, to the docks. This tunnel is for wagons and other heavy carriages; and as the engines which are to draw the trains along the railroad do not enter these tunnels, there is a large building at this entrance which is to be inhabited by steam-engines of a stationary turn of mind, and different constitution from the traveling ones, which are to propel the trains through the tunnels to the terminus in the town, without going out of their houses themselves. The length of the tunnel parallel

to the one we passed through is (I believe) two thousand two hundred yards. I wonder if you are understanding one word I am saying all this while! We were introduced to the little engine which was to drag us along the rails. She (for they make these curious little fire-horses all mares) consisted of a boiler, a stove, a small platform, a bench, and behind the bench a barrel containing enough water to prevent her being thirsty for fifteen miles, —the whole machine not bigger than a common fire-engine. She goes upon two wheels, which are her feet, and are moved by bright steel legs called pistons; these are propelled by steam, and in proportion as more steam is applied to the upper extremities (the hip-joints, I suppose) of these pistons, the faster they move the wheels; and when it is desirable to diminish the speed, the steam, which unless suffered to escape would burst the boiler, evaporates through a safety-valve into the air. The reins, bit, and bridle of this wonderful beast is a small steel handle, which applies or withdraws the steam from its legs or pistons, so that a child might manage it. The coals, which are its oats, were under the bench, and there was a small glass tube affixed to the boiler, with water in it, which indicates by its fullness or emptiness when the creature wants water, which is immediately conveyed to it from its reservoirs. There is a chimney to the stove, but as they burn coke there is none of the dreadful black smoke which accompanies the progress of a steam vessel. This snorting little animal, which I

felt rather inclined to pat, was then harnessed to our carriage, and, Mr. Stephenson having taken me on the bench of the engine with him, we started at about ten miles an hour. The steam-horse being ill adapted for going up and down hill, the road was kept at a certain level, and appeared sometimes to sink below the surface of the earth, and sometimes to rise above it. Almost at starting it was cut through the solid rock, which formed a wall on either side of it, about sixty feet high. You can't imagine how strange it seemed to be journeying on thus, without any visible cause of progress other than the magical machine, with its flying white breath and rhythmical, unvarying pace, between these rocky walls, which are already clothed with moss and ferns and grasses; and when I reflected that these great masses of stone had been cut asunder to allow our passage thus far below the surface of the earth, I felt as if no fairy tale was ever half so wonderful as what I saw. Bridges were thrown from side to side across the top of these cliffs, and the people looking down upon us from them seemed like pigmies standing in the sky. I must be more concise, though, or I shall want room. We were to go only fifteen miles, that distance being sufficient to show the speed of the engine, and to take us on to the most beautiful and wonderful object on the road. After proceeding through this rocky defile, we presently found ourselves raised upon embankments ten or twelve feet high; we then came to a moss, or swamp, of

considerable extent, on which no human foot could tread without sinking, and yet it bore the road which bore us. This had been the great stumbling-block in the minds of the committee of the House of Commons; but Mr. Stephenson has succeeded in overcoming it. A foundation of hurdles, or, as he called it, basket-work, was thrown over the morass, and the interstices were filled with moss and other elastic matter. Upon this the clay and soil were laid down, and the road does float, for we passed over it at the rate of five and twenty miles an hour, and saw the stagnant swamp water trembling on the surface of the soil on either side of us. I hope you understand me. The embankment had gradually been rising higher and higher, and in one place, where the soil was not settled enough to form banks, Stephenson had constructed artificial ones of wood-work, over which the mounds of earth were heaped, for he said that though the wood-work would rot, before it did so the banks of earth which covered it would have been sufficiently consolidated to support the road.

We had now come fifteen miles, and stopped where the road traversed a wide and deep valley. Stephenson made me alight and led me down to the bottom of this ravine, over which, in order to keep his road level, he has thrown a magnificent viaduct of nine arches, the middle one of which is seventy feet high, through which we saw the whole of this beautiful little valley. It was lovely and wonderful beyond all words. He here told me many curious things respecting this ravine:

how he believed the Mersey had once rolled through it; how the soil had proved so unfavorable for the foundation of his bridge that it was built upon piles, which had been driven into the earth to an enormous depth; how, while digging for a foundation, he had come to a tree bedded in the earth fourteen feet below the surface of the ground; how tides are caused, and how another flood might be caused; all of which I have remembered and noted down at much greater length than I can enter upon it here. He explained to me the whole construction of the steam-engine, and said he could soon make a famous engineer of me, which, considering the wonderful things he has achieved, I dare not say is impossible. His way of explaining himself is peculiar, but very striking, and I understood, without difficulty, all that he said to me. We then rejoined the rest of the party, and the engine having received its supply of water, the carriage was placed behind it, for it cannot turn, and was set off at its utmost speed, thirty-five miles an hour, swifter than a bird flies (for they tried the experiment with a snipe). You cannot conceive what that sensation of cutting the air was; the motion is as smooth as possible, too. I could either have read or written; and as it was, I stood up, and with my bonnet off "drank the air before me." The wind, which was strong, or perhaps the force of our own thrusting against it, absolutely weighed my eyelids down. [I remember a similar experience to this, the first time I attempted to go behind

the sheet of the cataract of Niagara; the wind coming from beneath the waterfall met me with such direct force that it literally bore down my eyelids, and I had to put off the attempt of penetrating behind the curtain of foam till another day, when that peculiar accident; was less directly hostile to me in its conditions.] When I closed my eyes this sensation of flying was quite delightful, and strange beyond description; yet, strange as it was, I had a perfect sense of security, and not the slightest fear. At one time, to exhibit the power of the engine, having met another steam-carriage which was unsupplied with water, Mr. Stephenson caused it to be fastened in front of ours; moreover, a wagon laden with timber was also chained to us, and thus propelling the idle steam-engine, and dragging the loaded wagon which was beside it, and our own carriage full of people behind, this brave little she-dragon of ours flew on. Farther on she met three carts, which, being fastened in front of her, she pushed on before her without the slightest delay or difficulty; when I add that this pretty little creature can run with equal facility either backward or forward, I believe I have given you an account of all her capacities.

Now for a word or two about the master of all these marvels, with whom I am most horribly in love. He is a man of from fifty to fifty-five years of age; his face is fine, though careworn, and bears an expression of deep thoughtfulness; his mode of explaining his ideas is peculiar and very original, striking,

and forcible; and although his accent indicates strongly his north-country birth, his language has not the slightest touch of vulgarity or coarseness. He has certainly turned my head.

Four years have sufficed to bring this great undertaking to an end. The railroad will be opened upon the 15th of next month. The Duke of Wellington is coming down to be present on the occasion, and, I suppose, what with the thousands of spectators and the novelty of the spectacle, there will never have been a scene of more striking interest. The whole cost of the work (including the engines and carriages) will have been eight hundred and thirty thousand pounds; and it is already worth double that sum. The directors have kindly offered us three places for the opening, which is a great favor, for people are bidding almost anything for a place, I understand; but I fear we shall be obliged to decline them, as my father is most anxious to take Henry over to Heidelberg before our season of work in London begins, which will take place on the first of October. I think there is every probability of our having a very prosperous season. London will be particularly gay this winter, and the king and queen, it is said, are fond of dramatic entertainments, so that I hope we shall get on well. You will be glad to hear that our houses here have been very fine, and that to-night, Friday, which was my benefit, the theater was crowded in every corner. We do not play here any more, but on Monday we open at Manchester. You will,

I know, be happy to hear that, by way of answer to the letter I told you I had written my mother, I received a very delightful one from my dear little sister, the first I have had from her since I left London. She is a little jewel, and it will be a sin if she is marred in the cutting and polishing, or if she is set in tawdry French pinchbeck, instead of fine, strong, sterling gold. I am sorry to say that the lady Mrs. Jameson recommended as her governess has not been thought sufficiently accomplished to undertake the charge. I regret this the more, as in a letter I have just received from Mrs. Jameson she speaks with more detail of this lady's qualifications, which seem to me peculiarly adapted to have a good effect upon such a mind and character as A——'s.

I wish I had been with your girls at their ball, and come back from it and found you holding communion with the skies. My dearest H——, sublime and sweet and holy as are the feelings with which I look up to the star-paved heavens, or to the glorious summer sun, or listen to the music of the great waves, I do not for an instant mistake the adoration of the almighty power manifested in these works of God, for religion. You tell me to beware of mixing up emotional or imaginative excitement with my devotion. And I think I can truly answer that I do not do so. I told you that the cathedral service was not prayer to me; nor do I ever confound a mere emotional or imaginative enthusiasm, even when excited by the highest of all objects of

contemplation, with the daily and hourly endeavor after righteousness—the humble trust, resignation, obedience, and thankfulness, which I believe constitute the vital part of religious faith. I humbly hope I keep the sacred ground of my religion clear from whatever does not belong to the spirit of its practice. As long as I can remember, I have endeavored to guard against mistaking emotion for religion, and have even sometimes been apprehensive lest the admiration I felt for certain passages in the Psalms and the Hebrew prophets should make me forget the more solemn and sacred purposes of the book of life, and the glad tidings of our salvation. And though, when I look up as you did at the worlds with which our midnight sky is studded, I feel inclined to break out, "The heavens declare the glory of God," or, when I stand upon the shore, can hardly refrain from crying aloud, "The sea is His, and He made it," I do not in these moments of sublime emotion forget that He is the God to whom all hearts be open; who, from the moment I rise until I lie down to rest, witnesses my every thought and feeling; to whom I look for support against the evil of my own nature and the temptations which He allots me, who bestows every blessing and inspires every good impulse, who will strengthen me for every duty and trial: my Father, in whom I live and move and have my being. I do not fear that my imagination will become over-excited with thoughts such as these, but I often regret most bitterly that my heart is not more deeply touched by

them. Your definition of the love of God seemed almost like a reproach to my conscience. How miserably our practice halts behind our knowledge of good, even when tried at the bar of our own lenient judgment, and by our imperfect standard of right! how poorly does our life answer to our profession! I should speak in the singular, for I am only uttering my own self-condemnation. But as the excellence we adore surpasses our comprehension, so does the mercy, and in that lies our only trust and confidence.

I fear Miss W—— either has not received my letter or does not mean to answer it, for I have received no reply, and I dare not try again. Up to a certain point I am impudent enough, but not beyond that. Why do you threaten me with dancing to me? Have I lately given you cause to think I deserve to have such a punishment hung *in terrorem* over me? Besides, threatening me is injudicious, for it rouses a spirit of resistance in me not easy to break down. I assure you *o* [in allusion to my mispronunciation of that vowel] is really greatly improved. I take much pains with it, as also with my deportment; they will, I hope, no longer annoy you when next we meet. You must not call Mrs. J—— my friend, for I do not. I like her much, and I see a great deal to esteem and admire in her, but I do not *yet* call her my friend. You are my friend, and Mrs. Harry Siddons is my friend, and you are the only persons I call by that name. I have read "Paul Clifford," according to your desire, and

like it very much; it is written with a good purpose, and very powerfully. You asked me if I believed such selfishness as Brandon's to be natural, and I said yes, not having read the book, but merely from your report of him; and, having read the book, I say so still.

CHAPTER XVI.

DUBLIN, August, 1830.

MY DEAR H——,

I should have answered your letter sooner had I before been able to give you any certain intelligence of our theatrical proceedings next week, but I was so afraid of some change taking place in the list of the plays that I resolved not to write until alteration was impossible. The plays for next week are, on Monday, "Venice Preserved;" on Wednesday, "The Grecian Daughter;" Thursday, "The Merchant of Venice." I wish your people may be able to come up, the latter end of the week; I think "Romeo and Juliet," and "The Merchant of Venice," are nice plays for them to see. But you have, I know, an invitation from Mrs. J—— to come into town on Monday. I do not know whether my wishes have at all influenced her in this, but she has my very best thanks for it, and I know that they will have some weight with you in inclining you to accept it;

do, my dearest H——, come if you can. I shall certainly not be able to return to Ardgillan, and so my only chance of seeing you depends upon your coming into Dublin. I wish I had been with you when you sat in the sun and listened to the wind singing over the sea. I have a great admiration for the wind, not so much for its purifying influences only, as for its invisible power, strength, the quality above all others without which there is neither moral nor mental greatness possible. Natural objects endowed with this invisible power please me best, as human beings who possess it attract me most; and my preference for it over other elements of character is because I think it communicates itself, and that while in contact with it one feels as if it were *catching*; and whether by the shore, when the tide is coming up fast and irresistible, or in the books or intercourse of other minds, it seems to rouse corresponding activity and energy in one's self, persuading one, for the time being, that one is strong. I am sure I have felt taller by three inches, as well as three times more vigorous in body and mind, than I really am, when running by the sea. It seemed as if that great mass of waters, as it rushed and roared by my side, was communicating power directly to my mind as well as my bodily frame, by its companionship. I wish I was on the shore now with you. It is surprising (talking of E——) how instantaneously, and by what subtle, indescribable means, certain qualities of individual natures make themselves felt—refinement, imagination,

poetical sensibility. People's voices, looks, and gestures betray these so unconsciously; and I think more by the manner, a great deal, than the matter of their speech. Refinement, particularly, is a wonderfully subtle, penetrating element; nothing is so positive in its effect, and nothing so completely escapes analysis and defies description.

I am glad dear little H—— thought I "grew pretty;" there is a world of discrimination in that sentence of his. To your charge that I should cultivate my judgment in preference to my imagination, I can only answer, "I am ready and willing to do so;" but it is nevertheless not altogether easy for me to do it. My life in London leaves me neither time nor opportunity for any self-culture, and it seems to me as if my best faculties were lying fallow, while a comparatively unimportant talent, and my physical powers, were being taxed to the uttermost. The profession I have embraced is supposed to stimulate powerfully the imagination. I do not find it so; it appeals to mine in a slight degree compared with other pursuits; it is too definite in its object and too confined in its scope to excite my imagination strongly; and, moreover, it carries with it the antidote of its own excitement in the necessary conditions under which it is exercised. Were it possible to act with one's mind alone, the case might be different; but the body is so indispensable, unluckily, to the execution of one's most poetical conceptions on the stage, that the imaginative powers are under very

severe though imperceptible restraint. Acting seems to me rather like dancing hornpipes in fetters. And, by no means the least difficult part of the business is to preserve one's own feelings warm, and one's imagination excited, while one is aiming entirely at producing effects upon others; surrounded, moreover, as one is, by objects which, while they heighten the illusion to the distant spectator, all but destroy it to us of the *dramatis personæ*. None of this, however, lessens the value and importance of your advice, or my own conviction that "mental bracing" is good for me. My reception on Monday was quite overpowering, and I was escorted back to the hotel, after the play, by a body-guard of about two hundred men, shouting and hurrahing like mad; strange to say, they were people of perfectly respectable appearance. My father was not with us, and they opened the carriage door and let down the steps, when we got home, and helped us out, clapping, and showering the most fervent expressions of good-will upon me and aunt Dall, whom they took for my mother. One young man exclaimed pathetically, "Oh, I hope ye're not too much fatigued, Miss Kemble, by your exertions!" They formed a line on each side of me, and several of them dropped on their knees to look under my bonnet, as I ran laughing, with my head down, from the carriage to the house. I was greatly confused and a little frightened, as well as amused and gratified, by their cordial demonstration.

The humors of a Dublin audience, much as I

had heard of them before going to Ireland, surprised and diverted me very much. The second night of our acting there, as we were leaving the theater by the private entrance, we found the carriage surrounded by a crowd eagerly waiting for our coming out. As soon as my father appeared, there was a shout of "Three cheers for Misther Char-*les!*" then came Dall, and "Three cheers for Misthriss Char-*les!*" then I, and "Three cheers for Miss Fanny!" "Bedad, she looks well by gas-light!" exclaimed one of my admirers. "Och, and bedad, she looks well by daylight too!" retorted another, though what his opportunity for forming that flattering opinion of the genuineness of my good looks had been, I cannot imagine. What further remarks passed upon us I do not know, as we drove off laughing, and left our friends still vociferously cheering. My father told us one day of his being followed up Sackville Street by two beggar-women, between whom the following dialogue passed, evidently with a view to his edification: "Och, but he's an iligant man, is Misther Char-*les* Kemble!" "An' 'deed, so was his brudher Misther John, thin —a moighty foine man! and to see his *demanour*, puttin' his hand in his pocket and givin' me sixpence, bate all the worrld!" When I was acting Lady Townley, in the scene where her husband complains of her late hours and she insolently retorts, "I won't come home till four, to-morrow morning," and receives the startling reply with which Lord Townley leaves her, "Then, madam, you shall never come home again," I was apt to

stand for a moment aghast at this threat; and one night during this pause of breathless dismay, one of my gallery auditors, thinking, I suppose, that I was wanting in proper spirit not to make some rejoinder, exclaimed, "Now thin, Fanny!" which very nearly upset the gravity produced by my father's impressive exit, both in me and in the audience.

DUBLIN, Friday, August 6, 1830.

MY DEAREST H——,

I fear I caused you a disappointment by not writing to you yesterday afternoon, but as it was not until between five and six o'clock that I learned we were not going to Cork, when I thought of writing you to that effect I found I was too late for the post. I hope still that Dall and I may be able to come to Ardgillan again, but we cannot leave my father alone here, and his departure for Liverpool is at present quite uncertain. I have been trying to reason myself into patience, notwithstanding a very childish inclination to cry about it, which I think I will indulge because I shall be able to be so much more reasonable without this stupid lump in my throat.

I hope I may see you again, dear H——. You are wrong when you say you cannot be of service to me; I can judge better of the value of your intercourse to me than you can, and I wish I could have the advantage of more of it before I plunge back into "toil and trouble." I have two very opposite feelings about my

present avocation: utter dislike to it and everything, connected with it, and an upbraiding sense of ingratitude when I reflect how prosperous and smooth my entrance upon my career has been. I hope, ere long, to be able to remember habitually what only occasionally occurs to me now, as a comfort and support, that since it was right for me to embrace this profession, it is incumbent upon me to banish all selfish regrets about the surrender of my personal tastes and feelings, which must be sacrificed to real and useful results for myself and others. You see, I write as I talk, still about myself; and I am sometimes afraid that my very desire to improve keeps me occupied too much about myself and will make a little moral egotist of me. I am going to bid good-by to Miss W—— this morning; I should like her to like me; I believe I should value her friendship as I ought. Good friends are like the shrubs and trees that grow on a steep ascent: while we toil up, and our eyes are fixed on the summit, we unconsciously grasp and lean upon them for support and assistance on our way. God bless you, dear H ——. I hope to be with you soon, but cannot say at present how soon that may be.

F. A. K.

A very delightful short visit to my friend at Ardgillan preceded my resuming my theatrical work at Liverpool, whence I wrote her the following letter:

LIVERPOOL August 19, 1830.

DEAR H——,

I received your letter about an hour ago, at rehearsal, and though I read it with rather dim eyes, I managed to swallow my tears, and go on with Mrs. Beverley.

The depth and solemnity of your feelings, my dear H——, on those important subjects of which we have so often spoken together, almost make me fear, sometimes, that I am not so much impressed as I ought to be with their *awfulness*. I humbly hope I *fear* as I ought, but it is so much easier for me to love than to fear, that my nature instinctively fastens on those aspects of religion which inspire confidence and impart support, rather than those which impress with dread. I was thinking the other day how constantly in all our prayers the loftiest titles of might are added to that Name of names, "Our Father," and yet His power is always less present to my mind than His mercy and love. You tell me I do not know you, and that may very well be, for one really *knows* no one; and when I reflect upon and attempt to analyze the various processes of my own rather shallow mind, and find them incomprehensible, I am only surprised that there should be so much mutual affection in a world where mutual knowledge and understanding are really impossible.

My side-ache was much better yesterday. I believe it was caused by the pain of leaving

you and Ardgillan: any strong emotion causes it, and I remember when I last left Edinburgh having an attack of it that brought on erysipelas. You say you wish to know how Juliet does. Why, very well, poor thing. She had a very fine first house indeed, and her success has been as great as you could wish it; out of our ten nights' engagement, "Romeo and Juliet" is to be given four times; it has already been acted three successive nights to very great houses. To-night it is "The Gamester," to-morrow "Venice Preserved," and on Saturday we act at Manchester, and on Monday here again. You will hardly imagine how irksome it was to me to be once more in my stage-trappings, and in the glare of the theater instead of the blessed sunshine in the country, and to hear the murmur of congregated human beings instead of that sound of many waters, that wonderful sea-song, that is to me like the voice of a dear friend. I made a great effort to conquer this feeling of repugnance to my work, and thought of my dear Mrs. Harry, whom I have seen, with a heart and mind torn with anxiety, leave poor Lizzy on what seemed almost a death-bed, to go and do her duty at the theater. That was something like a trial. There was a poor old lady, of more than seventy years of age, who acted as my nurse, who helped also to rouse me from my selfish morbidness—age and infirmity laboring in the same path with rather more cause for weariness and disgust than I have. She may have been working, too, only for herself, while I am the means of helping my

own dear people, and many others; she toils on, unnoticed and neglected, while my exertions are stimulated and rewarded by success and the approval of every one about me. And yet my task is sadly distasteful to me; it seems such useless work that but for its very useful pecuniary results I think I would rather make shoes. You tell me of the comfort you derive, under moral depression, from picking stones and weeds out of your garden. I am afraid that antidote would prove insufficient for me; the weeds would very soon lie in heaps in my lap, and the stones accumulate in little mountains all round me, while my mind was sinking into contemplations of the nature of slow quicksands. Violent bodily exercise, riding, or climbing up steep and rugged pathways are my best remedies for the blue devils.

My father has received a pressing invitation from Lord and Lady W—— to go to their place, Heaton, which is but five miles from Manchester.

You say to me in your last letter that you could not live at the rate I do; but my life is very different now from what it was while with you. I am silent and quiet and oppressed with irksome duties, and altogether a different creature from your late companion by the sea-shore. It is true that that *was* my natural condition, but if you were here with me now, in the midst of all these unnatural sights and sounds, I do not think I should weary you with my overflowing life and spirits, as I fear I did at

Ardgillan. I was as happy there as the birds that fly in the clear sky above the sea, and much happier, for I had your companionship in addition to the delight which mere existence is in such scenes. I am glad Lily made and wore the wreath of lilac blossoms; I was sure it would become her. Give her my love and thanks for having done as I asked her. Oh, do not wish Ardgillan fifteen miles from London! Even for the sake of seeing you, I would not bring you near the smoke and dirt and comparative confinement of such a situation; I would not take you from your sea and sky and trees, even to have you within reach of me.

Certainly it is the natural evil of the human mind, and not the supernatural agency in the story of its development, that makes Macbeth so terrible; it is the hideousness of a wicked soul, into which enter more foul ingredients than are held in the witches' caldron of abominations, that makes the play so tremendous. I wish we had read that great work together. How it contrasts with what we did read, the "Tempest," that brightest creation of a wholesome genius in its hour of happiest inspiration!

I believe some people think it presumptuous to pray for any one but themselves; but it seems to me strange to share every, feeling with those we love and not associate them with our best and holiest aspirations; to remember them everywhere but there where it is of the utmost importance to us all to be remembered; to desire all happiness for

> them, and not to implore in their behalf the Giver of all good. I think I pray even more fervently for those I love than for myself. Pray for me, my dear H——, and God bless you and give you strength and peace. Your affectionate
>
> F. A. K.
>
> I have not seen the railroad yet; if you do not write soon to me, we shall be gone to Manchester.

My objection to the dramatic profession on the score of its uselessness, in this letter, reminds me of what my mother used to tell me of Miss Brunton, who afterward became Lady Craven; a very eccentric as well as attractive and charming woman, who contrived, too, to be a very charming actress, in spite of a prosaical dislike to her business, which used to take the peculiar and rather alarming turn of suddenly, in the midst of a scene, saying aside to her fellow-actors, "What nonsense all this is! Suppose we don't go on with it." This singular expostulation my mother said she always expected to see followed up by the sadden exit of her lively companion, in the middle of her part. Miss Brunton, however, had self-command enough to go on acting till she became Countess of Craven, and left off the *nonsense* of the stage for the *earnestness* of high life.

A very serious cause for depression had added itself to the weariness of spirit with which my distaste for my profession often affected me. While at Liverpool, I received a letter from my brother John which filled me with surprise and vexation. After his return from Germany he had expressed his determination to go into the Church; and we all supposed him to be in

the country, zealously engaged in the necessary preparatory studies. Infinite, therefore, was my astonishment to receive from him a letter dated from Algeciras, in Spain, telling me that he and several of his college companions, Sterling, Barton, Trench, and Boyd among others, had determined to lend the aid of their enthusiastic sympathy to the cause of liberty in Spain. The "cause of liberty in Spain" was then represented by the rash and ill-fated rising of General Torrijos against the Spanish Government, that protean nightmare which, in one form or another of bigotry and oppression, has ridden that unfortunate country up to a very recent time, when civil war has again interfered with apparently little prospect of any better result. My distress at receiving such unexpected news from my brother was aggravated by his forbidding me to write to him or speak of his plans and proceedings to any one. This concealment, which would have been both difficult and repugnant to me, was rendered impossible by the circumstances under which his letter reached me, and we all bore together, as well as we could, this severe disappointment and the cruel anxiety of receiving no further intelligence from John for a considerable time. I was bitterly grieved by this letter, which clearly indicated that the sacred profession for which my brother had begun to prepare himself, and in which we had hoped to see him ere long honorably and usefully laboring, was as little likely to be steadily pursued by him as the legal career which he had renounced for it. Richard Trench brought home a knowledge of the Spanish tongue which has given to his own some beautiful translations of Calderon's masterpieces; and his early crusade for the enfranchisement of Spain has not militated against the well-deserved distinction he has achieved in the

high calling to which he devoted himself. With my brother, however, the case was different. This romantic expedition canceled all his purposes and prospects of entering the Church, and Alfred Tennyson's fine sonnet, addressed to him when he first determined to dedicate himself to the service of the temple, is all that bears witness to that short-lived consecration: it was poetry, but not prophecy.

MANCHESTER, September 3, 1830.

MY DEAREST H——,

I received you letter and the pretty Balbriggan stockings, for which I thank you very much, quite safely. I have not been able to put pen to paper till now, and even now do not know whether I can do more than just tell you that we have heard nothing further whatever from my brother. In his letter to me he said that he would write home whenever he could do so safely, but that no letter of ours would reach him; and, indeed, I do not now know where he may be. From the first moment of hearing this intelligence, which has amazed us all so much, I have felt less miserable than I could have thought possible under the circumstances; my mind, I think, has hardly taken hold of the truth of what has come so unexpectedly upon me. The very impossibility of relieving one's suspense, I suppose, compels one not to give way to its worst suggestions, which may, after all, be unfounded. I cannot communicate with him, and must wait patiently till he can write again; he is in God's hand, and I hope and pray that he may

be guided and protected. My great anxiety is to keep all knowledge of his having even gone abroad, if possible, from my mother. She is not in a state to bear such a shock, and I fear that the impossibility of ascertaining anything about him at present, which helps *me* to remain tolerably collected, would almost drive her distracted.

The news of the revolt in the Netherlands, together with the fact that one of our dear ones is away from us in scenes of peril and disturbance, has, I think, shaken my father's purpose of sending Henry to Heidelberg. It is a bad thing to leave a boy of eighteen so far from home control and influences; and he is of a sweet, affectionate, gentle disposition, that makes him liable to be easily led and persuaded by the examples and counsels of others. Moreover, he is at the age when boys are always in some love-scrape or other, and if he is left alone at Heidelberg, in his own unassisted weakness, at such a distance from us all, I should not be surprised to hear that he had constituted himself the lord and master of some blue-eyed *fräulein* with whom he could not exchange a dozen words in her own vernacular, and had become a *dis*-respectable *pater familias* at nineteen. In the midst of all the worry and anxiety which these considerations occasion, we are living here a most unsettled, flurried life of divided work and pleasure. We have gone out to Heaton every morning after rehearsal, and come in with the W——s in the evening, to act. I think to-night we shall sleep there after the play, and come in with the W——s after

dinner to-morrow. They had expected us to spend some days with them, and perhaps, after our Birmingham engagement, we may be able to do so. Heaton is a charming specimen of a fine country-house, and Lady W—— a charming specimen of a fine lady; she is handsome, stately, and gentle. I like Lord W——; he is clever, or rather accomplished, and refined. They are both of them very kind to me, and most pressing in their entreaties that we should return and stay as long as we can with them. To-morrow is my last night here; on Monday we act at Birmingham, and my father thinks we shall be able to avail ourselves of the invitation of our Liverpool friends, and witness the opening of the railroad. This would be a memorable pleasure, the opportunity of which should certainly not be neglected. I have been gratified and interested this morning and yesterday by going over one of the largest manufactories of this place, where I have seen a number of astonishing processes, from the fusing of iron in its roughest state to the construction of the most complicated machinery and the work that it performs. I have been examining and watching and admiring power-looms, and spinning-jennies, and every species of work accomplished by machinery. But what pleased me most of all was the process of casting iron. Did you know that the solid masses of iron-work which we see in powerful engines were many of them cast in moulds of sand?—inconstant, shifting, restless sand! The strongest iron of all,

though, gets its strength beaten into it.

BIRMINGHAM, September 7, 1830.

You see, my dearest H——, how my conversations are liable to be cut short in the midst; just at the point where I broke off, Lord and Lady W—— came to fetch us to Heaton, and until this moment, when I am quietly seated in Birmingham, I have not been able to resume the thread of my discourse. I once was told of a man who had been weather-bound at some port, whence he was starting for the West Indies; he was standing on the wharf, telling a long story to a friend, when a fair wind sprang up and he had to hurry on board. Two years after, returning thence, the first person he met on landing was his friend, whom he accosted with, "Oh, well, and so, as I was telling you," etc. But I cannot do that, for my mind has dwelt on new objects of interest since I began this letter, and my visit to Heaton has swept sand and iron and engines all back into the great warehouse at Manchester for a time, whence I may draw them at some future day for your edification.

Lady W—— possesses, to a great degree, beauty, that "tangible good" which you admire so much; she has a bright, serene countenance, and very sweet and noble eyes and forehead. Her manner is peculiarly winning and simple, and to me it was cordially kind, and even affectionate.

During the two days which were all we could

spare for Heaton, I walked and rode and sang and talked, and was so well amused and pleased that I hope, after our week's work is over here, we may return there for a short-time. I must tell you of a curious little bit of *ancientry* which I saw at Heaton, which greatly delighted me—a "rush-bearing." At a certain period of the year, generally the beginning of autumn, it was formerly the wont in some parts of Lancashire to go round with sundry rustic mummeries to all the churches and strew them with rushes. The religious intention of the custom has passed away, but a pretty rural procession, which I witnessed, still keeps up the memory of it hereabouts. I was sitting at my window, looking out over the lawn, which slopes charmingly on every side down to the house, when the still summer air was suddenly filled with the sound of distant shouts and music, and presently the quaint pageant drew in sight. First came an immense wagon piled with rushes in a stack-like form, on the top of which sat two men holding two huge nosegays. This was drawn by a team of Lord W——'s finest farm-horses, all covered with scarlet cloths, and decked with ribbons and bells and flowers. After this came twelve country lads and lasses, dancing the real old morris-dance, with their handkerchiefs flying, and in all the rustic elegance of apparel which they could command for the occasion. After them followed a very good village band, and then a species of flowery canopy, under which walked a man and woman covered with finery, who, Lord W

—— told me, represented Adam and Eve. The procession closed with a *fool* fantastically dressed out, and carrying the classical bladder at the end of his stick. They drew up before the house and danced their morris-dance for us. The scraps of old poetry which came into my head, the contrast between this pretty picture of a bygone time and the modern but by no means unpicturesque group assembled under the portico, filled my mind with the pleasantest ideas, and I was quite sorry when the rural pageant wound up the woody heights again, and the last shout and peal of music came back across the sunny lawn. I am very glad I saw it. I have visited, too, Hopwood Hall, an enchanting old house in the neighborhood of Heaton, some parts of which are as old as the reign of Edward the First. The gloomy but comfortable oak rooms, the beautiful and curious carving of which might afford one days of entertaining study, the low, latticed windows, and intricate, winding, up-and-down passages, contrasted and combined with all the elegant adornments of modern luxury, and the pretty country in which the house is situated, all delighted me. I must leave off writing to you now; I have to dress, and dine at three, which I am sorry for. Thank you for Mrs. Hemans's beautiful lines, which made me cry very heartily. I have not been altogether well for the last few days, and am feeling tired and out of spirits; if I can get a few days' quiet enjoyment of the country at Heaton, I shall feel fitter for my winter work than I do now.

MANCHESTER, September 20, 1830.

MY DEAREST H——,

I did not answer your letter which I received at Heaton, because the latter part of my stay there was much engrossed by walking, riding, playing battledore and shuttlecock, singing, and being exceedingly busy all day long about nothing. I have just left it for this place, where we stop to-night on our way to Stafford; Heaton was looking lovely in all the beauty of its autumnal foliage, lighted by bright autumnal skies, and I am rather glad I did not answer you before, as it is a consolatory occupation to do so now.

I am going with my mother to stay a day at Stafford with my godmother, an old and attached friend of hers, after which we proceed into Buckinghamshire to join my aunt Dall and Henry and my sister, who are staying there; and we shall all return to London together for the opening of the theater, which I think will take place on the first of next month. I could have wished to be going immediately to my work; I should have preferred screwing my courage to my professional tasks at once, instead of loitering by way of pleasure on the road. Besides that, in my visit to Buckinghamshire I come in contact with persons whose society is not very agreeable to me. My mother, however, made a great sacrifice in giving up her fishing, which she was enjoying very much, to come and chaperon me at Heaton, where there is no fishing so good as at Aston Clinton, so that I am bound to submit

cheerfully to her wishes in the present instance.

You probably have by this time heard and read accounts of the opening of the railroad, and the fearful accident which occurred at it, for the papers are full of nothing else. The accident you mention *did* occur, but though the unfortunate man who was killed bore Mr. Stephenson's name, he was not related to him. I will tell you something of the events on the 15th, as, though you may be acquainted with the circumstances of poor Mr. Huskisson's death, none but an eyewitness of the whole scene can form a conception of it. I told you that we had had places given to us, and it was the main purpose of our returning from Birmingham to Manchester to be present at what promised to be one of the most striking events in the scientific annals of our country. We started on Wednesday last, to the number of about eight hundred people, in carriages constructed as I before described to you. The most intense curiosity and excitement prevailed, and, though the weather was uncertain, enormous masses of densely packed people lined the road, shouting and waving hats and handkerchiefs as we flew by them. What with the sight and sound of these cheering multitudes and the tremendous velocity with which we were borne past them, my spirits rose to the true champagne height, and I never enjoyed anything so much as the first hour of our progress. I had been unluckily separated from my mother in the first distribution of

places, but by an exchange of seats which she was enabled to make she rejoined me when I was at the height of my ecstasy, which was considerably damped by finding that she was frightened to death, and intent upon nothing but devising means of escaping from a situation which appeared to her to threaten with instant annihilation herself and all her traveling companions. While I was chewing the cud of this disappointment, which was rather bitter, as I had expected her to be as delighted as myself with our excursion, a man flew by us, calling out through a speaking-trumpet to stop the engine, for that somebody in the directors' carriage had sustained an injury. We were all stopped accordingly, and presently a hundred voices were heard exclaiming that Mr. Huskisson was killed; the confusion that ensued is indescribable: the calling out from carriage to carriage to ascertain the truth, the contrary reports which were sent back to us, the hundred questions eagerly uttered at once, and the repeated and urgent demands for surgical assistance, created a sudden turmoil that was quite sickening. At last we distinctly ascertained that the unfortunate man's thigh was broken. From Lady W——, who was in the duke's carriage, and within three yards of the spot where the accident happened, I had the following details, the horror of witnessing which we were spared through our situation behind the great carriage. The engine had stopped to take in a supply of water, and several of the gentlemen in the directors' carriage had

jumped out to look about them. Lord W——, Count Batthyany, Count Matuscenitz, and Mr. Huskisson among the rest were standing talking in the middle of the road, when an engine on the other line, which was parading up and down merely to show its speed, was seen coming down upon them like lightning. The most active of those in peril sprang back into their seats: Lord W—— saved his life only by rushing behind the duke's carriage, and Count Matuscenitz had but just leaped into it, with the engine all but touching his heels as he did so; while poor Mr. Huskisson, less active from the effects of age and ill health, bewildered, too, by the frantic cries of "Stop the engine! Clear the track!" that resounded on all sides, completely lost his head, looked helplessly to the right and left, and was instantaneously prostrated by the fatal machine, which dashed down like a thunderbolt upon him, and passed over his leg, smashing and mangling it in the most horrible way. (Lady W—— said she distinctly heard the crushing of the bone.) So terrible was the effect of the appalling accident that, except that ghastly "crushing" and poor Mrs. Huskisson's piercing shriek, not a sound was heard or a word uttered among the immediate spectators of the catastrophe. Lord W—— was the first to raise the poor sufferer, and calling to aid his surgical skill, which is considerable, he tied up the severed artery, and for a time, at least, prevented death by loss of blood. Mr. Huskisson was then placed in a carriage with his wife and Lord W——, and the engine, having been

detached from the director's carriage, conveyed them to Manchester. So great was the shock produced upon the whole party by this event, that the Duke of Wellington declared his intention not to proceed, but to return immediately to Liverpool. However, upon its being represented to him that the whole population of Manchester had turned out to witness the procession, and that a disappointment might give rise to riots and disturbances, he consented to go on, and gloomily enough the rest of the journey was accomplished. We had intended returning to Liverpool by the railroad, but Lady W——, who seized upon me in the midst of the crowd, persuaded us to accompany her home, which we gladly did. Lord W—— did not return till past ten o'clock, at which hour he brought the intelligence of Mr. Huskisson's death. I need not tell you of the sort of whispering awe which this event threw over our whole circle, and yet, great as was the horror excited by it, I could not help feeling how evanescent the effect of it was after all. The shuddering terror of seeing our fellow-creature thus struck down by our side, and the breathless thankfulness for our own preservation, rendered the first evening of our party at Heaton almost solemn; but the next day the occurrence became a subject of earnest, it is true, but free discussion; and after that, was alluded to with almost as little apparent feeling as if it had not passed under our eyes, and within the space of a few hours.

I have heard nothing of my brother; my

> mother distresses me by talking of him, ignorant as she is of what would give her so much more anxiety about him. I feel, while I listen to her, almost guilty of deceit; and yet I am sure we were right in doing for her what she cannot do for herself, keeping her mind as long as possible in comparative tranquillity about him.
>
> Our Sunday at Heaton terminated with much solemn propriety by Lord W—— reading aloud the evening prayers to the whole family, visitors, and servants assembled; a ceremony which, combined and contrasted with so much of the pomps and vanities of the world, gave me a pleasant feeling toward these people, who live in the midst of them without forgetting better things. I mean to make studying German and drawing (and endeavoring to abate my self-esteem) my principal occupations this winter. I have met at Heaton Lord Francis Leveson Gower, the translator of "Faust." I like him very much; he is a young man of a great deal of talent, with a charming, gentle manner, and a very handsome, sweet face. Good-by, dear H——. Write to me soon, and direct to No. 79 Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury. I should like to find a letter from you there, waiting for me.

Our arrangement for driving in to the theater from Heaton compelled me once or twice to sit down to dinner in my theatrical costume, a device for saving time in dressing at the theater which might have taxed my self-possession unpleasantly; but the persons I was surrounded by were all singularly kind and amiable to me, and my appearing among them

in these picturesque fancy dresses was rather a source of amusement to us all. Many years after, a lady who was not staying in the house, but was invited from the neighborhood to dine at Heaton one evening, told me how amazed she had been on the sudden wide opening of the drawing-room doors to see me enter, in full mediæval costume of black satin and velvet, cut Titian fashion, and with a long, sweeping train, for which apparition she had not been previously prepared. Of Lord W—— I have already spoken, and have only to add that, in spite of his character of a mere dissipated man of fashion, he had an unusual taste for and knowledge of music, and had composed some that is not destitute of merit; he played well on the organ, and delighted in that noble instrument, a fine specimen of which adorned one of the drawing-rooms at Heaton. Moreover, he possessed an accomplishment of a very different order, a remarkable proficiency in anatomy, which he had studied very thoroughly. He had made himself enough of a practical surgeon to be able, on the occasion of the fatal accident which befell Mr. Huskisson on the day of the opening of the railroad, to save the unfortunate gentleman from bleeding to death on the spot, by tying up the femoral artery, which had been severed. His fine riding in the hunting-field and on the race-course was a less peculiar talent among his special associates. Lady W —— was strikingly handsome in person, and extremely attractive in her manners. She was tall and graceful, the upper part of her face, eyes, brow, and forehead were radiant and sweet, and, though the rest of her features were not regularly beautiful, her countenance was noble and her smile had a peculiar charm of expression at once winning and mischievous. My father said she was very like her

fascinating mother, the celebrated Miss Farren. She was extremely kind to me, petting me almost like a spoiled child, dressing me in her own exquisite riding-habit and mounting me on her own favorite horse, which was all very delightful to me. My father and mother probably thought the acquaintance of these distinguished members of the highest English society advantageous to me. I have no doubt they felt both pride and pleasure in the notice bestowed upon me by persons so much my superiors in rank, and had a natural sympathy in my enjoyment of all the gay grandeur and kindly indulgence by which I was surrounded at Heaton. I now take the freedom to doubt how far they were judicious in allowing me to be so taken out of my own proper social sphere. It encouraged my taste for the luxurious refinement and elegant magnificence of a mode of life never likely to be mine, and undoubtedly increased my distaste for the coarse and common details of my professional duties behind the scenes, and the sham splendors of the stage. The guests at Heaton of whom I have a distinct remembrance were Mr. and Lady Harriet Baring, afterward Lord and Lady Ashburton. I knew them both in after-life, and liked them very much; Mr. Baring was highly cultivated and extremely amiable; his wife was much cleverer than he, and in many respects a remarkable woman. The beautiful sisters, Anne and Isabella Forrester, with their brother Cecil, were at Heaton at this time. They were celebrated beauties: the elder, afterward Countess of Chesterfield, was a brunette; the younger, who married Colonel Anson, the most renowned lady-killer of his day, was a blonde; and they were both of them exquisitely pretty, and used to remind me of the French quatrain—

"Vous êtes belle, et votre sœur est belle;
Entre vous deux, tout choix serait bien
doux.
L'Amour était blond, comme vous,
Mais il aimait une brune, comme elle."

They had beautiful figures as well as faces, and dressed peculiarly and so as to display them to the greatest advantage. Long and very full skirts gathered or plaited all round a pointed waist were then the fashion; these lovely ladies, with a righteous scorn of all disfigurement of their beauty, wore extremely short skirts, which showed their thoroughbred feet and ankles, and were perfectly plain round their waists and over their hips, with bodies so low on the shoulders and bosom that there was certainly as little as possible of their beautiful persons concealed. I remember wishing it were consistent with her comfort and the general decorum of modern manners that Isabella Forrester's gown could only slip entirely off her exquisite bust. I suppose I felt as poor Gibson, the sculptor, who, looking at his friend and pupil's (Miss Hosmer's) statue of Beatrice Cenci, the back of which was copied from that of Lady A —— T——, exclaimed in his slow, measured, deliberate manner, "And to think that the cursed prejudices of society prevent my seeing that beautiful back!" Count and Countess Batthyany (she the former widow of the celebrated Austrian general, Bubna, a most distinguished and charming woman) were visitors at Heaton at this time, as was also Henry Greville, with whom I then first became acquainted, and who from that time until his death was my kind and constant friend. He was for several years attached to the embassy in Paris, and afterward had some small nominal post in the household of the

Duchess of Cambridge, and was Gentleman Gold-Stick in waiting at court. He was not in any way intellectually remarkable; he had a passion for music, and was one of the best society singers of his day, being (that, to me, incomprehensible thing) a *mélomane* for one kind of music only. Passionately fond of Italian operatic music, he did not understand, and therefore cordially detested, German music. He had a passion for the stage; but though he delighted in acting he did not particularly excel in it. He had a taste for everything elegant and refined, and his small house in May-Fair was a perfect casket full of gems. He was a natural exquisite, and perfectly simple and unaffected, a great authority in all matters of fashion both in Paris and in London, and a universal favorite, especially with the women, in the highest society of both capitals. His social position, friendly intimacy with several of the most celebrated musical and dramatic artists of his day, passion for political and private gossip, easy and pleasant style of letter-writing, and general rather supercilious fastidiousness, used sometimes to remind me of Horace Walpole. He had a singularly kind heart and amiable nature, for a life of mere frivolous pleasure had not impaired the one or the other. His serviceableness to his friends was unwearied, and his generous liberality toward all whom he could help either with his interest, his trouble, or his purse was unfailing.

The whole gay party assembled at Heaton, my mother and myself included, went to Liverpool for the opening of the railroad. The throng of strangers gathered there for the same purpose made it almost impossible to obtain a night's lodging for love or money; and glad and thankful were we to put up with and be put up in a tiny garret by our old friend,

Mr. Radley, of the Adelphi, which many would have given twice what we paid to obtain. The day opened gloriously, and never was seen an innumerable concourse of sight-seers in better humor than the surging, swaying crowd that lined the railroad with living faces. How dreadfully that brilliant opening was overcast I have described in the letter given above. After this disastrous event the day became overcast, and as we neared Manchester the sky grew cloudy and dark, and it began to rain. The vast concourse of people who had assembled to witness the triumphant arrival of the successful travelers was of the lowest order of mechanics and artisans, among whom great distress and a dangerous spirit of discontent with the Government at that time prevailed. Groans and hisses greeted the carriage, full of influential personages, in which the Duke of Wellington sat. High above the grim and grimy crowd of scowling faces a loom had been erected, at which sat a tattered, starved-looking weaver, evidently set there as a *representative man*, to protest against this triumph of machinery, and the gain and glory which the wealthy Liverpool and Manchester men were likely to derive from it. The contrast between our departure from Liverpool and our arrival at Manchester was one of the most striking things I ever witnessed. The news of Mr. Huskisson's fatal accident spread immediately, and his death, which did not occur till the evening, was anticipated by rumor. A terrible cloud covered this great national achievement, and its success, which in every respect was complete, was atoned for to the Nemesis of good fortune by the sacrifice of the first financial statesman of the country.

CHAPTER XVII.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, Friday, October 1, 1830.

DEAREST H——,

I have risen very early, for what with excitement, and the wakefulness always attendant with me upon a new bed, I have slept but little, and I snatch this first hour of the day, the only one I may be able to command, to tell you that I have heard from my brother, and that he is safe and well, for which, thank God! Further I know nothing. He talks vaguely of being with us toward the end of the winter, but in the meantime, unless he finds some means of conveying some tidings of his welfare to me, I must remain in utter ignorance of his circumstances and situation. Your letter, which was to welcome me to my new home, arrived there two days before I did, and was forwarded to me into Buckinghamshire. A few days there—taking what interest I could in the sporting and fishing, the country quiet of the place, and above all the privilege of taking the sacrament, which, had I remained at Heaton, I should have had no opportunity of doing—gave me a breathing-time and a sense of mental repose before entering again upon that busy life whose demands are already besieging me in the inexorable form of half a dozen new stage dresses to be devised, ordered, and executed in the shortest imaginable time.

October 3d.

You see how truly I prophesied at the beginning of this letter, when I said that the hour before breakfast was perhaps the only one I should be able to command that day. I might have said that week, for this is the first instant I have been able to call my own since then. I rehearsed Juliet yesterday, and shall do so again to-morrow morning; the theater opens with it to-morrow night. I have a new nurse, and I am rehearsing for her, poor woman! She is dreadfully alarmed at taking Mrs. Davenport's place, who certainly was a very great favorite. I am half crazy with the number of new dresses to be got; for though, thanks to the kindness and activity of my mother, none of the trouble of devising them ever falls on me, yet the bare catalogue of silks and satins and velvets, hats and feathers and ruffs, fills me with amazement and trepidation. I fancy I shall go through all the old parts, and then come out in a new tragedy. I shall be most horribly frightened, but I hope I shall do well, for the sake of the poor author, who is a young man of great abilities, and to whom I wish every success. The subject of his play is taken from a Spanish one, called "The Jew of Aragon," and the whole piece is of a new and unhackneyed order. My father and I play a Jewish father and daughter; this and the novelty of the story itself will perhaps be favorable to the play; I hope so with all my heart.

Mrs. Henry Siddons has taken a house in London for six months; I have not seen her

yet, but am most anxious to do so. Anxiety and annoyance, I fear, have just caused her a severe indisposition, but she is a little better now. Mrs. Siddons is much better. She is staying at Leamington at present.

Dearest H——, returning from Buckinghamshire the other day, I passed Cassiobury, the grove, the little lane leading down to Heath Farm, and Miss M——'s cottage, and the first days of our acquaintance came back to my memory. I suppose I should have liked and loved you wherever I had met you, but you come in for a share of my love and liking of Cassiobury, and the spring, the beautiful season in which we met first. I send you the long-promised lock of my hair; you will be surprised at the lightness of the shade—at least, I was. It was cut from my forehead, and I think it is a nice bit; tell me that you get it safe.

Henry is staying in Buckinghamshire in all the ecstasy of a young cockney's first sporting days. When he was quite a child and was asked what profession he intended to embrace, he replied that he would be "*a gentleman and wear leather breeches*," and I think it is the very destiny he is fitted to fill. He is the perfect picture of happiness when in his shooting-jacket and gaiters, with his gun on his shoulder and a bright day before him; and although we were obliged to return to town, my mother was unwilling to curtail his pleasure, and left him to murder pheasants and hares, and amuse himself in a manly fashion.

> I did not like the place at which they were staying as much as they did, for though the country was very pretty, I had during the summer tour seen so much that surpassed it that I saw it at a disadvantage. Then, I have no fancy for gypsying, and the greatest taste for all the formal proprieties of life, and what I should call "silver fork existence" in general; and the inconveniences of a small country inn, without really affecting my comfort, disturb my decided preference for luxury. The principal diversion my ingenious mind discovered to while away my time with was a *fiddle* (an elderly one), which I routed out of a lumber closet, and from which, after due invocations to St. Cecilia, I drew such diabolical sounds as I flatter myself were never excelled by Tartini or his master, the devil himself. I must now close this, for it is tea-time.

The play of "The Jew of Aragon," the first dramatic composition of a young gentleman of the name of Wade, of whose talent my father had a very high opinion, which he trusted the success of his piece would confirm, I am sorry to say failed entirely. It was the first time and the last that I had the distress of assisting in damning a piece, and what with my usual intense nervousness in acting a new part, my anxiety for the interests of both the author and the theatre, and the sort of indignant terror with which, instead of the applause I was accustomed to, I heard the hisses which testified the distaste and disapprobation of the public and the failure of the play, I was perfectly miserable when the curtain fell, and the poor young author, as pale as a ghost, came

forward to meet my father at the side scene, and bravely holding out his hand to him said, "Never mind for me, Mr. Kemble; I'll do better another time." And so indeed he did; for he wrote a charming play on the old pathetic story of "Griselda," in which that graceful actress Miss Jarman played his heroine, and my father the hero, and which had an entire and well-deserved success. I am obliged to confess that I retain no recollection whatever of the ill-fated play of "The Jew of Aragon," or my own part in it, save the last *scene* alone; this, I recollect, was a magnificent Jewish place of worship, in which my father, who was the high priest, appeared in vestments such as I believe the Jewish priests still wear in their solemn ceremonies, and which were so closely copied from the description of Aaron's sacred pontifical robes that I felt a sense of impropriety in such a representation (purely historical, as it was probably considered, and in no way differing from the costume accepted on the French stage in Racine's Jewish plays). And I think it extremely likely that the failure of the piece, which had been imminent all through, found its climax in the unfavorable impression made upon the audience by this very scene, in spite of my father's noble and picturesque appearance.

I never heard hisses on the stage before or since; and though I was very well aware that on this occasion they were addressed neither to me nor to my performance, I think if they had been the whistling of bullets (which I have also heard nearer than was pleasant) I could not have felt more frightened and furious.

Young Wade's self-control and composure during the catastrophe of this play reminds me, by contrast, of a

most ludicrous story my father used to tell of some unfortunate authoress, who, in an evil hour for herself and some friendly provincial manager, persuaded him to bring out an original drama of hers.

The audience (not a very discriminating or numerous one) were sufficiently appreciative to object extremely to the play, and large enough to make their objections noisily apparent.

The manager, in his own distress not unmindful of his poor friend, the authoress, sought her out to console her, and found her seated at the side scene with a glass of stiff brandy and water that some commiserating friend had administered to her for her support, rocking herself piteously to and fro, and, with the tears streaming down her cheeks, uttering between sobs and sips, in utter self-abasement, her *peccavi* in the form of oaths and imprecations of the finest Billingsgate vernacular (all, however, addressed to herself), that would have made a dragoon shake in his shoes. The original form of which *mea culpa* seized the worthy manager with such an irresistibly ludicrous effect that he left the poor, guilty authoress without being able to address a syllable to her, lest he should explode in peals of laughter instead of decent words of condolence.

To accompany an author or authoress (I should think especially the latter) on the first night of the representation of their piece is by no means a pleasant act of duty or friendship. I remember my mother, whose own nervous temperament certainly was extremely ill adapted for such an undertaking, describing the intolerable distress she had experienced on the occasion of the first

representation of a piece called, I think, "Father and Son," taken from a collection of interesting stories entitled "The Canterbury Tales," and adapted to the stage by one of the Misses Lee, the sister authoresses of the Tales. The piece was very fairly successful, but my mother said that though, according to her very considerable experience, the actors were by no means more imperfect in their parts than usual on a first night, her nervous anxiety was kept almost at fever height by poor Miss Lee's incessant running commentary of "Ah! very pretty, no doubt—very fine, I dare say—*only I never wrote a word of it*!"

Lord Byron took the same story for the subject of his powerful play of "Werner," in which Mr. Macready acted so finely, and with such great success.

I cannot imagine what possessed me in an unguarded hour to consent, as I did, to go with my friends, Messrs. Tom Taylor and Charles Reade, to see the first representation of a play of theirs called, I think, "The King's Wager," in which Charles the Second, Nell Gwynn, and the Plague were prominent characters. Accidental circumstances prevented one of the gentlemen from coming with me, and I have often since wondered at my temerity in having placed myself in such a trying situation.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, October 24, 1830.

DEAR H——,

I have been too busy to answer your last sooner, but this hour before bedtime, the first quiet one for some time, shall be yours. I have heard nothing more of my brother, and am ignorant where he is or how engaged at present. You judged rightly with respect to

the impossibility of longer keeping my mother in ignorance of his absence from England. The result was pretty much what I had apprehended; but her feelings have now become somewhat calmer on the subject. We are careful, however, as much as possible, to avoid all mention of or reference to my brother in her presence, for she is in a very cruel state of anxiety about him.

I am endeavoring as much as possible to follow my studies with some regularity. I have forsworn paying and receiving morning visits; so that, when no rehearsal interferes, I get my practicing, my singing, and my reading in tolerable peace.

I have had a key of Russell Square offered me, which privilege I shall most thankfully accept. Walking regularly is, of course, essential, and though I rather dread the idea of solitarily turning round and round that dreary emblem of eternity, a circular gravel-walk, over-*gloomed* with soot-blackened privet bushes, I am sure I ought, and I mean to do it every day for an hour. We do not dine till six, when I do not act, and when I do, I do not go to the theater till that hour; so that from ten in the morning, when breakfast is over, I get a tolerably long day. I have obtained my father's leave to learn drawing and German, and as soon as our house is a little more comfortably settled, I shall begin both. I do not know whether I have the least talent for drawing, but I have so strong a desire to possess that accomplishment that I think, by the help of a

good master and patience and hard work, I must succeed to some decent degree. I wish to provide myself with every possible resource against the engrossing excitement of my profession while I remain in it, and to fill its place whenever I leave it, or it leaves me; all my occupations are with that view and to that end.

My father has promised me to speak to Mr. Murray about publishing my play and my verses. I am anxious for this for several reasons, some of which I believe I mentioned to you; and to these I have since added a great wish to have some good prints I possess framed, for my little room, and I should not scruple to apply part of the money so earned to that purpose. You asked me which is my room. You remember the bathroom, next to what was my uncle John's bedroom, on the third floor; the room above that my mother has fitted up beautifully for me, and I inhabit it all day long with great complacency and a sort of comfortable, Alexander-Selkirk feeling. And this suggests a question which has seldom been out of my mind, and which I wish to recall to yours. When do you intend to come and see me? I can offer you a nest on the *fourth story*, which is excellent for your health, as free a circulation of air as a London lodging can well afford, and as fine a combination of chimney-pots as even your love of the picturesque could desire.

Dear H——, will you not come and pass a month with us? Now stop a bit, and I will point out to you one by one the inducements

to and advantages of such a step. In the first place, my father and mother both request and wish it, and you know how truly happy it would make me. Your own people can well spare you for a month, and I am sure will be the more inclined to do so from the consideration that change of air and scene will be good for you, and that, though your stock of original ideas is certainly extraordinary, yet you cannot be expected to go on for ever, like a spider, existing mentally in the midst of your own weavings, without every now and then recruiting your strength and taking in a new supply of material.

You shall come to London, that huge mass of matter for thought and observation, and to me, in whom you find so interesting an epitome of all the moods, tenses, and conjugations of every regular and irregular form of "to do, to be, and to suffer;" and when you have been sufficiently *smoked, fogged*, astonished, and edified, you shall return home with one infallible result of your stay with us—increased value for a peaceful life, quiet companions, a wide sea-view, and potatoes roasted in their skins; not but what you shall have the last-mentioned luxury here, if you will but come.

Now, dear H——, I wish this very much, but promise to bear your answer reasonably well; I depend upon your indulging me if you can, and shall try not to behave ill if you don't; so do me justice, and do not give way to your shyness and habits of retirement. I

want you to come here before the 20th of November, and then I will let you go in time to be at home for Christmas. So now my cause is in your hands—*avisez-vous*.

I wonder whether you have heard that my father has been thrashing the editor of the *Age* newspaper, who, it seems, took offence at my father's not appearing on sufficiently familiar terms with him somewhere or other when they met, in revenge for which "coldness" (as he styles it) he has not ceased for the last six months abusing us, every week, in his paper. From what I hear I was the especial mark of his malice; of course I need not tell you that, knowing the character of this publication, I should never have looked at it, and the circumstance of my name appearing in its columns would hardly have been an inducement to me to do so. I knew nothing, therefore, of my own injuries, but heard general expressions of indignation against Mr. Westmacott, and saw that my father was extremely exasperated upon the subject. The other night they were all going to the play, and pressed me very much to go too, but I had something I wished to write, and remained at home. On their return my father appeared to me much excited, and I was informed that having unluckily come across Mr. Westmacott, his wrath had got the better of his self-command, and he had bestowed a severe beating upon that individual. I could not help looking very grave at this; for though I should have been very well satisfied if it could have *rained* a good thrashing upon Mr. Westmacott from

the sky, yet as I do not approve of returning injuries by injuries, I could not rejoice that my father had done so. I suppose he saw that I had no great satisfaction in the event, for he said, "The law affords no redress against such attacks as this paper makes on people, and I thought it time to take justice in my own hands when my daughter is insulted." He then repeated some of the language made use of with reference to me in the *Age*, and I could not help blushing with indignation to my fingers' ends.

Perhaps, under the circumstances, it is not surprising that my father has done what he has, but I think I should have admired him more if he had not. Mr. Westmacott means to bring an action against him, and I am afraid he will have to pay dearly for his momentary indulgence of temper.

I must have done writing, though I had a good deal more to say. God bless you, dear. If you answer this letter directly, I will write you a better next time.

Ever yours,

F. A. K.

The majority of parents—mothers, I believe I ought to say—err in one or other excess with regard to their children. Love either blinds them absolutely to their defects, or makes them so terribly alive to them as to exaggerate every imperfection. It is hard to say which of the errors is most injurious in its effects. I suppose according as the temperament is desponding and diffident, or sanguine and self-sufficient, the one

system or the other is likely to do most harm.

My mother's intensely nervous organization, acute perceptions, and exacting taste made her in everything most keenly alive to our faults and deficiencies. The unsparing severity of the sole reply or comment she ever vouchsafed to our stupidity, want of sense, or want of observation—"I hate a fool"—has remained almost like a cut with a lash across my memory. Her wincing sensitiveness of ear made it all but impossible for me to practice either the piano or singing within hearing of her exclamations of impatient anguish at my false chords and flat intonations; and I suppose nothing but my sister's *unquenchable* musical genius would have sustained her naturally timid, sensitive disposition under such discipline.

Two of our family, my eldest brother and myself, were endowed with such robust self-esteem and elastic conceit as not only defied repression, but, unfortunately for us, could never be effectually snubbed; with my sister and my younger brother the case was entirely different, and encouragement was rather what they required. How well it is for the best and wisest, as well as the least good and least wise, of trainers of youth, that God is above all. I do not myself understand the love that blinds one to the defects of those dear to one; their faults are part of themselves, without which they could not be themselves, no more to be denied or dissembled, it seems to me, than the color of their eyes or hair. I do not feel the scruple which I observe in others, in alluding to the failings of those they love. The mingled good and evil qualities in my friends make up their individual identity, and neither from myself, nor from them, nor from others does it ever occur to

me that half that identity should or could be concealed. I could as soon imagine them without their arms or their legs as without their peculiar moral characteristics, and could no more think of them without their faults than without their virtues.

Many were the pleasant hours, in spite of my misgivings, that I passed with a book in my hand, mechanically pacing the gravel walks of Russell Square. Certain readings of Shakespeare's plays, "Othello" and "Macbeth" especially, in lonely absorption of spirit, I associate for ever with that place. I remember, too, reading at my father's request, during those peripatetic exercises, two plays written by Sheil for his amiable countrywoman, Miss O'Neill, in which she won deserved laurels: "Evadne, or the Statue," and "The Apostate." I never had the pleasure of seeing Miss O'Neill act; but the impression left on my mind by those plays was that her abilities must have been very great to have given them the effect and success they had. As for me, as usual, of course my reply to my father was a disconsolate "I am sure *I* can do nothing with them."

My friend H—— S——, in coming to us in Russell Street, came to a house that had been almost a home to her and her brother when they were children, in the life of my uncle and Mrs. John Kemble, by whom they were regarded with great affection, and whom they visited and stayed with as if they had been young relations of their own.

My hope of learning German and drawing was frustrated by the engrossing calls of my theatrical occupations. The first study was reserved for a long-subsequent season, when I had recourse to it as a temporary distraction in perplexity and sorrow, from

which I endeavored to find relief in some sustained intellectual effort; and I mastered it sufficiently to translate without difficulty Schiller's "Mary Stuart" and some of his minor poems.

As for drawing, that I have once or twice tried to accomplish, but the circumstances of my unsettled and restless life have been unfavorable for any steady effort to follow it up, and I have got no further yet than a passionate desire to know how to draw. If (as I sometimes imagine) in a future existence undeveloped capacities and persistent yearnings for all kinds of good may find expansion and exercise, and not only our moral but also our intellectual being put forth new powers and achieve progress in new directions, then in some of the successive heavens to which, perhaps, I may be allowed to climb (if to any) I shall be a painter of pictures; a mere idea that suggests a heavenly state of long-desired capacity, to possess which, here on earth, I would give at once the finger of either hand least indispensable to an artist. Of the two pursuits, a painter's or a musician's, considered not as arts but as accomplishments merely, the former appears to me infinitely more desirable, for a woman, than the latter far more frequently cultivated one. The one is a sedative, the other an acute stimulant to the nervous system. The one is a perfectly independent and always to be commanded occupation; the other imperatively demands an instrument, utters an audible challenge to attention, and must either command solitude or disturb any society not inclined to become an audience. The one cultivates habits of careful, accurate observation of nature, and requires patient and precise labor in reproducing her models; the other appeals powerfully to the imagination and emotions, and charms almost in proportion as it

excites its votaries. With regard to natural aptitude, the most musical of nations—the German—shows by the impartial training of its common schools how universal it considers a certain degree of musical capacity.

Our musical literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the glees, madrigals, rounds, and catches, requiring considerable skill, and familiarly performed formerly in the country houses and home circles of our gentry, and the noble church music of our cathedral choirs, bear witness to a high musical inspiration, and thorough musical training in their composers and executants.

We seem to have lost this vein of original national music; the Lancashire weavers and spinners are still good choristers, but among the German half of our common Teutonic race, the real feeling for and knowledge of music continues to flourish, while with the Anglo-Saxons of Britain and America it has dwindled and decayed.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, November 8, 1830.
DEAREST H——,

I received your note, for I cannot honor the contents of your last with the name of a letter (whatever title the shape and quantity of the paper it was written on may claim).

I have made up my mind to let you make up yours, without urging you further upon the subject; but I must reply to one thing. You say to me, could you bring with you a strip of sea-shore, a corner of blue sky, or half a dozen waves, you would not hesitate. Allow

my to say that whereas by the sea-side or under a bright sky your society enhances the pleasure derived from them, I now desire it (not having these) as delightful in itself, increasing my enjoyment in the beauties of nature, and compensating for their absence. But I have done; only if Mrs. K—— has held out a false hope to me, she is ferocious and atrocious, and that is all, and so pray tell her.

I had left myself so little room to tell you about this disagreeable business of the *Age* newspaper, in my last, that I thought what I said of it would be almost unintelligible to you. I do not really deserve the sympathy you express for my feelings in the matter, for partly from being totally ignorant of the nature and extent of my injuries—having never, of course, read a line of that scurrilous newspaper—and partly from my indifference to everything that is said about me, I really have felt no annoyance or distress on the subject, beyond, as I told you, one moment's feminine indignation at a coarse expression which was repeated to me, but which in strict truth did not and could not apply to me; and considerable regret that my father should have touched Mr. Westmacott even with a stick, or a "pair of tongs." That individual intends bringing a suit for damages, which makes me very anxious to have my play and rhymes published, if I can get anything for them, as I think the profits derived from my "scribbles" (as good Queen. Anne called her letters) would be better bestowed in paying for that little ebullition of my father's temper than in decorating my

tiny sanctum. What does my poor, dear father expect, but that I shall be bespattered if I am to live on the highway?

Mr. Murray has been kind enough to say he will publish my very original compositions, and I am preparing them for him. I am sorry to say I have heard nothing from my brother; *of* him I have heard, for his whereabout is known and talked of—so much so, indeed, that my father says further concealment is at once useless and ridiculous. I may therefore now tell you that he is at this moment in Spain, trying to levy troops for the cause of the constitutionalists. I need not tell you, dearest H——, how much I regret this, because you will know how deeply I must disapprove of it. I might have thought any young man Quixotic who thus mistook a restless, turbulent spirit, eager to embrace a quarrel not his own, for patriotism and self-devotion to a sacred cause; but in my brother, who had professed aims and purposes so opposed to tumult and war and bloodshed, it seems to me a subject of much more serious regret. Heaven only knows what plans he has formed for the future! His present situation affords anxiety enough to warrant our not looking further in anticipation of vexation, but even if the present be regarded with the best hope of success in his undertaking, the natural consideration must be, as far as he is concerned, "What follows?" It is rather a melancholy consideration that such abilities should be wasted and misapplied. Our own country is in a perilous state of excitement,

and these troubled times make politicians of us all. Of course the papers will have informed you of the risings in Kent and Sussex; London itself is in an unquiet state that suggests the heaving of a volcano before an eruption. It is said that the Duke of Wellington must resign; I am ignorant, but it appears to me that whenever he does it will be a bad day's work for England. The alarm and anxiety of the aristocracy is extreme, and exhibits itself, even as I have had opportunity of observing in society, in the half-angry, half-frightened tone of their comments on public events. If one did not sympathize with their apprehensions, their mode of expressing them would sometimes be amusing.

The aspect of public affairs is injurious to the theater, and these graver interests thin our houses while they crowd the houses of Parliament. However, when we played "The Provoked Husband" before the king and queen the other night, the theater was crammed from floor to ceiling, and presented a most beautiful *coup d'œil*. I have just come out in Mrs. Haller. It seems to have pleased the people very much. I need not tell you how much I dislike the play; it is the quintessence of trashy sentimentalism; but our audiences cry and sob at it till we can hardly hear ourselves speak on the stage, and the public in general rejoices in what the servant-maids call "something deep." My father acts the Stranger with me, which makes it very trying to my nerves, as I mix up all my own personal feelings for him with

my acting, and the sight of his anguish and sense of his displeasure is really very dreadful to me, though it is only all about "stuff and nonsense" after all.

I must leave off writing; I am excruciated with the toothache, which has tormented me without respite all day. I will inclose a line to Mrs. K——, which I will beg you to convey to her.

With kindest love to all your circle, believe me ever yours,

F. A. K.

Thank you for your delicious French comic song; you should come to London to hear how admirably I sing it.

Mrs. K—— was a Miss Dawson, sister of the Right Honorable George Dawson, and the wife of an eminent member of the Irish bar. She was a woman of great mental cultivation and unusual information upon subjects which are generally little interesting to women. She was a passionate partisan of Owen the philanthropist and Combe the phrenologist, and entertained the most sanguine hopes of the regeneration of the whole civilized world through the means of the theories of these benevolent reformers. Except Queen Elizabeth, of glorious memory, I do not think a woman can have existed who combined the love of things futile and serious to the same degree as Mrs. K——. Her feminine taste for fashionable society and the frivolities of dress, together with her sober and solid studies of the gravest sort and her devotion to the speculations of her friends Owen and Combe, constituted a rare

union of contrasts. She was a remarkable instance of the combination exemplified by more than one eminent person of her sex, of a capacity for serious study, solid acquirements, and enlightened and liberal views upon the most important subjects, with a decided inclination for those more trifling pursuits supposed to be the paramount interests of the female mind. She was the dear friend of my dear friend Miss S——, and corresponded with her upon the great subject of social progress with a perfect enthusiasm of theoretical reform.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, November 14th

DEAREST H——,

Thank you a thousand times for your kindness in consenting to come to us. We are all very happy in the hope of having you, nor need you be for a moment nervous or uncomfortable from the idea that we shall receive or treat you otherwise than as one of ourselves. I have left my mother and my aunt in the room which is to be yours, devising and arranging matters for you. It is a very small roost, dear H——, but it is the only spare room in our house, and although it is three stories up, it is next to mine, and I hope good neighborhood will atone for some deficiencies. With regard to interfering with the routine or occupations of the family, they are of a nature which, fortunately for your scruples, renders that impossible. There is but one thing in your letter which rather distressed me: you allude to the inconveniences of a woman traveling in mail coaches in December, and I almost felt, when

I read the sentence, what my aunt Dall told me after I had requested you to come to us now, that it was a want of consideration in me to have invited you at so ungenial a season for traveling. I had one reason for doing so which I hope will excuse the apparent selfishness of the arrangement. Toward the end of the spring I shall be leaving town, I hope to come nearer your land, and the beginning of our spring is seldom much more mild and inviting or propitious for traveling than the winter itself. Then, too, the early spring is the time when our engagements are unavoidably very numerous; to decline going into society is not in my power, and to drag you to my balls (which I love dearly) would, I think, scarce be a pleasure to you (whom I love more), and to go to them when I might be with you would be to run the risk of destroying my taste for the only form of intercourse with my fellow-creatures which is not at present irksome to me. Think, dear H——, if ceasing to dance I should cease to care for universal humanity—indeed, take to hating it, and become an absolute misanthropist! What a risk!

I have heard nothing more of or from John, but the newspaper reports of the proceedings are rather more favorable than they have been, though I fear one cannot place much reliance on them. I do not know how the papers you see speak of the aspect of affairs in England at this moment; the general feeling seems to be one of relief, and that, whatever apprehensions may have been

> entertained for the tranquillity of the country, the storm has blown over for the present. Everything is quiet again in London and promises to remain so, and there seems to be a sort of "drawing of a long breath" sensation in the state of the public mind, though I cannot myself help thinking not only that we have been, but that we still are, on the eve of some great crisis.
>
> Mrs. Haller is going on very well; it is well spoken of, I am told, and upon the whole it seems to have done me credit, though I am surprised it has, for there is nothing in the part that gives me the least satisfaction. My next character, I hear, is to be of a very different order of frailty—Calista, in "The Fair Penitent." However odious both play and part are, there are powerful situations in it, and many opportunities for fine acting, but I am afraid I am quite unequal to such a *turpissime* termagant, with whom my aunt did such tremendous things.

My performance of "The Fair Penitent" was entirely ineffective, and did neither me nor the theater any service; the play itself is a feeble adaptation of Massinger's powerful drama of "The Fatal Dowry," and, as generally happens with such attempts to fit our old plays to our modern stage, the fundamentally objectionable nature of the story could not be reformed without much of the vigorous and terrible effect of the original treatment evaporating in the refining process. Mr. Macready revived Massinger's fine play with considerable success, but both the matter and the manner of our dramatic ancestors is too robust for the audiences of our day, who

nevertheless will go and see "Diane de Lys," by a French company of actors, without wincing. Of Mrs. Siddons's Mrs. Haller, one of her admirers once told me that her majestic and imposing person, and the commanding character of her beauty, militated against her effect in the part. "No man, alive or dead," said he, "would have dared to take a liberty with her; wicked she might be, but weak she could not be, and when she told the story of her ill-conduct in the play, nobody believed her." While another of her devotees, speaking of "The Fair Penitent," said that it was worth sitting out the piece for her scene with Romont alone, and to see "such a splendid animal in such a magnificent rage."

CHAPTER XVIII.

My friend left us after a visit of a few weeks, taking my sister to Ireland with her on a visit to Ardgillan.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, December 21st.

MY DEAREST H——,

My aunt Dall brought me home word that you wished me to send a letter which should meet you on your arrival at Ardgillan; and I would have done so, but that I had previously promised myself that I would do nothing this day till I had copied out the fourth act of "The Star of Seville," and you know unless I am steady at my work this week, I shall break my word a second time,

which is *impossible,* as it ought to have been at first.

[A tragedy in five acts, called "The Star of Seville," at which I was working, is here referred to. My father had directed my attention to the subject by putting in my hands a sketch of the life and works of Lope de Vega, by Lord Holland. The story of La Estrella de Seviglia appeared to my father eminently dramatic, and he excited me to choose it for the subject of a drama. I did so, and Messrs. Saunders and Ottley were good enough to publish it; it had no merit whatever, either dramatic or poetical (although I think the subject gave ample scope for both), and I do not remember a line of it.]

However, it is nine o'clock; I have not ceased writing except to dine, and my act is copied; and now I can give you an hour before bedtime. How are you? and how is dear A ——? Give her several good kisses for me; she is by this time admirable friends with all your circle, I doubt not, and slightly, superficially acquainted with the sea. Tell her she is a careless little puss, though, for she forgot the plate with my effigy on it for Hercules [Miss S——'s nephew] which she was to have given my aunt to pack up. I am quite sorry about it; tell him, however, he shall not lose by it, for I will send him both a plate with the Belvidera and a mug with my own natural head on it, the next time you return home.

I stood in the dining-room listening to your carriage wheels until I believe they were only rolling in my imagination; you cannot

fancy how doleful our breakfast was. Henry was perfectly enraged at finding that A—— was gone in earnest, and my father began to wonder how it had ever come to pass that he had consented to let her go. After breakfast, Dall and I walked to Mr. Cartwright's (the dentist), who fortunately did not torture me much; for if he had, my spirits were so exceedingly low that I am sure I should have disgraced myself and cried like a coward. As soon as we came home I set to work, and have never stopped copying till I began this letter, when, having done my day's work, I thought I might tell you how much I miss you and dear A——.

My father is gone to the theater upon business to-night; my mother is very unwell, and Dall and Henry, as well as myself, are stupid and dreary.

My dear H——, tell me how you bore the journey and the cold, and how dear A—— fared on the road; how you found all your people, and how the dell and the sea are looking. Write to me very *soon* and *very* long. You have let several stitches fall in one of the muffetees you knit for me, and it is all running to ruin; I must see and pick them up at the theater on Thursday night. You have left all manner of things behind you; among others, Channing's two essays; I will keep all your property honestly for you, and shall soon have time to read those essays, which I very much wish to do.

A large supply of Christmas fare arrived from

Stafford to-day from my godmother, and among other things, a huge nosegay for me. I was very grateful for the flowers; they are always a pleasure, and to-day I thought they tried to be a consolation to me.

Now I must break off. Do you remember Madame de Sévigné's "Adieu; ce n'est pas jusqu'à demain—jusqu'à samedi—jusqu' aujourd'hui en huit; c'est adieu pour un an"? and yet I certainly have no right to grumble, for our meeting as we have done latterly is a pleasure as little to have been anticipated as the events which have enabled us to do so, and for which I have so many reasons to be thankful. God bless you, dear H——; kiss dear little A—— for me, and remember me affectionately to all your people.

I am yours ever truly,

FANNY.

Dall sends her best love to both, and all; and Henry bids me tell A—— that the name of the Drury Lane pantomime is "Harlequin and Davy Jones, or Mother Carey's Chickens." Ours is yet a secret; he will write her all about it.

Mr. Cartwright, the eminent dentist, was a great friend of my father's; he was a cultivated gentleman of refined taste, and an enlightened judge and liberal patron of the arts. If anything could have alleviated the half-hour's suspense before one obtained admission to his beautiful library, which was on some occasions (of, I suppose, slight importance) his "operating-room," it would have been the choice

specimens of lovely landscape painting, by the first English masters, which adorned his dining-room. I have sat by Sir Thomas Lawrence at the hospitable dinner-table, where Mr. Cartwright gave his friends the most agreeable opportunity of using the teeth which he, preserved for them, and heard in his house the best classical English vocal music, capitally executed by the first professors of that school, and brilliant amicable rivalry of first-rate piano-forte performances by Cramer, Neukomm, Hummel, and Moscheles, who were all personal friends of their host.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, January 3, 1831.

MY DEAR H——,

I promised you, in the interesting P.S. I annexed to my aunt Dall's letter, to write to you to-day, and I sit down this evening to fulfill my promise. My father is gone out to dinner, my mother is asleep on the sofa, Dall reclines dozing in that blissful armchair you wot of, and Henry, happier than either, is extended snoring before the fire on the softest, thickest, splendidest colored rug (a piece of my mother's workmanship) that the most poetical canine imagination could conceive; I should think an earthly type of those heavenly rugs which virtuous dogs, according to your creed, are destined to enjoy.

[My friend Miss S—— held (without having so eloquently advocated) the theory of her and my friend Miss Cobbe, of the possible future existence of animals; such animals at any rate as had formed

literally a precious part of the earthly existence of their owners, and in whom a certain sense, so nearly resembling conscience, is developed, by their obedience and attachment to the superior race, that it is difficult to consider them unmoral creatures. Perhaps, however, if the choice were given our four-footed friends to share our future prospects and present responsibility, they might decline the offer, "Thankfu' they werena' men, but dogs."]

Dear H——, the pleasant excitement of your society assisted the natural contentedness or indifference of my disposition to throw aside many reflections upon myself and others, the life I lead and its various annoyances, which have been unpleasantly forced upon me since your departure; and when I say that I do not feel happy, you will not count it merely the blue-devilish fancy of a German brain or an English (that is bilious) stomach.

I have a feeling, not of dissatisfaction or discontent so much as of sadness and weariness, though I struggle always and sometimes pretty successfully to rouse myself from it.

You say you wish to know what we did on Christmas Day. I'll tell you. In the morning I went to church, after which I came home and copied "The Star of Seville" till dinner-time. After dinner my mother, who had proposed spending the evening at our worthy pastor's, Mr. Sterky's, finding my father disinclined for that exertion, remained at home and went to sleep; my father likewise, Dall likewise, Henry likewise; and I copied

> on at my play till bedtime: *voilà*. On Monday, contrary to my expectation, I had to play Euphrasia before the pantomime. You know we were to spend Christmas Eve at my aunt Siddons's; we had a delightful evening and I was very happy. My aunt came down from the drawing-room (for we danced in the dining-room on the ground floor) and sat among us, and you cannot think how nice and pretty it was to see her surrounded by her clan, more than three dozen strong; some of them so handsome, and many with a striking likeness to herself, either in feature or expression. Mrs. Harry and Cecy danced with us, and we enjoyed ourselves very much; I wished for dear A—— exceedingly. Wednesday we dined at Mrs. Mayow's.

[My mother's dear friend, Mrs. Mayow, was the wife of a gentleman in a high position in one of our Government offices. She was a West Indian creole, and a singularly beautiful person. Her complexion was of the clear olive-brown of a perfectly Moorish skin, with the color of a damask rose in her cheeks, and lips as red as coral. Her features were classically symmetrical, as was the soft, oval contour of her face; her eyes and hair were as black as night, and the former had a halo of fine lashes of the most magnificent length. She never wore any head-dress but a white muslin turban, the effect of which on her superb dark face was strikingly handsome, and not only its singularity but its noble and becoming simplicity distinguished her in every assembly, amid the various fantastic head-gear of each successive Parisian "fashion of the day." As a girl she had been remarkably slender, but she grew to an enormous

size, without the increased bulk of her person disfiguring or rendering coarse her beautiful face.]

> Thursday I acted Lady Townley, and acted it abominably ill, and was much mortified to find that Cecilia had got my cousin Harry to chaperon her two boys to the play that night; because, as he never before went to see me act, it is rather provoking that the only time he did so I should have sent him to sleep, which he gallantly assured me I did. I do not find cousins so much more polite than brothers (one's natural born plagues). Harry's compliment to my acting had quite a brotherly tenderness, I think. Friday, New Year's Eve, we went to a ball at Mrs. G——'s, which I did not much enjoy; and yesterday, New Year's Day, Henry and I spent the evening at Mrs. Harry's. There was no one there but Cecy and her two boys, and we danced, almost without stopping, from eight till twelve.

[The lads my cousin Cecilia called her boys were the two younger sons of her brother George Siddons, Mrs. Siddons's eldest son, then and for many years after collector of the port at Calcutta. These lads and their sisters were being educated in England, and were spending their Christmas holidays with their grandmother, Mrs. Siddons. The youngest of these three schoolboys, Henry, was the father of the beautiful Mrs. Scott-Siddons of the present day. It was in the house of my cousin George Siddons, then one of the very pleasantest and gayest in Calcutta, that his young nephew Harry, son of his sister-in-law, my dear Mrs. Harry Siddons, was to find a home on his arrival in India, and subsequently a wife in

Harriet, the second daughter of the house.]

I am to act Juliet to-morrow, and Calista on Thursday; Friday and Saturday I am to act Mrs. Haller and Lady Townley at Brighton. I shall see the sea, that's one comfort, and it will be something to live upon for some time to come. Next Wednesday week I am to come out in Bianca, in Milman's "Fazio." Do you know the play? It is very powerful, and my part is a very powerful one indeed. I have hopes it may succeed greatly. Mr. Warde is to be my Fazio, for, I hear, people object to my having my father's constant support, and wish to see me act *alone*; what geese, to be sure! I wonder whether they think my father has hold of strings by the means of which he moves my arms and legs! I am very glad something likely to strike the public is to be given before "Inez de Castro" (a tragedy of Miss Mitford's), for it will need all the previous success of a fine play and part to carry us safely through that.

I have not seen Mr. Murray again; I conclude he is out of town just now.

We have made all inquiries about poor dear A——'s trunk, and of course, as soon as we hear of it, it will be sent to her; I am very sorry for her, poor dear little child, but I advise her, when she does get them, to put on each of her new dresses for an hour by turns, and sit opposite the glass in them. Good-by, dear H——. Your affectionate

F. K.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, 6th January, 1831.

DEAREST H——,

I have only time to say two words to you, for I am in the midst of preparations for our flight to Brighton, to-morrow. Thank you for your last letter; I liked it very much, and will answer it at length when we come back to town.

Mr. Murray has got my MSS., but I have yet heard nothing about it from him. My fire is not in that economical invention, the "miserable basket" [an iron frame fitting inside our common-sized grate to limit the extravagant consumption of coal], but well spread out in the large comfortable grate; yet I am sitting with my door and windows all wide open; it is a lovely, bright, mild spring day. I do not lose my time any more of a morning watching the fire kindling, for the housemaid lights it before I get out of bed, so my poetry and philosophy are robbed of a most interesting subject of meditation.

With regard to what you say about A——, I do not know that I expected her to love, though I was sure she would admire, nature; she is very young yet, and her quick, observant mind and tendency to wit and sarcasm make human beings more amusing, if not more interesting, to her than inanimate objects. It is not the beauty of nature alone, as it appeals merely to our senses, that produces that passionate love for it which induces us to prefer communion with it to the intercourse of our fellows. The elevated

trains of thought, and the profound and sublime aspirations which the external beauty of the world suggests, draw and rivet our mind and soul to its contemplation, and produce a sort of awful sense of companionship with the Unseen, which cannot, I think, be an experience of early youth. For then the volatile, vivid, and various spirit, with its sympathizing and communicative tendency, has a strong propensity to spend itself on that which can return its value in like commodity; and exchange of thought and feeling is a preponderating desire and necessity, and human fellowship and intercourse is naturally attractive to unworn and unwearied human nature. I suppose the consolatory element in the beautiful *un*human world in which we live is not often fully appreciated by the young, they want comparatively so little of it; youth is itself so thoroughly its own consoler. Some years hence, I dare say A—— will love both the sea and sky better than she does now. To a certain degree, too, the love of solitude, which generally accompanies a deep love for nature, is a kind of selfishness that does not often exist in early life.

I am desired to close this letter immediately; I have therefore only time to add that I act Calista to-night here, Mrs. Haller to-morrow at Brighton, and Saturday, also there, Lady Townley. On Monday I act Juliet here, and on Wednesday Bianca in "Fazio"—when pray for me! Now you know where to think of me. I will write to you a *real* letter on Sunday.

> Kiss A—— for me, and do not be unhappy, my dear, for you will soon see me again; and in the meantime I advise you, as you think my picture so much more agreeable than myself, to console yourself with that. Good-by.
>
> Your affectionate
>
> FANNY.

The fascination of sitting by a brook and watching the lapsing water, or, on the sands, the oncoming, uprising, breaking, and melting away of the white wave-crests, is, I suppose, matter of universal experience. I do not know whether watching fire has the same irresistible attraction for everybody. It has almost a stronger charm for me; and the hours I have spent sitting on the rug in front of my grate, and watching the wonderful creature sparkling and glowing there, have been almost more than I dare remember. I was obliged at last, in order not to waste half my day in the contemplation of this bewitching element, to renounce a practice I long indulged in of lighting my own fire; but to this moment I envy the servant who does that office, or should envy her but that she never remains on her knees worshiping the beautiful, subtle spirit she has evoked, as I could still find it in my heart to do.

I think I remember that Shelley had this passion for fire-gazing; it's a comfort to think that whatever he could *say*, he could never *see* more enchanting things in his grate than I have in mine; but indeed, even for Shelley, the motions and the colors of flames are unspeakable.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, January 9, 1831.

DEAR H——,

I promised you a letter to-day, and if I can do so now, at least I will begin to keep my promise, though I think it possible my courage may fail me after the first side of my sheet of paper. We arrived in town from Brighton on this afternoon at four o'clock, and though it is not yet ten I am so weary, and have so much to do to-morrow (rehearsing "Fazio" and acting Juliet), that I think I shall not sit up much longer to-night, even to write to you.

We found my mother tolerably well, and Henry, who had been out skating all day, in great beauty and high spirits. I must now tell you what I had not room for when I wrote you those few lines in A——'s letter.

Mr. Barton, a friend of John's who traveled with him in Germany, and whose sister has lately married John Sterling (of whom you have often heard us speak), called here the other day, and during the course of a long visit told us a great deal of the very beginning of this Spanish expedition, and of the share Mr. Sterling and Richard Trench [the present venerable archbishop of Dublin] had in its launching.

It seems (though he would not say whence they derived them) that they were plentifully supplied with funds, with which they purchased and manned a vessel destined to carry arms and ammunition to Spain for the purposes of the revolutionists. This ship they

put under command of an experienced *smuggler*, and it was actually leaving the mouth of the Thames with Sterling and Mr. Trench on board it, bound for Spain, when by order of Lord Aberdeen it was stopped. Our two young gentlemen jumped into a boat and made their escape, but Mr. Sterling, hearing that government threatened to proceed against the captain of the captured vessel, came forward and owned it as his property, and exonerated the man, as far as he could, from any share of the blame attaching to an undertaking in which he was an irresponsible instrument. Matters were in this state, with a prosecution pending over John Sterling, when the ministry was changed, and nothing further has been done or said by government on the subject since.

My brother had gone off to Gibraltar previously to all this, to take measures for facilitating their landing; he is now quietly and I hope comfortably wintering there. Torrijos, it seems, is not at all disheartened, but is waiting for the propitious moment, which, however, from the appearance of things, I should not consider likely to be at hand just yet. Mr. Sterling has, I understand, been so seriously ill since his marriage that at one time his life was despaired of, and even now that he is a little recovered he is ordered to Madeira as soon as he can be moved. This is very sad for his poor bride.

Of our home circle I have nothing to tell you. My father, Dall, and I had a very delightful day on Saturday at Brighton. After a lovely

day's journey, we arrived there on Friday. Our companion in the coach luckily happened to be a son of Dr. Burney's, who was an old and intimate friend of my father's, and they discoursed together the whole way along, of all sorts of events and people: of my uncle John and my aunt Siddons, in their prime; of Mrs. Jordan and the late king; of the present one, Harlow, Lawrence, and innumerable other folk of note and notoriety. Among other things they had a long discussion on the subject of Hamlet's feigned or—as my father maintains and I believe—real madness; all this formed a very amusing accompaniment to the history of Sir Launcelot du Lac, which I was reading with much delight when I was not listening to their conversation.

I like all that concerns the love adventures of these valorous knights of yore; but their deadly blows and desperate thrusts, their slashing, gashing, mashing, mangling, and hewing bore me to death. The fate of Guinevere interested me deeply, but Sir Launcelot's warlike exploits I got dreadfully weary of; I prefer him greatly in hall and bower rather than in tournament and battle-field.

We got into Brighton at half-past four, and had just time to dine, dress, and go to the theater, where we were to act "The Stranger." The house was very full indeed, but my reception was not quite what I had expected; for whether they were disappointed in my dress (Mrs. Haller being traditionally clothed

in droopacious white muslin, and I dressing her in gray silk, which is both stiff and dull looking, as I think it should be), or whether, which I think still more likely, they were disappointed in my "personal appearance," which, as you know, is neither tragical nor heroic, I know not, but I thought their welcome rather, cold; but the truth is, I believe my London audience spoils me for every other. However, the play went off admirably, and I believe everybody was satisfied, not excepting the manager, who assured me so full and *enthusiastic* a house had not been seen in Brighton for many years.

Our rooms at the inn [the old Ship was then *the* famous Brighton hotel] looked out upon the sea, but it was so foggy when we entered Brighton that although I perceived the *motion* of the waves through the mist that hung over them, their color and every object along the shore was quite indistinct. The next morning was beautiful. Dall and I ran down to the beach before breakfast; there are no sands, unluckily, but we stood ankle-deep in the shingles, watching the ebbing tide and sniffing the sweet salt air for a long time with great satisfaction. After breakfast we rehearsed "The Provoked Husband," and from the theater proceeded to take a walk.

All this was very fine, but still it was streets and houses; and there were crowds of gay people parading up and down, looking as busy about nothing and as full of themselves as if the great awful sea had not been close

beside them. In fact, I was displeased with the levity of their deportment, and the contrast of all that fashionable frivolity with the grandest of all natural objects seemed to me incongruous and discordant; and I was so annoyed at finding myself by the sea-side and *yet* still surrounded with all the glare and gayety of London, that I think I wished myself at the bottom of the cliff and Brighton at the bottom of the sea. However, we walked on and on, beyond the Parade, beyond the town, till we had nothing but the broad open downs to contrast with the broad open sea, and then I was completely happy. I gave my muff to my father and my fur tippet to Dall, for the sun shone powerfully on the heights, and I walked and ran along the edge of the cliffs, gazing and pondering, and enjoying the solemn sound and the brilliant sight, and the nervous excitement of a slight sense of fear as I peeped over at the depth below me. From this diversion, however, my father called me away, and, to console me for not allowing me to run the risk of being dashed to pieces, offered to run a race up a small hill with me, and beat me hollow.

We had walked about four miles when we halted at one of the Preventive Service stations to look about us. The tide had not yet come in, but its usual height when up was indicated, first by a delicate, waving fringe of sea-weed, like very bright green moss, and then, nearer in shore, by an incrustation of chalk washed from the cliffs, which formed a deep embossed silver embroidery along the coast as far as eye

could see. The sunshine was dazzling, and its light on the detached masses of milky chalk which lay far beneath us made them appear semi-transparent, like fragments of alabaster or carnelian. I was wishing that I *could but* get down the cliff, when a worthy sailor appeared toiling up it, and I discovered his winding stair case cut in the great chalk wall, down which I proceeded without further ado. I was a little frightened, for the steps were none of the most regular or convenient, and I felt as if I were hanging (and at an uncomfortable distance from either) between heaven and earth. I got down safe, however, and ran to the water's edge, danced a galop on one smooth little sand island, waited till the tide, which was coming up, just touched my toes, gave it a kick of cowardly defiance, and then showed it a fair pair of heels and scrambled up the cliff again, very much enchanted with my expedition.

I think a fight with smugglers up that steep staircase at night, with a heavy sea rolling and roaring close under it, would be glorious! When I reached the top my father said it was time to go home, so we returned. The Parade was crowded like Hyde Park in the height of the season [Thackeray called Brighton London-super-Mare], and when once I was out of the crowd and could look down upon it from our windows as it promenaded up and down, I never saw anything gayer: carriages of every description—most of them open—cavalcades of ladies and gentlemen riding to and fro, throngs of smart bonnets and fine dresses;

and beyond all this the high tide, with one broad crimson path across it, thrown by the sun, looking as if it led into some enchanted world beyond the waters.

I thought of dear A——; for though she is seeing the sea—and I think the sea at Ardgillan, with its lovely mountains on one side and Skerries on the other, far more beautiful than this—I am sure she would have been enchanted with the life, the bustle, and brilliancy of the Parade combined with its fine sea view, for I, who am apt rather selfishly to wish myself alone in the enjoyment of nature, looked at the bright, moving throng with pleasure when once I was out of it.

Our house at the theater at night was very fine; and now, as you are perhaps tired of Brighton, you will not be sorry to get home with me; but pray communicate the end of our "land sorrow" to A——. We were to start for London Sunday morning at ten [a journey of six hours by coach, now of less than two by rail], and my father had taken three inside places in a coach, which was to call for us at our inn. I ran down to the beach and had a few moments alone there. It was a beautiful morning, and the fishing boats were one by one putting out into the calmest sleepy sea. I longed to ask to be taken on board one of them; but I was summoned away to the coach, and found on reaching it that, the fourth place being occupied by a sickly looking woman with a sickly looking child nearly as big as herself in her lap, my

father, notwithstanding the coldness of the morning, had put himself on the outside. I went to sleep; from which blessed refuge of the wretched I was recalled by a powerful and indescribable smell, which, seizing me by the nose, naturally induced me to open my eyes. Mother and daughter were each devouring a lump of black, strong, greasy plum cake; as a specific, I presume, against (or for?) sickness in a stage-coach.

The late Duke of Beaufort, when Marquis of Worcester, used frequently to amuse himself by driving the famous fast Brighton coach, the Highflyer. One day, as my father was hastily depositing his shilling gratuity in his driver's outstretched hand, a shout of laughter, and a "Thank ye, Charles Kemble," made him aware of the gentleman Jehu under whose care he had performed the journey.

WEDNESDAY, January 12, 1831.

DEAREST H——,

I received your letter dated the 7th the night before last, and purposed ending this long epistle yesterday evening with an answer to it, but was prevented by having to go with my mother to dine with Mrs. L——, that witty woman and more than middle-aged beauty you have heard me speak of. I was repaid for the exertion I had not made very willingly, for I had a pleasant dinner. This lady has a large family and very large fortune, which at her death goes to her eldest

son, who is a young man of enthusiastically religious views and feelings; he has no profession or occupation, but devotes himself to building chapels and schools, which he himself superintends with unwearied assiduity; and though he has never taken orders, he preaches at some place in the city, to which crowds of people flock to hear him; none of which is at all agreeable to his mother, whose chief anxiety, however, is lest some one of the fair Methodists who attend his exhortations should admire his earthly expectations as much as his heavenly prospects, and induce this young apostle to marry her for her soul's sake; all which his mother told mine, with many lamentations over the godly zeal of her "serious" son, certainly not often made with regard to young men who are likely to inherit fine fortunes and estates. One of this young gentleman's sisters is strongly imbued with the same religious feeling, and I think her impressions deepened by her very delicate state of health. I am much attracted by her gentle manner, and the sweet, serious expression of her face, and the earnest tone of her conversation; I like her very much.

My mother is reading Moore's "Life of Byron," and has fallen in love with the latter and in hate with his wife. She declares that he was originally good, generous, humble, religious —indeed, everything that a man can be, short of absolute perfection. She thinks me narrow-minded and prejudiced because I do not care to read his life, and because, in spite of all Moore's assertions, I maintain that with

Byron's own works in one's hand his character cannot possibly be a riddle to anybody. I dare say the devil may sometimes be painted blacker than he is; but Byron has a fancy for the character of Lucifer, and seems to me, on the contrary, *très pauvre diable*. I have no idea that Byron was half fiend, half man (at least, no more so than all of us are); I dare say he was not at all really an atheist, as he has been reputed; indeed, I do not think Lord Byron, in spite of all the fuss that has been made about him, was by any means an uncommon character. His genius was indeed rare, but his pride, vanity, and selfishness were only so in degree. You know, H——, nobody was ever a more fanatical worshiper of his poetry than I was: time was that I devoured his verses (poison as they were to me) like "raspberry tarts;" I still know, and remember with delight, their exquisite beauty and noble vigor, but they don't agree with me. And, without knowing anything of his religious doubts or moral delinquencies, I cannot at all agree with Mr. Moore that upon the showing of his own works Byron was a "good man." If he was, no one has done him such injustice as himself; and if *he* was *good*, then what was Milton? and what genial and gentle Shakespeare?

Good-by, dear H——; write me along "thank you" for this longest of mortal letters, and believe that I am your ever affectionate

F. A. K.

I began living upon my allowance on New

Year's Day, and am keeping a most rigorous account of every farthing I spend. I have a tolerable "acquisitiveness" among my other organs, but think I would rather get than keep money, and to earn would always be pleasanter to me than to save. I act in "Fazio" to-night, Friday, and Monday next, so you will know where to find me on those evenings.

MONDAY, 27th.

DEAR H——,

Horace Twiss has been out of town, and I have been obliged to delay this for a frank. You will be glad, I know, to hear that "Fazio" has made a great hit. Milman is coming to see me in it to-night; I wish I could induce him to write me such another part.

We are over head and ears in the mire of chancery again. The question of the validity of our—the great theater—patents is now before Lord Brougham; I am afraid they are not worth a farthing. I am to hear from Mr. Murray some day this week; considering the features of my handwriting, it is no wonder it has taken him some time to become acquainted with the MSS.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, January 29, 1831.

MY DEAR H——,

All our occupations have been of a desultory and exciting kind, and all our doings and

sayings have been made matter of surprise and admiring comment; of course, therefore, we are disinclined for anything like serious or solid study, and naturally conclude that sayings and doings so much admired and wondered at *are* admirable and astonishing. A—— is possessed of strong powers of ridicule, and the union of this sarcastic vein with a vivid imagination seems to me unusual; their prey is so different that they seldom hunt in company, I think. When I heard that she was reading "Mathilde" (Madame Cottin), I was almost afraid of its effect upon her. I remember at school, when I was her age, crying three whole days and half nights over it; but I sadly overrated her sensibility. Her letter to me contained a summary, abusive criticism of "Mathilde" as a book, and ended by presenting to me one of those ludicrous images which I abhor, because, while they destroy every serious or elevated impression, they are so absurd that one cannot defend one's self from the "idiot laughter" they excite, and leave one no associations but grinning ones with one's romantic ideals. Her letters are very clever and make me laugh exceedingly, but I am sorry she has such a detestation of Mrs. Marcet and natural philosophy. As for her letters being shown about, I am not sorry that my indiscretion has relieved A—— from a restraint which, if it had only been disagreeable to her, would not have mattered so much, but which is calculated to destroy all possibility of free and natural correspondence, and inevitably renders

letters mere compositions and their young authors vain and pretentious. I have always thought the system a bad one, for under it, if a girl's letters are thought dull, she feels as if she had made a failure, and if they are laughed at and passed from hand to hand with her knowledge, the result is much worse; and in either case, what she writes is no longer the simple expression of her thoughts and feelings, but samples of wit, ridicule, and comic fancy which are to be thought amusing and clever by others than those to whom they are addressed.

You say my mother in her note to you speaks well of my acting in Bianca. It has succeeded very well, and I think I act some of it very well; but my chief pleasure in its success was certainly her approbation. She is a very severe critic, and, as she censures sharply, I am only too thankful when I escape her condemnation. I think you will be pleased with Bianca. I was surprised when I came to act it at finding how terribly it affected me, for I am not naturally at all jealous, and in this play, while feigning to be so, it seemed to me that it must be really the most horrible suffering conceivable; I am almost sorry that I can imagine it well enough to represent it well.

You say that we love intellect, but I do not agree with you; I do not think intellect excites love. I do not even think that it increases our love for those we do love, though it adds admiration to our affection. I certainly do admire intellect immensely;

mental power, which allied to moral power, goodness, is a force to uphold the universe.

I have forsworn all discussions about Byron; my mother and I differ so entirely on the subject that, as I cannot adopt her view of his character, I find it easier to be silent about my own. Perhaps her extreme admiration of him may have thrown me into a deeper disapprobation than I should otherwise have expressed. He has many excuses, doubtless: the total want of early restraint, the miserable influence of the injudicious mother who alternately idolized and victimized him, the bitter castigation of his first plunge into literature, and then the flattering, fawning, fulsome adoration of his habitual associates, of course were all against him; but, after all, one cannot respect the man who strikes colors to the enemy as one does the one who comes conqueror out of the conflict. I now believe that there is a great deal of unreality in those sentiments to which the charm of his verses lent an appearance of truth and depth; in fact, his poetical feelings will sometimes stand the test of sober reflection quite as little as his grammar will that of a severe application of the rules of syntax. He has written immensely for mere effect, but all young people read him, and young people are not apt to analyze closely what they feel strongly, and, judging by my own experience, I should think Byron had done more mischief than one would like to be answerable for. When I said this the other day to my mother, she replied by referring to

his "Don Juan," supposing that I alluded to his profligacy; but it is not "Don Juan" only or chiefly that I think so mischievous, but "Manfred," "Cain," "Lucifer," "Childe Harold," and through them all Byron's own spirit—the despondent, defiant, questioning, murmuring, bitter, proud spirit, that acts powerfully and dangerously on young brains and throws poison into their natural fermentation.

Since you say that my perpetual quotation of that stupid song, "Old Wilson is Dead," worries you, I will renounce my delight in teasing you with it. The love of teasing is, of course, only a base form of the love of power. Mr. Harness and I had a long discussion the other night about the Cenci; he maintains your opinion, that the wicked old nobleman was absolutely mad; but I argued the point stoutly for his sanity, and very nearly fell into the fire with dismay when I was obliged to confess that if he was not mad, then his actuating motive was simply *the love of power*. Do you know that that play was sent over by Shelley to England with a view to Miss O'Neill acting Beatrice Cenci? If it were ever possible that the piece could be acted, I should think an audience might be half killed with the horror of that entrance of Beatrice when she describes the marble pavement sliding from beneath her feet.

Did my mother tell you in her note that Milman was at the play the other night, and said I had made Bianca exactly what he

intended? I wish he would write another tragedy. I think perhaps he will, from something Murray said the other day. That eminent publisher still has my MSS. in his possession, but you know I can take things easily, and I don't feel anxious about his decision. I act in "Fazio" Monday and Wednesday, and Friday and Saturday Mrs. Beverley and Belvidera at Brighton.

I was inexpressibly relieved by receiving a letter from my brother, and the intelligence that if I answered him he would be able to receive my reply, which I made immediate speed to send him.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

My brother John is alive, safe and well, in Gibraltar. You deserve to know this, but it is all I can say to you. My mother has suffered so much that she hardly feels her joy; it has broken her down, and I, who have borne up well till now, feel prostrated by this reprieve. God be thanked for all his mercies! I can say no more.

F. A. K.

CHAPTER XIX.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, February 7, 1831.

MY DEAR H——,

I found your lecture waiting for me on my return from Brighton; I call it thus because if your two last were less than letters your yesterday's one is more; but I shall not attempt at present to follow you to the misty heights whither our nature tends, or dive with you into the muddy depths whence it springs. I have heard from my brother John, and now expect almost hourly to see him. The Spanish revolution, as he now sees and as many foresaw, is a mere vision. The people are unready, unripe, unfit, and therefore unwilling; had it not been so they would have done their work themselves; it is as impossible to urge on the completion of such a change before the time as to oppose it when the time is come. John now writes that, all hope of rousing the Spaniards being over, and their party consequently dispersing, he is thinking of bending his steps homeward, and talks of once more turning his attention to the study of the law. I know not what to say or think. My cousin, Horace Twiss, was put into Parliament by Lord Clarendon, but the days of such parliamentary patronage are numbered, and I do not much deplore it, though I sometimes fancy that the House of Commons, could it by any means have been opened to him, might perhaps have been the best sphere for John. His natural abilities are brilliant, and his eloquence, energy, and activity of mind might perhaps have been made more and more quickly available for good purposes in that than in any other career.

I am not familiar with all that Burns has

written; I have read his letters, and know most of his songs by heart. His passions were so violent that he seems to me in that respect to have been rather a subject for poetry than a poet; for though a poet should perhaps have a strongly passionate nature, he should also have power enough over it to be able to observe, describe, and, if I may so say, experimentalize with it, as he would with the passions of others. I think it would better qualify a man to be a poet to be able to perceive rather than liable to feel violent passion or emotion. May not such things be known of without absolute experience? What is the use of the poetical imagination, that lower inspiration, which, like the higher one of faith, is the "evidence of things not seen"? Troubled and billowy waters reflect nothing distinctly on their surface; it is the still, deep, placid element that gives back the images by which it is surrounded or that pass over its surface. I do not of course believe that a good man is necessarily a poet, but I think a devout man is almost always a man with a poetical imagination; he is familiar with ideas which are essentially sublime, and in the act of adoration he springs to the source of all beauty through the channel by which our spirits escape most effectually from their chain, the flesh, and their prison-house, the world, and rise into communion with that supreme excellence from which they originally emanated and into whose bosom they will return. I cannot now go into all I think about this, for I have so many other things to talk about. Since I began this letter

I have heard a report that John is a prisoner, that he has been arrested and sent to Madrid. Luckily I do not believe a word of this; if he has rendered himself obnoxious to the British authorities in Gibraltar they may have locked him up for a week or two there, and I see no great harm in that; but that he should have been delivered to the Spaniards and sent to Madrid I do not believe, because I know that the whole revolutionary party is going to pieces, and that they have neither the power nor the means to render themselves liable to such a disagreeable distinction. We expect him home every day. Only conceive, dear H ——, the ill-fortune that attends us: my father, or rather the theater, is involved in six lawsuits I He and my mother are neither of them quite well; anxiety naturally has much share in their indisposition.

I learned Beatrice this morning and the whole of it, in an hour, which I tell you because I consider it a feat. I am delighted at the thoughts of acting it; it will be the second part which I shall have acted with real pleasure; Portia is the other, but Beatrice is not nearly so nice. I am to act it next Thursday, when pray think of me.

I do not know whether you have seen anything in the papers about a third theater; we have had much anxiety, vexation, and expense about it, but I have no doubt that Mr. Arnold will carry the question. The great people want a plaything for this season, and have set their hearts upon that. I acted Belvidera to my father's Jaffier at Brighton;

you cannot imagine how great a difference it produced in my acting. Mrs. Siddons and Miss O'Neill had a great advantage over me in their tragic partners. Have you heard that Mr. Hope, the author of "Anastasius," is just dead? That was a wonderfully clever book, of rather questionable moral effects, I think; the same sort of cynical gloom and discontent which pervade Byron's writings prevail in that; and I thought it a pity, because in other respects it seems a genuine book, true to life and human nature. A few days before I heard of his death, Mr. Harness was discussing with me a theory of Hope's respecting the destiny of the human soul hereafter. His notion is that all spirit is after death to form but one whole spiritual existence, a sort of *lumping* which I object to. I should like always to be able to know myself from somebody else.

I *do* read the papers sometimes, dear H——, and, whenever I do, I wonder at you and all sensible people who make a daily practice of it; the proceedings of Parliament would make one angry if they did not make one so sad, and some of the debates would seem to me laughable but that I know they are lamentable.

I have just finished Channing's essay on Milton, which is admirable.

My cousin Harry sails for India on Thursday; his mother is making a brave fight of it, poor soul! I met them all at my aunt Siddons's last night; she was remarkably well, and

"charming," as she styles herself when that is the case. Good-by. Always affectionately yours,

FANNY.

I suppose it is one of the peculiarities of the real poetical temperament to receive, as it were, a double impression of its own phenomena—one through the senses, affections, and passions, and one through the imagination—and to have a perpetual tendency to make intellectual capital of the experiences of its own sensuous, sentimental, and passionate nature. In the above letter, written so many years ago, I have used the term *experimentalizing* with his own nature as the process of a poet's mind; but though self-consciousness and self-observation are almost inseparable from the poetical organization, Goethe is the only instance I know of what could, with any propriety, be termed self-experimentalizing—he who wrung the heart and turned the head of the whole reading Europe of his day by his own love passages with Madame Kestner transcribed into "The Sorrows of Werther."

Self-illustration is perhaps a better term for the result of that passionate egotism which is so strong an element in the nature of most poets, and the secret of so much of their power. *Ils s'intéressent tellement à ce qui les regarde*, that they interest us profoundly in it too, and by the law of our common nature, and the sympathy that pervades it, their great difference from their kind serves but to enforce their greater likeness to it.

Goethe's nature, however, was not at all a predominantly passionate one; so much the contrary, indeed, that one hardly escapes the impression all

through his own record of his life that he *felt* through his overmastering intellect rather than his heart; and that he analyzed too well the processes of his own feelings ever to have been carried by them beyond the permission of his will, or out of sight of that æsthetic self-culture, that development, which really seems to have been his prevailing passion. A strong histrionic vein mixes, too, with his more imaginative mental qualities, and perpetually reveals itself in his assumption of fictitious characters, in his desire for producing "situations" in his daily life, and in his conscious "effects" upon those whom he sought to impress.

His genius sometimes reminds me of Ariel—the subtle spirit who, observing from aloof, as it were (that is, from the infinite distance of his own *unmoral*, demoniacal nature), the follies and sins and sorrows of humanity, understands them all and sympathizes with none of them; and describes, with equal indifference, the drunken, brutish delight in his music expressed by the coarse Neapolitan buffoons and the savage gorilla, Caliban, and the abject self-reproach and bitter, poignant remorse exhibited by Antonio and his fellow conspirators; telling Prospero that if *he* saw them he would pity them, and adding, in his passionless perception of their anguish, "I should, sir, *were I human*."

There is a species of remote partiality in Goethe's mode of delineating the sins and sorrows of his fellows, that seems hardly human and still less divine; "*Das ist dämonisch*," to use his own expression about Shakespeare, who, however, had nothing whatever in common with that quality of moral *neutrality* of the great German genius.

Perhaps nothing indicates what I should call Goethe's intellectual *unhumanity* so much as his absolute want of sympathy with the progress of the race. He was but mortal man, however, though he had the head of Jove, and Pallas Athena might have sprung all armed from it. Once, and once only, if I remember rightly, in his conversations with Eckermann, the cause of mankind elicits an expression of faith and hope from him, in some reference to the future of America. I recollect, on reading the second part of "Faust" with my friend Abeken (assuredly the most competent of all expounders of that extraordinary composition), when I asked him what was the signification of that final cultivation of the barren sea sand, in Faust's blind old age, and cried, "Is it possible that he wishes to indicate the hopelessness of all attempt at progress?" his replying, "I am afraid he was no believer in it." And so it comes that his letters to Madame von Stein leave one only amazed with the more sorrowful admiration that the unrivaled genius of the civilized world in its most civilized age found perfect satisfaction in the inane routine of the life of a court dignitary in a petty German principality.

It is worthy of note how, in the two instances of his great masterpieces, "Faust" and "Wilhelm Meister," Goethe has worked up in a sequel all the superabundant material he had gathered for his subject; and in each case how the life-blood of the poet pulses through the first part, while the second is, as it were, a mere storehouse of splendid intellectual supply which he has wrought into elaborate phantasmagoria, dazzling in their brilliancy and wonderful in their variety, but all alike difficult to comprehend and sympathize with—the rare mental fragments, precious like diamond dust, left after the cutting of those two perfect gems.

Free-trade had hardly uttered a whisper yet upon any subject of national importance when the monopoly of theatrical property was attacked by Mr. Arnold, of the English Opera House, who assailed the patents of the two great theaters, Covent Garden and Drury Lane, and demanded that the right to act the legitimate drama (till then their especial privilege) should be extended to all British subjects desirous to open play-houses and perform plays. A lawsuit ensued, and the proprietors of the great houses—"his Majesty's servants," by his Majesty's royal patent since the days of the merry monarch—defended their monopoly to the best of their ability. My father, questioned before a committee of the House of Commons upon the subject, showed forth the evils likely, in his opinion, to result to the dramatic art and the public taste by throwing open to unlimited speculation the right to establish theaters and give theatrical representations. The great companies of good sterling actors would be broken up and dispersed, and there would no longer exist establishments sufficiently important to maintain any large body of them; the best plays would no longer find adequate representatives in any but a few of the principal parts, the characters of theatrical pieces produced would be lowered, the school of fine and careful acting would be lost, no play of Shakespeare's could be decorously put on the stage, and the profession and the public would alike fare the worse for the change. But he was one of the patented proprietors, one of the monopolists, a party most deeply interested in the issue, and therefore, perhaps, an incompetent judge in the matter. The cause went against us, and every item of his prophecy concerning the stage has undoubtedly come to pass. The fine companies of the great

theaters were dissolved, and each member of the body that together formed so bright a constellation went off to be the solitary star or planet of some minor sphere. The best plays no longer found decent representatives for any but one or two of their first parts; the pieces of more serious character and higher pretension as dramatic works were supplanted by burlesques and parodies of themselves; the school of acting of the Kembles, Young, the Keans, Macready, and their contemporaries, gave place to no school at all of very clever ladies and gentlemen, who certainly had no pretension to act tragedy or declaim blank verse, but who played low comedy better than high, and lowest farce best of all, and who for the most part wore the clothes of the sex to which they did not belong. Shakespeare's plays *all* became historical, and the profession was decidedly the worse for the change; I am not aware, however, that the public has suffered much by it.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March 5, 1831.

MY DEAREST H——,

I am extremely obliged to you for your long account of Mrs. John Kemble, and all the details respecting her with which, as you knew how intensely interesting they were likely to be to me, you have so kindly filled your letter. Another time, if you can afford to give a page or two to her interesting dog, Pincher, I shall be still more grateful; you know it is but omitting the superfluous word or two you squeeze in about yourself.

As for the journal I keep, it is—as what is not?—a matter of mingled good and bad influences and results. I am so much alone

that I find this pouring out of my thoughts and feelings a certain satisfaction; but unfortunately one's book is only a recipient, and not a commentary, and I miss the sifting, examining, scrutinizing, discussing intercourse that compels one to the analysis of one's own ideas and sentiments, and makes the society of any one with whom one communicates unreservedly so much more profitable, as well as pleasurable, than this everlasting self-communion. I miss my wholesome bitters, my daily dose of contradiction; and you need not be jealous of my book, for it is a miserable *pis aller* for our interminable talks.

I had a visit from J—— F—— the other day, and she stayed an hour, talking very pleasantly, and a little after your fashion; for she propounded the influence of matter over mind and the impossibility of preserving a sound and vigorous spirit in a weak and suffering body. I am blessed with such robust health that my moral shortcomings, however anxious I may be to refer them to side-ache, toothache, or any other ache, I am afraid deserve small mercy on the score of physical infirmity; but she, poor thing, I am sorry to say, suffers much and often from ill health, and complained, with evident experience, of the difficulty of preserving a cheerful spirit and an even temper in the dreary atmosphere of a sick-room.

When she was gone I set to work with "Francis I.," and corrected all the errors in the meter which Mr. Milman had had the

kindness to point out to me. I then went over Beatrice with my mother, who takes infinite pains with me and seems to think I profit. She went to the play with Mrs. Fitzgerald and Mrs. Edward Romilly, who is a daughter of Mrs. Marcet, and, owing to A——'s detestation of that learned lady's elementary book on natural philosophy, I was very desirous they should not meet one another, though certainly, if any of Mrs. Marcet's works are dry and dull, it is not this charming daughter of hers.

But A—— was rabid against "Nat. Phil.," as she ignominiously nick-named Mrs. Marcet's work on natural philosophy, and so I brought her to the theater with me; and she stayed in my dressing-room when I was there, and in my aunt Siddons's little box when I was acting, as you used to do; but she sang all the while she was with me, and though I made no sign, it gave me the nervous fidgets to such a degree that I almost forgot my part. In spite of which I acted better, for my mother said so; and there is some hope that by the time the play is withdrawn I shall not play Beatrice "like the chief mourner at a funeral," which is what she benignly compares my performance of the part to.

The alteration in my gowns met with her entire approbation—I mean the taking away of the plaits from round the waist—and my aunt Dall pronounced it an immense improvement and wished you could see it.

Lady Dacre and her daughter, Mrs. Sullivan,

and Mr. James Wortley were in the orchestra, and came after the play to supper with us, as did Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald, Mrs. Edward Romilly, and Mr. Harness: a very pleasant party, for the ladies are all clever and charming, and got on admirably together.

It is right, as you are a shareholder in that valuable property of ours, Covent Garden, you should know that there was a very fine house, though I cannot exactly tell you the amount of the receipts.

I miss you dreadfully, my dear H——, and I do wish you could come back to us when Dorothy has left you; but I know that cannot be, and so I look forward to the summer time, the sunny time, the rosy time, when I shall be with you again at Ardgillan.

Yesterday, I read for the first time Joanna Baillie's "Count Basil." I am not sure that the love she describes does not affect me more even than Shakespeare's delineation of the passion in "Romeo and Juliet." There is a nerveless despondency about it that seems to me more intolerable than all the vivid palpitating anguish of the tragedy of Verona; it is like dying of slow poison, or malarial fever, compared with being shot or stabbed or even bleeding to death, which is life pouring out from one, instead of drying up in one's brains. I think the lines beginning—

> "I have seen the last look of her
> heavenly eyes,"

some of the most poignantly pathetic I know. I afterward read over again Mr. Procter's play; it is extremely well written, but I am afraid it would not act as well as it reads. I believe I told you that "Iñez de Castro" was finally given up.

Sally and Lizzy Siddons came and sat with me for some time; they seem well and cheerful. Their mother, they said, was not very well; how should she be! though, indeed, regret would be selfish. Her son is gone to fulfill his own wishes in pursuing the career for which he was most fit; he will find in his uncle George Siddons's house in Calcutta almost a second home. Sally, whom you know I respect almost as much as love, said it was surprising how soon they had learned to accept and become reconciled to their brother's departure. Besides all our self-invoked aids of reason and religion, nature's own provision for the need of our sorrows is more bountiful and beneficent than we always perceive or acknowledge. No one can go on living upon agony; we cannot grieve for ever if we would, and our most strenuous efforts of self-control derive help from the inevitable law of change, against which we sometimes murmur and struggle as if it wronged our consistency in sorrow and constancy in love. The tendency to *heal* is as universal as the liability to *smart*. You always speak of change with a sort of vague horror that surprises me. Though all things round us are for ever shifting and altering, and though we ourselves vary and change, there is a supreme spirit of steadfastness in the midst

of this huge unrest, and an abiding, unshaken, immovable principle of good guiding this vanishing world of fluctuating atoms, in whose eternal permanence of nature we largely participate, and our tendency toward and aspiration for whose perfect stability is one of the very causes of the progress, and therefore mutability, of our existence. Perhaps the most painful of all the forms in which change confronts us is in the increased infirmities and diminished graces which after long absence we observe in those we love; the failure of power and vitality in the outward frame, the lessened vividness of the intellect we have admired, strike us with a sharp surprise of distress, and it is startling to have revealed suddenly to us, in the condition of others, how rapidly, powerfully, and unobservedly time has been dealing with ourselves. But those who believe in eternity should be able to accept time, and the ruin of the altar from which the flame leaps up to heaven signifies little.

My father and I went to visit Macdonald's collection of sculpture to-day. I was very much pleased with some of the things; there are some good colossal figures, and an exquisite statue of a kneeling girl, that charmed me greatly; there are some excellent busts, too. How wonderfully that irrevocable substance assumes the soft, round forms of life! The color in its passionless purity (absence of color, I suppose I should say) is really harder than the substance itself of marble. I could not fall in love with a statue, as the poor girl in Procter's poem did with

the Apollo Belvidere, though I think I could with a fine portrait: how could one fall in love with what had no eyes! Was it not Thorwaldsen who said that the three materials in which sculptors worked—clay, plaster, and marble—were like life, death, and immortality? I thought my own bust (the one Macdonald executed in Edinburgh, you know) very good; the marble is beautiful, and I really think my friend did wonders with his impracticable subject; the shape of the head and shoulders is very pretty. I wonder what Sappho was like! An ugly woman, it is said; I do not know upon what authority, unless her own; but I wonder what kind of ugliness she enjoyed! Among other heads, we saw one of Brougham's mother, a venerable and striking countenance, very becoming the mother of the Chancellor of England. There was a bust, too, of poor Mr. Huskisson, taken after death. I heard a curious thing of him to-day: it seems that on the night before the opening of the railroad, as he was sitting with some friends, he said, "I cannot tell what ails me; I have a strange weight on my spirits; I am sure something dreadful will happen to-morrow; I wish it were over;" and that, when they recapitulated all the precautions, and all the means that had been taken for security, comfort, and pleasure, all he replied was, "I wish to God it were over!" There is something awful in these stories of presentiments that always impresses me deeply—this warning shadow, projected by no perceptible object, falling darkly and

chilly over one; this indistinct whisper of destiny, of which one hears the sound, without distinguishing the sense; this muffled tread of Fate approaching us!

Did you read Horace Twiss's speech on the Reform Bill? Every one seems to think it was excellent, whether they agree with his opinions and sentiments or not. I saw by the paper, to-day, that an earthquake had been felt along the coast near Dover. A—— says the world is coming to an end. We certainly live in strange times, but for that matter so has everybody that ever lived.

[In the admirable letter of Lord Macaulay to Mr. Ellis, describing the division of the house on the second reading of the Reform Bill, given in Mr. Trevelyan's life of his uncle, the great historian says Horace Twiss's countenance at the liberal victory looked like that of a "damned soul." If, instead of a lost soul, he had said poor Horace looked like a *lost seat*, he would have been more accurate, if not as picturesque. Mr. Twiss sat for one of Lord Clarendon's boroughs, and the passage of the Reform Bill was sure to dismiss him from Parliament; a serious thing in his future career, fortunes, and position.]

I must now tell you what I do next week, that you may know where to find me. Monday, the king goes to hear "Cinderella," and I have a holiday and go with my mother to a party at Dr. Granville's. Tuesday, I act Belvidera, and *afterward* go to Lady Dacre's; I do this because, as I fixed the day myself for her party, not expecting to act that night, I

cannot decently get off. Lady Macdonald's dinner party is put off; so until Saturday, when I play Beatrice, I shall spend my time in practicing, reading, writing (*not* arithmetic), walking, working cross-stitch, and similar young-ladyisms.

Good-by, my dear H——. Give my love to Dorothy, if she will take it; if not, put it to your own share. I think this letter deserves a long answer. Mrs. Norton, Chantrey, and Barry Cornwall have come in while I have been finishing this letter; does not that sound pretty and pleasant? and don't you envy us some of our *privileges?* My mother has been seeing P——'s picture of my father in Macbeth this morning, and you never heard anything funnier than her rage at it: "A fat, red, round, staring, *pudsy* thing! the eyes no more like his than mine are!" (certainly, no human eyes could be more dissimilar); "and then, his jaw!—bless my soul, how could he miss it! the Kemble jawbone! Why, it was as notorious as Samson's!" Good-by. Your affectionate

FANNY.

Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby, the famous friends of Llangollen, kept during the whole life they spent together under such peculiar circumstances a daily diary, so minute as to include the mention not only of every one they saw (and it must be remembered that their hermitage was a place of fashionable pilgrimage, as well as a hospitable refuge), but also *what they had for dinner every day*—so I have been told.

The little box on the stage I have alluded to in this letter as Mrs. Siddons's was a small recess opposite the prompter's box, and of much the same proportions, that my father had fitted up for the especial convenience of my aunt Siddons whenever she chose to honor my performances with her presence. She came to it several times, but the draughts in crossing the stage were bad, and the exertion and excitement too much for her, and her life was not prolonged much after my coming upon the stage.

Lord and Lady Dacre were among my kindest friends. With Lady Dacre I corresponded from the beginning of our acquaintance until her death, which took place at a very advanced age. She was strikingly handsome, with a magnificent figure and great vivacity and charm of manner and conversation. Her accomplishments were various, and all of so masterly an excellence that her performances would have borne comparison with the best works of professional artists. She drew admirably, especially animals, of which she was extremely fond. I have seen drawings of groups of cattle by her that, without the advantage of color, recall the life and spirit of Rosa Bonheur's pictures. She was a perfect Italian scholar, having studied enthusiastically that divine tongue with the enthusiast Ugo Foscolo, whose patriotic exile and misfortunes were cheered and soothed by the admiring friendship and cordial kindness of Lord and Lady Dacre. Among all the specimens of translation with which I am acquainted, her English version of Petrarch's sonnets is one of the most remarkable for fidelity, beauty, and the grace and sweetness with which she has achieved the difficult feat of following in English the precise form of the complicated and peculiar Italian prosody. These

translations seem to me as nearly perfect as that species of literature can be. But the most striking demonstrations of her genius were the groups of horses which Lady Dacre modeled from nature, and which, copied and multiplied in plaster casts, have been long familiar to the public, without many of those who know and admire them being aware who was their author. It is hardly possible to see anything more graceful and spirited, truer at once to nature and the finest art, than these compositions, faithful in the minutest details of execution, and highly poetical in their entire conception. Lady Dacre was the finest female rider and driver in England; that is saying, in the world. Had she lived in Italy in the sixteenth century her name would be among the noted names of that great artistic era; but as she was an Englishwoman of the nineteenth, in spite of her intellectual culture and accomplishments she was *only* an exceedingly clever, amiable, kind lady of fashionable London society.

Of Lord Dacre it is not easy to speak with all the praise which he deserved. He inherited his title from his mother, who had married Mr. Brand of the Hoo, Hertfordshire, and at the moment of his becoming heir to that estate was on the point of leaving England with Colonel Talbot, son of Lord Talbot de Malahide, to found with him a colony in British Canada, where Arcadia was to revive again, at a distance from all the depraved and degraded social systems of Europe, under the auspices of these two enthusiastic young reformers. Mr. Brand had completed his studies in Germany, and acquired, by assiduous reading and intimate personal acquaintance with the most enlightened and profound thinkers of the philosophical school of which Kant was the apostle, a mental cultivation

very unlike, in its depth and direction, the usual intellectual culture of young Englishmen of his class.

He was an enthusiast of the most generous description, in love with liberty and ardent for progress; the political as well as the social and intellectual systems of Europe appeared to him, in his youthful zeal for the improvement of his fellow-beings, belated if not benighted on the road to it, and he had embraced with the most ardent hopes and purposes the scheme of emigration of Colonel Talbot, for forming in the New World a colony where all the errors of the Old were to be avoided. But his mother died, and the young emigrant withdrew his foot from the deck of the Canadian ship to take his place in the British peerage, to bear an ancient English title and become master of an old English estate, to marry a brilliant woman of English fashionable society, and be thenceforth the ideal of an English country gentleman, that most enviable of mortals, as far as outward circumstance and position can make a man so.

His serious early German studies had elevated and enlarged his mind far beyond the usual level and scope of the English country gentleman's brain, and freed him from the peculiarly narrow class prejudices which it harbors. He was an enlightened liberal, not only in politics but in every domain of human thought; he was a great reader, with a wide range of foreign as well as English literary knowledge. He had exquisite taste, was a fine connoisseur and critic in matters of art, and was the kindliest natured and mannered man alive.

At his house in Hertfordshire, the Hoo, I used to meet Earl Grey; his son, the present earl (then Lord

Howick); Lord Melbourne; the Duke of Bedford; Earl Russell (then Lord John), and Sidney and Bobus Smith—all of them distinguished men, but few of them, I think, Lord Dacre's superiors in mental power. Altogether the society that he and Lady Dacre gathered round them was as delightful as it was intellectually remarkable; it was composed of persons eminent for ability, and influential members of a great world in which extraordinary capacity was never an excuse for want of urbanity or the absence of the desire to please; their intercourse was charming as well as profoundly interesting to me.

During a conversation I once had with Lady Dacre about her husband, she gave me the following extract from the writings of Madame Huber, the celebrated Therëse Heyne, whose first husband, Johann Georg Forster, was one of the delegates which sympathizing Mentz sent to Paris in 1793, to solicit from the revolutionary government the favor of annexation to the French republic.

"In the year 1790 Forster had attached to himself and introduced in his establishment a young Englishman, who came to Germany with the view of studying the German philosophy [Kant's system] in its original language. He was nearly connected with some of the leaders of the then opposition. He was so noble, so simple, that each virtue seemed in him an instinct, and so stoical in his views that he considered every noble action as the victory of self-control, and never felt himself good enough. The friends [Huber and Forster] who loved him with parental tenderness sometimes repeated with reference to him the words of Shakespeare—

> 'So wise, so young, they say, do ne'er live long.'

But, thanks to fate, he has falsified that prophecy; the youth is grown into manhood; he lives, unclaimed by any mere political party, with the more valuable portion of his people, and satisfies himself with being a good man so long as circumstances prevent him from acting in his sense as a good citizen. Our daily intercourse with this youth enabled us to combine a knowledge of English events with our participation in the proceedings on the Continent. His patriotism moderated many of our extreme views with regard to his country; his estimate of many individuals, of whom from his position he possessed accurate knowledge, decided many a disputed point amongst us; and the tenderness which we all felt for this beloved and valued friend tended to produce justice and moderation in all our conflicts of opinion."[A]

> [A] Sketch of Lord Dacre's character by Madame Huber.

Lady Dacre had had by her first marriage, to Mr. Wilmot, an only child, the Mrs. Sullivan I have mentioned in this letter, wife of the Reverend Frederick Sullivan, Vicar of Kimpton. She was an excellent and most agreeable person, who inherited her mother's literary and artistic genius in a remarkable degree, though her different position and less leisurely circumstances as wife of a country clergyman and mother of a large family, devoted to the important duties of both callings, probably prevented the full development and manifestation of her fine intellectual gifts. She was a singularly modest and diffident person, and this as well as her

more serious avocations may have stood in the way of her doing justice to her uncommon abilities, of which, however, there is abundant evidence in her drawings and groups of modeled figures, and in the five volumes of charming stories called "Tales of a Chaperon," and "Tales of the Peerage and the Peasantry," which were not published with her name but simply as edited by Lady Dacre, to whom their authorship was, I think, generally attributed. The mental gifts of Lady Dacre appear to be heirlooms, for they have been inherited for three generations, and in each case by her female descendants.

The gentleman who accompanied her to her house, on the evening I referred to in my letter, was the Honorable James Stuart Wortley, youngest son of the Earl of Wharncliffe, who was prevented by failure of health alone from reaching the very highest honors of the legal profession, in which he had already attained the rank of solicitor-general, when his career was prematurely closed by disastrous illness. At the time of my first acquaintance with him he was a very clever and attractive young man, and though intended for a future Lord Chancellor he condescended to sing sentimental songs very charmingly.

Of my excellent and amiable friend, the Reverend William Harness, a biography has been published which tells all there is to be told of his uneventful life and career. Endowed with a handsome face and sweet countenance and very fine voice, he was at one time a fashionable London preacher, a vocation not incompatible, when he exercised it, with a great admiration for the drama. He was an enthusiastic frequenter of the theater, published a valuable edition of Shakespeare, and wrote two plays in blank

verse which had considerable merit; but his pre-eminent gift was goodness, in which I have known few people who surpassed him. Objecting from conscientious motives to hold more than one living, he received from his friend, Lord Lansdowne, an appointment in the Home Office, the duties of which did not interfere with those of his clerical profession. He was of a delightfully sunny, cheerful temper, and very fond of society, mixing in the best that London afforded, and frequently receiving with cordial hospitality some of its most distinguished members in his small, modest residence. He was a devoted friend of my family, had an ardent admiration for my aunt Siddons, and honored me with a kind and constant regard.

Miss Joanna Baillie was a great friend of Mrs. Siddons's, and wrote expressly for her the part of Jane de Montfort, in her play of "De Montfort." My father and mother had the honor of her acquaintance, and I went more than once to pay my respects to her at the cottage in Hampstead where she passed the last years of her life.

The peculiar plan upon which she wrote her fine plays, making each of them illustrate a single passion, was in great measure the cause of their unfitness for the stage. "De Montfort," which has always been considered the most dramatic of them, had only a very partial success, in spite of its very great poetical merit and considerable power of passion, and the favorable circumstance that the two principal characters in it were represented by the eminent actors for whom the authoress originally designed them. In fact, though Joanna Baillie selected and preferred the dramatic form for her poetical compositions, they are wanting in the real

dramatic element, resemblance to life and human nature, and are infinitely finer as poems than plays.

But the desire and ambition of her life had been to write for the stage, and the reputation she achieved as a poet did not reconcile her to her failure as a dramatist. I remember old Mr. Sotheby, the poet (I add this title to his name, though his title to it was by some esteemed but slender), telling me of a visit he had once paid her, when, calling him into her little kitchen (she was not rich, kept few servants, and did not disdain sometimes to make her own pies and puddings), she bade him, as she was up to the elbows in flour and paste, draw from her pocket a paper; it was a play-bill, sent to her by some friend in the country, setting forth that some obscure provincial company was about to perform Miss Joanna Baillie's celebrated tragedy of "De Montfort." "There," exclaimed the culinary Melpomene, "there, Sotheby, I am so happy! You see my plays can be acted somewhere!" Well, too, do I remember the tone of half-regretful congratulation in which she said to me, "Oh, you lucky girl—you lucky girl; you are going to have your play acted!" This was "Francis I.," the production of which on the stage was a bitter annoyance to me, to prevent which I would have given anything I possessed, but which made me (vexed and unhappy though I was at the circumstance on which I was being congratulated) an object of positive envy to the distinguished authoress and kind old lady.

In order to steer clear of the passion of revenge, which is in fact hatred proceeding from a sense of injury, Miss Joanna Baillie in her fine tragedy of "De Montfort" has inevitably made the subject of it an *antipathy*—that is, an instinctive, unreasoning, partly

physical antagonism, producing abhorrence and detestation the most intense, without any adequate motive; and the secret of the failure of her noble play on the stage is precisely that this is not (fortunately) a natural passion common to the majority of human beings (which hatred that *has* a motive undoubtedly is, in a greater or less degree), but an abnormal element in exceptionally morbid natures, and therefore a sentiment (or sensation) with which no great number of people or large proportion of a public audience can sympathize or even understand. Intense and causeless hatred is one of the commonest indications of insanity, and, alas! one that too often exhibits itself toward those who have been objects of the tenderest love; but De Montfort is not insane, and his loathing is unaccountable to healthy minds upon any other plea, and can find no comprehension in audiences quite prepared to understand, if not to sympathize with, the vindictive malignity of Shylock and the savage ferocity of Zanga. Goethe, in his grand play of "Tasso," gives the poet this morbid detestation of the accomplished courtier and man of the world, Antonio; but then, Tasso is represented as on the very verge of that madness into the dark abyss of which he subsequently sinks.

Shakespeare's treatment of the passion of hatred, in "The Merchant of Venice," is worthy of all admiration for the profound insight with which he has discriminated between that form of it which all men comprehend, and can sympathize with, and that which, being really nothing but diseased idiosyncrasy, appears to the majority of healthy minds a mere form of madness.

In his first introduction to us the Jew accounts for his detestation of Antonio upon three very

comprehensible grounds: national race hatred, in feeling and exciting which the Jews have been quite a "peculiar people" from the earliest records of history; personal injury in the defeat of his usurious prospects of gain; and personal insult in the unmanly treatment to which Antonio had subjected him. However excessive in degree, his hatred is undoubtedly shown to have a perfectly comprehensible, if not adequate cause and nature, and is a *reasonable* hatred, except from such a moral point of view as allows of none.

An audience can therefore tolerate him with mitigated disgust through the opening portions of the play. When, however, in the grand climax of the trial scene Shakespeare intends that he shall be no longer tolerated or tolerable, but condemned alike by his Venetian judges and his English audience, he carefully avoids putting into his mouth any one of the reasons with which in the opening of the play he explains and justifies his hatred. He does not make him quote the centuries-old Hebrew scorn of and aversion to the Gentiles, nor the merchant's interference with his commercial speculations, nor the man's unprovoked spitting at, spurning, and abuse of him; but he will and *can* give *no* reason for his abhorrence of Antonio, whom he says he *loathes* with the inexplicable revulsion of nature that certain men feel toward certain animals; and the mastery of the poet shows itself in thus making Shylock's cruelty monstrous, and accounting for it as an abnormal monstrosity.

Hatred that has a reasonable cause may cease with its removal. Supposing Antonio to have become a converted Jew, or to have withdrawn all opposition to Shylock's usury and compensated him largely for

the losses he had caused him by it, and to have expressed publicly, with the utmost humility, contrition for his former insults and sincere promises of future honor, respect, and reverence, it is possible to imagine Shylock relenting in a hatred of which the reasons he assigned for it no longer existed. But from the moment he says he has *no* reason for his hatred other than the insuperable disgust and innate enmity of an antagonistic nature—the deadly, sickening, physical loathing that in rare instances affects certain human beings toward others of their species, and toward certain animals—then there are no calculable bounds to the ferocity of such a blind instinct, no possibility of mitigating, by considerations of reflection or feeling, an inherent, integral element of a morbid organization. And Shakespeare, in giving this aspect to the last exhibition of Shylock's vindictiveness, cancels the original appeal to possible sympathy for his previous wrongs, and presents him as a dangerous maniac or wild beast, from whose fury no one is safe, and whom it is every one's interest to strike down; so that at the miserable Jew's final defeat the whole audience gasps with a sense of unspeakable relief. Perhaps, too, the master meant to show—at any rate he has shown—that the deadly sin of hatred, indulged even with a cause, ends in the dire disease of causeless hate and the rabid frenzy of a maniac.

It has sometimes been objected to this wonderful scene that Portia's reticence and delay in relieving Antonio and her husband from their suspense is unnatural. But Portia is a very *superior woman*, able to control not only her own palpitating sympathy with their anguish, but her impatient yearning to put an end to it, till she has made ever effort to redeem the wretch whose hardness of heart fills her with

incredulous amazement—a heavenly instinct akin to the divine love that desires not that a sinner should perish, which enables her to postpone her own relief and that of those precious to her till she has exhausted endeavor to soften Shylock; and Shakespeare thus not only justifies the stern severity of her ultimate sentence on him, but shows her endowed with the highest powers of self-command, and patient, long-suffering with evil; her teasing her husband half to death afterward restores the balance of her humanity, which was sinking heavily toward perfection.

Bryan Waller Procter, dear Barry Cornwall—beloved by all who knew him, even his fellow-poets, for his sweet, gentle disposition—had married (as I have said elsewhere) Anne Skepper, the daughter of our friend, Mrs. Basil Montague. They were among our most intimate and friendly acquaintance. Their house was the resort of all the choice spirits of the London society of their day, her pungent epigrams and brilliant sallies making the most delightful contrast imaginable to the cordial kindness of his conversation and the affectionate tenderness of his manner; she was like a fresh lemon—golden, fragrant, firm, and wholesome—and he was like the honey of Hymettus; they were an incomparable compound.

The play which I spoke of as his, in my last letter, was Ford's "White Devil," of which the notorious Vittoria Corrombona, Duchess of Bracciano, is the heroine. The powerful but coarse treatment of the Italian story by the Elizabethan playwright has been chastened into something more adapted to modern taste by Barry Cornwall; but, even with his kindred power and skillful handling, the work of the early

master retained too rough a flavor for the public palate of our day, and very reluctantly the project of bringing it out was abandoned.

The tragical story of Vittoria Corrombona, eminently tragical in that age of dramatic lives and deaths, has furnished not only the subject of this fine play of Ford's, but that of a magnificent historical novel, by the great German writer, Tieck, in which it is difficult to say which predominates, the intense interest of the heroine's individual career, or that created by the splendid delineation of the whole state of Italy at that period—the days of the grand old Sixtus the Fifth in Rome, and of the contemporary Medici in Florence; it is altogether a masterpiece by a great master. Superior in tragic horror, because unrelieved by the general picture of contemporaneous events, but quite inferior as a work of imagination, is the comparatively short sketch of Vittoria Corrombona's life and death contained in a collection of Italian stories called "Crimes Célèbres," by Stendal, where it keeps company with other tragedies of private life, which during the same century occupied with their atrocious details the tribunals of justice in Rome. Among the collection is the story from which Mr. Fechter's melodrama of "Bel Demonio" was taken, the story of the Cenci, and the story of a certain Duchess of Pagliano, all of them inconceivably horrible and revolting.

About the same time that this play of Barry Cornwall's was given up, a long negotiation between Miss Mitford and the management of Covent Garden came to a conclusion by her withdrawal of her play of "Iñez de Castro," a tragedy founded upon one of the most romantic and picturesque incidents in the Spanish chronicle. After much uncertainty and many

difficulties, the project of bringing it out was abandoned. I remember thinking I could do nothing with the part of the heroine, whose corpse is produced in the last act, seated on the throne and receiving the homage of the subjects of her husband, Pedro the Cruel—a very ghastly incident in the story, which I think would in itself have endangered the success of the play. My despondency about the part of Inez had nothing to do with the possible effect of this situation, however, but was my invariable impression with regard to every new part that was assigned to me on first reading it. But I am sure Miss Mitford had no cause to regret that I had not undertaken this; the success of her play in my hands ran a risk such as her fine play of "Rienzi," in those of Mr. Young or Mr. Macready, could never have incurred; and it was well for her that to their delineation of her Roman tribune, and not mine of her Aragonese lady, her reputation with the public as a dramatic writer was confided.

I have mentioned in this last letter a morning visit from Chantrey, the eminent sculptor, who was among our frequenter. His appearance and manners were simple and almost rustic, and he was shy and silent in society, all which may have been results of his obscure birth and early want of education. It was to Sir Francis Chantrey that my father's friends applied for the design of the beautiful silver vase which they presented to him at the end of his professional career. The sculptor's idea seemed to me a very happy and appropriate one, and the design was admirably executed; it consisted of a simple and elegant figure of Hamlet on the cover of the vase, and round it, in fine relief, the "Seven Ages of Man," from Jacques's speech in "As You Like It;" the whole work was very beautiful, and has a double interest

for me, as that not only of an eminent artist, but a kind friend of my father's.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March 7, 1831.

MY DEAREST H——,

With regard to change as we contemplate it when parting from those we love, I confess I should shrink from the idea of years intervening before you and I met again; not that I apprehend any diminution of our affection, but it would be painful to be no longer young, or to have grown *suddenly* old to each other. But I hope this will not be so; I hope we may go on meeting often enough for that change which is inevitable to be long imperceptible; I hope we may be allowed to go on *wondering* together, till we meet where you will certainly be happy, if wonder is for once joined to *knowledge*. I remember my aunt Whitelock saying that when she went to America she left my father a toddling thing that she used to dandle and carry about; and the first time she saw him after her return, he had a baby of his own in his arms. That sort of thing makes one's heart jump into one's mouth with dismay; it seems as if all the time one had been *living away*, unconsciously, was thrown in a lump at one's head.

J—— F—— told me on Thursday that her sister, whose wedding-day seemed to be about yesterday, was the mother of four children; she has lost no time, it is true, but my "yesterday" must be five years old. After dinner, yesterday, I wrote a new last scene to

"Francis I." I mean to send it to Murray.

A—— says you seem younger to her than I do; which, considering your fourteen years' seniority over me, is curious; but the truth is, though she does not know it, I am still *too young*; I have not lived, experienced, and suffered enough to have acquired the self-forgetfulness and gentle forbearance that make us good and pleasant companions to our *youngers*.

Henry and I are going together to the Zoological Gardens one of these days; that lovely tigress hangs about my heart, and I must go and see her again. Ever your affectionate

F. A. KEMBLE.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March 9, 1831.

MY DEAR H——,

Why are you not here to kiss and congratulate me? I am so proud and happy! Mr. Murray has given me four hundred and fifty pounds for my play alone! the other things he does not wish to publish with it. Only think of it—was there ever such publishing munificence! My father has the face to say *it is not enough!* but looks so proud and pleased that his face alone shows it is *too much* by a great deal; my mother is enchanted, and I am so happy, so thankful for this prosperous result of my work, so delighted at earning so much, so surprised and charmed to think that what gave me

nothing but pleasure in the doing has brought me such an after-harvest of profit; it is too good almost to be true, and yet it is true.

But I am happy and have been much excited from another reason to-day. Richard Trench, John's dear friend and companion, is just returned from Spain, and came here this morning to see us. I sat with him a long while. John is well and in good spirits. Mr. Trench before leaving Gibraltar had used every persuasion to induce my brother to return with him, and had even got him on board the vessel in which they were to sail, but John's heart failed him at the thought of forsaking Torrijos, and he went back. The account Mr. Trench gives of their proceedings is much as I imagined them to have been. They hired a house which they denominated Constitution Hall, where they passed their time smoking and drinking ale, John holding forth upon German metaphysics, which grew dense in proportion as the tobacco fumes grew thick and his glass grew empty. You know we had an alarm about their being taken prisoners, which story originated thus: they had agreed with the constitutionalists in Algeciras that on a certain day the latter were to *get rid* of their officers (murder them civilly, I suppose), and then light beacons on the heights, at which signal Torrijos and his companions, among them our party who were lying armed on board a schooner in the bay, were to make good their landing. The English authorities at Gibraltar, however, had note of this, and

while they lay watching for the signal they were boarded by one of the Government ships and taken prisoners. The number of English soldiers in whose custody they found themselves being, however, inferior to their own, they agreed that if the beacons made their appearance they would turn upon their guards and either imprison or kill them. But the beacons were never lighted; their Spanish fellow-revolutionists broke faith with them, and they remained ingloriously on board until next day, when they were ignominiously suffered to go quietly on shore again.

CHAPTER XX.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March 8, 1831.

I am going to be very busy signing my name; my benefit is fixed for the 21st; I do not yet know what the play is to be. Our young, unsuccessful playwright, Mr. Wade, whom I like very much (he took his damnation as bravely as Capaneo), and Macdonald, the sculptor, dined with us on Sunday. On Monday I went to the library of the British Museum to consult Du Bellay's history for my new version of the last scene of "Francis I." I looked at some delightful books, and among others, a very old and fine MS. of the "Roman de la Rose," beautifully illuminated;

also all the armorial bearings, shields, banners, etc., of the barons of King John's time, the barons of Runnymede and the Charter, most exquisitely and minutely copied from monuments, stained glass, brass effigies, etc.; it was a fine work, beautifully executed for the late king, George IV. I wish it had been executed for me. I did get A—— to walk in the square with me once, but she likes it even less than I do; my intellectual conversation is no equivalent for the shop-windows of Regent Street and the counters of the bazaar, and she has gone out with my aunt every day since, "leaving the square to solitude and me;" so I take my book with me (I can read walking at my quickest pace), and like to do so.

Tuesday evening I played Belvidera. I was quite nervous at acting it again after so long a period. After the play my father and I went to Lady Dacre's and had a pleasant party enough. Mrs. Norton was there, more entertaining and blinding beautiful than ever. Henry desired me to give her his "desperate love," to which she replied by sending the poor youth her "deadly scorn." Lord Melbourne desired to be introduced to me, and I think if he likes, he shall be the decrepit old nobleman you are so afraid of me marrying. I was charmed with his face, voice, and manner; we dine with him next Wednesday week, and I will write you word if the impression deepens.

My dear H——, only imagine my dismay; my father told me that after Easter I should have

to play Lady Macbeth! It is no use thinking about it, for that only frightens me more; but, looking at it as calmly and reasonably as possible, surely it is too great an undertaking for so young a person as myself. Perhaps I may play it better than most girls of my age would; what will that amount to? That towering, tremendous woman, what a trial of courage and composure for me! If you were a good friend, now, you would come up to town "for that occasion only," and sustain me with your presence.

The beautiful Miss Bayley is at length married to William Ashley [the present Earl of Shaftesbury], and everybody is rejoicing with them or for them; it is pleasant to catch glimpses of fresh shade and flowers as one goes along the dusty highroad of life.

I must now tell you what I am going to do, that you may know where to find me: to-morrow, I go to a private morning concert with my mother; in the evening, I act Beatrice, and after the play all sorts of people are coming here to supper. On Monday, I act Fazio; Wednesday, we dine at Lady Macdonald's; Thursday, I act Mrs. Haller; and Saturday, Beatrice again. I have not an idea what will be done for my benefit; we are all devising and proposing. I myself want them to bring out Massinger's "Maid of Honor;" I think it beautiful.

Now, dear H——, I must leave off, and sign my tickets. We all send our loves to you: my mother tells me not to let you forget her; she

says she is afraid you class her with Mrs. John Kemble. If ever there were two dissimilar human beings, it is those two. Ever your affectionate

FANNY.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March 13, 1831.

DEAR H——,

I received your letter yesterday, and must exult in my self-command, for Mrs. Jameson was with me, and I did not touch it till she was gone. Thank you first of all for Spenser; that *is* poetry! I was much benefited as well as delighted by it. Considering the power of poetry to raise one's mind and soul into the noblest moods, I do not think it is held in sufficient reverence nowadays; the bards of old were greater people in their society than our modern ones are; to be sure, modern poetry is not all of a purely elevating character, and poets are *paid*, besides being asked out to dinner, which the bards always were. I think the tone of a good deal of Campbell's "Pleasures of Hope" very noble, and some of Mrs. Hemans's things are very beautiful in sentiment as well as expression. But then, all that order of writing is so feeble compared with the poetry of our old masters, who do not so much appeal to our feelings as to our reason and imagination combined. I do not believe that to be sublime is in the power of a woman, any more than to be logical; and Mrs. Hemans, who is neither, writes charmingly, and one loves her as a

Christian woman even more than one admires her as a writer.

Yes, it is very charming that the dove, the favorite type of gentleness and tenderness and "harmlessness," should have such a swift and vigorous power of flight; *suaviter—fortiter*, a good combination.

We are having the most tempestuous weather; A—— is horribly frightened, and I am rather awed. I got the encyclopædia to-night to study the cause of the equinoctial gales, which I thought we should both be the better for knowing, but could find nothing about them; can you tell me of any book or treatise upon this subject?

My dear H——, shut your eyes while you read this, because if you don't, they'll never shut again. Constance is what I am to play for my benefit. I am horribly frightened; it is a cruel weight to lay upon my shoulders: however, there is nothing for it but doing my best, and leaving the rest to fate. I almost think now I could do Lady Macbeth better. I am like poor little Arthur, who begged to have his tongue cut off rather than have his eyes put out; that last scene of Constance—think what an actress one should be to do it justice! Pray for me.

And so the Poles are crushed! what a piteous horror! Will there never come a day of retribution for this!

Mrs. Jameson came and sat with me some time yesterday evening, and read me a good

deal of her work on Shakespeare's female characters; they are very pleasing sketches—outlines—but her criticism and analysis are rather graceful than profound or powerful. Tuesday next my mother and I spend the evening with her; Wednesday, we dine at Sir John Macdonald's; Thursday, I act Mrs. Haller; Friday, we have an evening party at home; Saturday, I play Beatrice; Monday, Constance (come up for it!); Tuesday, we dine with Lord Melbourne; and this is as much of the book of fate as is unrolled to me at present.

Mrs. Harry came here to-day; it is the first time I have seen her this month; she is looking wretchedly, and talks of returning to Edinburgh. My first feeling at hearing this was joy that I shall not go there and find the face and voice for ever associated with Edinburgh in my heart away from it. But I am not really glad, for it is the failure of some plan of hers which obliges her to do this. I have the loves of all to give you, and they are all very troublesome, crying, "Give mine separately," "Don't lump mine;" so please take them each separately and singly. I have been sobbing my heart out over Constance this morning, and act Fazio to-night, which is hard work.

Your affectionate

F.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, Saturday, March 19th.

DEAR H——,

You ask if Mr. Trench's account of their Spanish escapade is likely to soften my father's view of the folly of the expedition. I think not, by any means—as how should it? But the yesterday papers reported a successful attack upon Cadiz and the proclamation of Torrijos general-in-chief by the Constitutionalists, who were rising all over the country. This has been again contradicted to-day, and may have been a mere stock-jobbing story, after all. If it be true, however, the results may be of serious importance to my brother. Should the Constitutionalists get the upper hand, his adherence to Torrijos may place him in a prominent position, I am afraid; perhaps, however, though success may not alter my father's opinion of the original folly of John's undertaking, it may in some measure reconcile him to it. I suppose it is not impossible now that John should become an officer in the Spanish army, and that after so many various and contradictory plans his career may finally be that of a soldier. How strange and sad it all seems to me, to be sure!

You say it's a horrid thing one can't "try on one's body" and choose such a one as would suit one; but do you consider your body accidental, as it were, or do you really think we could do better for ourselves than has been done for us in this matter? After all, our souls get used to our bodies, and in some fashion alter and shape them to fit; then you

know if we had different bodies we should be different people and not our *same selves* at all; if I had been tall, as I confess I in my heart of hearts wish I were, what another moral creature should I have been.

You urge me to work, dear H——, and study my profession, and were I to say I hate it, you would retort, "You do it, therefore take pains to do it well." And so I do, as well as I can; I have been studying Constance with my father, and rubbed off some of the rough edges of it a little.

I am sorry to say I shall not have a good benefit; unluckily, the second reading of the Reform Bill comes on to-morrow (to-night, by the bye, for it is Monday), and there will be as many people in the House of Commons as in *my* house, and many more in Parliament Street than in either; it is unfortunate for me, but cannot be helped. I was going to say, pray for me, but I forgot that you will not get this till "it is bedtime, Hal, and all is well." The publication of my play is not to take place till after this Reform fever has a little abated.

Dear H——, this is Wednesday, the 23rd; Monday and King John and my Constance are all over; but I am at this moment still so *deaf with nervousness* as not to hear the ticking of my watch when held to one of my ears; the other side of my head is not deaf any longer *now*; but on Monday night I hardly heard one word I uttered through the whole play. It is rather hard that having

endeavored (and succeeded wonderfully, too) in possessing my soul in peace during that trial of my courage, my nervous system should give way in this fashion. I had a knife of pain sticking in my side all through the play and all day long, Monday; as I did not hear myself speak, I cannot tell you anything of my performance. My dress was of the finest pale-blue merino, all folds and drapery like my Grecian Daughter costume, with an immense crimson mantle hung on my shoulders which I could hardly carry. My head-dress was exactly copied from one of my aunt's, and you cannot imagine how curiously like her I looked. My mother says, "You have done it better than I believe any other girl of your age would do it." But of course that is not a representation of Constance to satisfy her, or any one else, indeed. You know, dear H——, what my own feeling has been about this, and how utterly incapable I knew myself for such an undertaking; but you did not, nor could any one, know how dreadfully I suffered from the apprehension of failure which my reason told me was well founded. I assure you that when I came on the stage I felt like some hunted creature driven to bay; I was really half wild with terror. The play went off admirably, but I lay, when my part was over, for an hour on my dressing-room floor, with only strength enough left to cry. Your letter to A—— revived me, and just brought me enough to life again to eat my supper, which I had not felt able to touch, in spite of my exhaustion and great need of it; when, however, I once

began, my appetite justified the French proverb and took the turn of voracity, and I devoured like a Homeric hero. I promised to tell you something of our late dinner at Lord Melbourne's, but have left myself neither space nor time. It was very pleasant, and I fell out of my love for our host (who, moreover, is absorbed by Mrs. Norton) and into another love with Lord O——, Lord T ——'s son, who is one of the most beautiful creatures of the male sex I ever saw; unluckily, he does not fulfill the necessary conditions of your theory, and is neither as old nor as decrepit as you have settled the nobleman I am to marry is to be; so he won't do.

We are going to a party at Devonshire House to-night. Here I am called away to receive some visitors. Pray write soon to your affectionate

FANNY.

To-morrow I act Constance, and Saturday Isabella, which is all I know for the present of the future. I have just bought A—— a beautiful guitar; I promised her one as soon as my play was out. My room is delicious with violets, and my new blue velvet gown heavenly in color and all other respects except the—well, *un*heavenly price Dévy makes me pay for it.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, April 2, 1831.

DEAR H——,

I am truly sorry for M——'s illness, just at the height of all her gay season gayeties, too; it is too provoking to have one's tackle out of order and lie on the beach with such a summer sea sparkling before one. I congratulate L—— on her father's relenting and canceling his edict against waltzing and galloping. And yet, I am always *rather* sorry when a determination of that sort, firmly expressed, is departed from. Of course our views and opinions, not being infallible, are liable to change, and may not unreasonably be altered or weakened by circumstances and the more enlightened convictions of improved powers and enlarged experience, but it is as well, therefore, for our own sakes, not to promulgate them as if they were Persian decrees. One can step gracefully down from a lesser height, where one would fall from a greater. But with young people generally, I think, to retreat from a position you have assumed is to run the risk of losing some of their consideration and respect; for they have neither consciousness of their own frailty, nor charity for the frailty of others, nor the wisdom to perceive that a resolution may be better broken than kept; and though perhaps themselves gaining some desired end by the yielding of their elders, I believe any indulgence so granted (that is, after being emphatically denied) never fails to leave on the youthful mind an impression of want of judgment or determination in those they have to do with.

We dine with the Fitzhughs on Tuesday week; I like Emily much, though she will talk

of human souls as "vile;" I gave her Channing to read, and she liked it very much, but said that his view of man's nature was not that of a Christian; I think her contempt for it still less such. As we are immortal in spite of death, so I think we are wonderful in spite of our weakness, and admirable in spite of our imperfection, and capable of all good in spite of all our evil.

A——'s guitar is a beauty, and wears a broad blue scarf and has a sweet, low, soft voice. Mr. Pickersgill is going to paint my portrait; it is a present Major Dawkins makes my father and mother, but I do wish they would leave off trying to take my picture. My face is too bad for anything but nature, and never was intended for *still* life. The intention, however, is very kind, and the offer one that can scarcely be refused. I wish you would come and keep me awake through my sittings.

Our engagements—social and professional—are a dinner party at the Mayows to-morrow; an evening party on Monday; Tuesday, the opera; Wednesday I act Isabella; Thursday, a dinner at Mr. Harness's; Friday I act Bianca; Saturday we have a dinner party at home; the Monday following I act Constance; Tuesday there is a dance at the Fitzhughs'; and sundry dissipations looming in the horizon.

Good-by, and God bless you, my dear H——. I look forward to our meeting at Ardgillan, three months hence, with delight, and am

affectionately yours,

F. A. K.

A—— and I begin our riding lessons on Wednesday next. We have got pretty dark-brown habits and red velvet waistcoats, and shall look like two nice little robin-redbreasts on horseback; all I dread is that she may be frightened to death, which might militate against her enjoyment, perhaps.

What you say about my brother John is very true; and though my first care is for his life, my next is for his happiness, which I believe more likely to be secured by his remaining in the midst of action and excitement abroad, than in any steady pursuit at home. My benefit was not as good as it ought to have been; it was not sufficiently advertised, and it took place on the night of the reading of the Reform Bill, which circumstance was exceedingly injurious to it.

To-day is John's birthday. I was in hopes it might not occur to my mother, but she alluded to it yesterday. I was looking at that little sketch of him in her room this morning, with a heavy heart. His lot seems now cast indeed, and most strangely. I would give anything to see him and hear his voice again, but I fear to wish him back again among us. I am afraid that he would neither be happy himself, nor make others so.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, 1831.

It is a long time, dear H——, since I have written to you, and I feel it so with self-reproach. To-day, except paying a round of visits with my mother and acting this evening, I have nothing to prevent my talking with you in tolerable peace and quiet —so here I am. You have no idea what a quantity of "things to be done" has been crowded into the last fortnight: studying Camiola, rehearsing for two hours and a half every other day, riding for two hours at a time, and sitting for my picture nearly as long, running from place to place about my dresses, and now having Lady Teazle and Mrs. Oakley to *get up*, immediately,—all this, with my nightly work or nightly gayeties, makes an amount of occupation of one sort and another that hardly leaves me time for thought.

You will be glad to hear that "The Maid of Honor" was entirely successful; that it will have a "great run," or bring much money to the theater, I doubt. It is a *cold* play, according to the present taste of audiences, and there are undoubted defects in its construction which in the fastidious judgment of our critics weigh down its sterling beauties.

It has done me great service, and to you I may say that I think it the best thing I have acted. Indeed, I like my own performance of it so well (which you know does not often happen to me), that I beg you will make A —— tell you something about it. I was beautifully dressed and looked very nice.

We have heard nothing of John for some time now, and my mother has ceased to express, if not to feel, anxiety about him, and seems tranquil at present; but after all she has suffered on his account, it is not, perhaps, surprising that she should subside into the calm of mere exhaustion from that cruel over-excitement.

Our appeal before the Lords, after having been put off once this week, will, in consequence of the threatened dissolution of Parliament, be deferred *sine die*, as the phrase is. Oh, what weary work this is for those who are tremblingly waiting for a result of vital importance to their whole fate and fortune! Thank Heaven, I am liberally endowed with youth's peculiar power and privilege of disregarding future sorrow, and unless under the immediate pressure of calamity can keep the anticipation of it at bay. My journal has become a mere catalogue of the names of people I meet and places I go to. I have had no time latterly for anything but the briefest possible registry of my daily doings. Mrs. Harry Siddons has taken a lodging in this street, nearly opposite to us, so that I have the happiness of seeing her rather oftener than I have been able to do hitherto; the girls come over, too; and as we have lately taken to acting charades and proverbs, we spend our evenings very pleasantly together.

We are going to get up a piece called "Napoleon." I do not mean my cousins and ourselves, but that prosperous establishment,

Covent Garden Theatre. Think of Bonaparte being acted! It makes one grin and shudder.

I have been three or four times to Mr. Pickersgill, and generally sit two hours at a time to him. I dare say he will make a nice picture of me, but his anxiety that it should in no respect resemble Sir Thomas Lawrence's drawing amuses me. I was in hopes that when I had done with him I should not have to sit to anybody for anything again. But I find I am to undergo that boredom for a bust by Mr. Turnerelli. I wish I could impress upon all my artist friends that my face is an inimitable original which nature never intended should be copied. Pazienza! I must say, though, that I grudge the time thus spent. I want to get on with my play, but I'm afraid for the next three weeks that will be hopeless.

To add to my occupations past, present, and to come, not having enough of acting with my professional duties in that line, I am going to take part in some private theatricals. Lord Francis Leveson wants to get up his version of Victor Hugo's "Hernani," at Bridgewater House, and has begged me, as a favor, to act the heroine; all the rest are to be amateurs. I have consented to this, not knowing well how to refuse, yet for one or two reasons I almost think I had better not have done so. I expect to be excessively amused by it, but it will take up a terrible deal of my time, for I am sure they will need rehearsals without end. I do not know at all what our summer plans are; but I believe we

shall be acting in the provinces till September, when if all things are quiet in Paris my father proposes going over with me and one or two members of the Covent Garden company, and playing there for a month or so. I think I should like that. I fancy I should like acting to a French audience; they are people of great intellectual refinement and discrimination, and that is a pleasant quality in an audience. I think my father seems inclined to take A —— with us and leave her there. A musical education can nowhere better be obtained, and under the care of Mrs. Foster, about whom I believe I wrote to you once a long letter, there could be no anxiety about her welfare.

I showed that part of your last letter which concerned my aunt Dall to herself, because I knew it would please her, and so it did; and she bids me tell you that she values your good-will and esteem extremely, and should do still more if you did not *misbestow so much of them on me*.

Emily Fitzhugh sent me this morning a Seal with a pretty device, in consequence of my saying that I thought it was pleasanter to lean upon one's friends, morally, than to be leant upon by them—an oak with ivy clinging to it and "Chiedo sostegno" for the motto. I do not think I shall use it to many people, though.

To-morrow Sheridan Knowles dines with us, to read a new play he has written, in which I

am to act. In the evening we go to Lady Cork's, Sunday we have a dinner-party here, Monday I act Camiola, Tuesday we go to Mrs. Harry's, Wednesday I act Camiola, and further I know not. Good-by, dear; ever yours,

F. A. K.

The piece which I have referred to in this letter, calling itself "Bonaparte," was a sensational melodrama upon the fate and fortunes of the great emperor, beginning with his first exploits as a young artillery officer, himself pointing and firing the cannon at Toulon, to the last dreary agony of the heart-broken exile of St. Helena. It was well put upon the stage, and presented a series of historical pictures of considerable interest and effect, not a little of which was due to the great resemblance of Mr. Warde, who filled the principal part, to the portraits of Napoleon. He had himself, I believe, been in the army, and left it under the influence of a passion for the stage, which his dramatic ability hardly justified; for though he was a very respectable actor, he had no genius whatever, and never rose above irreproachable mediocrity. But his military training and his peculiar likeness to Bonaparte helped him to make his part in this piece very striking and effective, though it was not in itself the merest peg to hang "situations" on.

I was at this time sitting for my picture to Mr. Pickersgill, with whose portrait of my father in the part of Macbeth I have mentioned my mother's comically expressed dissatisfaction. Our kind friend, Major Dawkins, wished to give my father and mother a good portrait of me, and suggested Mr. Pickersgill,

a very eminent portrait-painter, as the artist who would be likely to execute it most satisfactorily. Mr. Pickersgill, himself, seemed very desirous to undertake it, and greatly as my sittings interfered with my leisure, of which I had but little, it was impossible under the circumstances that I should refuse, especially as he represented that if he succeeded, as he hoped to do, his painting me would be an advantage to him; portraits of public exhibitors being of course recognizable by the public, and, if good, serving the purpose of advertisements. Unluckily, Mrs. Jameson proposed accompanying me, in order to lighten by her very agreeable conversation the tedium of the process. Her intimate acquaintance with my face, with which Mr. Pickersgill was not familiar, and her own very considerable artistic knowledge and taste made her, however, less discreet in her comments and suggestions with regard to his operations than was altogether pleasant to him; and after exhibiting various symptoms of impatience, on one occasion he came so very near desiring her to mind her own business, that we broke off the sitting abruptly; and the offended painter adding, to my dismay, that it was quite evident he was not considered equal to the task he had undertaken, our own attitude toward each other became so constrained, not to say disagreeable, that on taking my leave I declined returning any more, and what became of Mr. Pickersgill's beginning of me I do not know. Perhaps he finished it by memory, and it is one of the various portraits of me, *qui courent le monde*, for some of which I never sat, which were taken either from the stage or were mere efforts of memory of the artists; one of which, a head of Beatrice, painted by my friend Mr. Sully, of Philadelphia, was engraved as a

frontispiece to a small volume of poems I published there, and was one of the best likenesses ever taken of me.

The success of "The Maid of Honor" gave me great pleasure. The sterling merits of the play do not perhaps outweigh the one insuperable defect of the despicable character of the hero; one can hardly sympathize with Camiola's devotion to such an idol, and his unworthiness not only lessens the interest of the piece, but detracts from the effect of her otherwise very noble character. The performance of the part always gave me great pleasure, and there was at once a resemblance to and difference from my favorite character, Portia, that made it a study of much interest to me. Both the women, young, beautiful, and of unusual intellectual and moral excellence, are left heiresses to enormous wealth, and are in exceptional positions of power and freedom in the disposal of it. Portia, however, is debarred by the peculiar nature of her father's will from bestowing her person and fortune upon any one of her own choice; chance serves her to her wish (she was not born to be unhappy), and gives her to the man she loves, a handsome, extravagant young gentleman, who would certainly have been pronounced by all of us quite unworthy of her, until she proved him worthy by the very fact of her preference for him; while Camiola's lover is separated from her by the double obstacle of his royal birth and religious vow.

The golden daughter of the splendid republic receives and dismisses princes and kings as her suitors, indifferent to any but their personal merits; we feel she is their equal in the lowest as their superior in the highest of their "qualities;" with

Camiola it is impossible not to suspect that her lover's rank must have had some share in the glamor he throws over her. In some Italian version of the story that I have read, Camiola is called the "merchant's daughter;" and contrasting her bearing and demeanor with the easy courtesy and sweet, genial graciousness of Portia, we feel that she must have been of lower birth and breeding than the magnificent and charming Venetian. Portia is almost always in an attitude of (unconscious) condescension in her relations with all around her; Camiola, in one of self-assertion or self-defense. There is an element of harshness, bordering upon coarseness, in the texture of her character, which in spite of her fine qualities makes itself unpleasantly felt, especially contrasted with that of Portia, to whom the idea of encountering insolence or insult must have been as *impossible* as to the French duchess, who, warned that if she went into the streets alone at night she would probably be insulted, replied with ineffable security and simplicity, "Qui? moi!" One can imagine the merchant's daughter *growing up* to the possession of her great wealth, through the narrowing and hardening influences of sordid circumstances and habits of careful calculation and rigid economy, thrifty, prudent, just, and eminently conscientious; of Portia one can only think as of a creature born in the very lap of luxury and nursed in the midst of sunny magnificence, whose very element was elegant opulence and refined splendor, and by whose cradle Fortune herself stood godmother. She seems like a perfect rose, blooming in a precious vase of gold and gems and exquisite workmanship. Camiola's contemptuous rebuff of her insolent courtier lover; her merciless ridicule of her fantastical, half-witted suitor; her bitter and harsh rebuke of Adorni when

he draws his sword upon the man who had insulted her; above all, her hard and cold insensibility to his unbounded devotion, and the cruelty of making him the agent for the ransom of her lover from captivity (the selfishness of her passion inducing her to employ him because she knows how absolutely she may depend upon the unselfishness of his); and her final stern and peremptory claim of Bertrand's promise, are all things that Portia could never have done. Portia is the Lady of Belmont, and Camiola is the merchant's daughter, a very noble and magnanimous woman. In the munificent bestowal of their wealth, the one to ransom her husband's friend from death, the other to redeem her own lover from captivity, the manner of the gift is strikingly characteristic of the two natures. When Portia, radiant with the joy of relieving Bassanio's anguish, speaks of Antonio's heavy ransom as the "petty debt," we feel sure that if it had been half her fortune it would have seemed to her an insignificant price to pay for her husband's peace of mind. Camiola reads the price set upon her lover's head, and with grave deliberation says, "Half my estate, Adorni," before she bids him begone and purchase at that cost the prince's release from captivity. Moreover, in claiming her right of purchase over him, at the very moment of his union with another woman, she gives a character of barter or sale to the whole transaction, and appeals for justice as a defrauded creditor, insisting upon her "money's worth," like Shylock himself, as if the love with which her heart is breaking had been a mere question of traffic between the heir of Sicily and the merchant's daughter. In spite of all which she is a very fine creature, immeasurably superior to the despicable man who accepts her favors and betrays her love. It is worthy

of note that Bassanio, who is clearly nothing else remarkable, is every inch a gentleman, and in that respect no unfit mate for Portia; while the Sicilian prince is a blackguard utterly, beneath Camiola in every particular but that of his birth.

I remember two things connected with my performance of Camiola which amused me a good deal at the time. In the last scene, when she proclaims her intention of taking the vail, Camiola makes tardy acknowledgment to Adorni for his life-long constancy and love by leaving him a third of her estate, with the simple words, "To thee, Adorni, for thy true and faithful service" (a characteristic proceeding on the part of the merchant's daughter. Portia would have given him the ring from her finger, or the flower from her bosom, besides the fortune). I used to pause upon the last words, endeavoring to convey, if one look and tone might do it, all the regretful gratitude which ought to have filled her heart, while uttering with her farewell that first, last, and only recognition of his infinite devotion to her. One evening, when the audience were perfectly silent and one might have "heard a pin drop," as the saying is, as I spoke these words, a loud and enthusiastic exclamation of, "Beautiful!" uttered by a single voice resounded through the theater, and was followed by such a burst of applause that I was startled and almost for a moment frightened by the sudden explosion of feeling, for which I was quite unprepared, and which I have never forgotten.

Another night, as I was leaving the stage, after the play, I met behind the scenes my dear friend Mr. Harness, with old Mr. Sotheby; both were very kind in their commendation of my performance, but the

latter kept repeating with much emphasis, "But how do you contrive to make yourself look so beautiful?" a rather equivocal compliment, which had a peculiar significance; my beauty, or rather my lack of it, being a sore subject between us, as I had made it the reason for refusing to act Mary Stuart in his play of "Darnley," assuring him I was too ugly to look the part properly; so upon this accusation of making myself "look beautiful," I could only reply, with much laughing, "Good-looking enough for Camiola, but not for Queen Mary."

I received with great pleasure a congratulatory letter from Mrs. Jameson, which, in spite of my feeling her praise excessive, confirmed me in my opinion of the effect the piece ought to produce upon intelligent spectators. She had seen all the great dramatic performers of the Continental theaters, and had had many opportunities, both at home and abroad, of cultivating her taste and forming her judgment, and her opinion was, therefore, more valuable to me than much of the criticism and praise that I received.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March, 1831.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

My mother is confined to her bed with a bad cold, or she would have answered your note herself; but, being disabled, she has commissioned me to do so, and desires me to say that both my father and herself object to my going anywhere without some member of my family as chaperon; and as this is a general rule, the infringement of it in a particular instance, however much I might wish it, would be better avoided, for fear of giving offense where I should be glad to

plead the prohibition. She bids me add that she fears she cannot go out to-morrow, but that some day soon, at an early hour, she hopes to be able to accompany us both to the British Gallery. Will you come to us on Sunday evening? You see what is hanging over me for Thursday next; shall you go to see me?

Yours affectionately,

F. A. K.

I did not, and do not, at all question the good judgment of my parents in not allowing me to go into society unaccompanied by one or the other of themselves. The only occasion on which I remember feeling very rebellious with regard to this rule was that of the coronation of King William and Queen Adelaide, for which imposing ceremony a couple of peers' tickets had been very kindly sent us, but of which I was unable to avail myself, my father being prevented by business from escorting me, my mother being out of town, and my brother's countenance and protection not being, in their opinion, adequate for the occasion. So John went alone to the abbey, and say the fine show, and my peer's ticket remained unused on my mantelpiece, a constant suggestion of the great disappointment I had experienced when, after some discussion, it was finally determined that he was too young to be considered a proper chaperon for me. Dear me! how vexed I was! and how little charmed with my notoriety, which was urged as the special reason for my being hedged round with the utmost conventional decorum!

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March, 1831.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I have but two minutes to say two words to you, in answer to your very kind note. Both my mother and myself went out of town, not to recover from absolute indisposition, but to recruit strength. I am sorry to say she is far from well now, however; but as I think her present suffering springs from cold, I hope a few warm days will remove it. I am myself very well, except a bad cough which I have had for some time, and a very bad side-ache, which has just come on, and which, if I had time in addition to the inclination which I have, would prevent me from writing much more at present. I envy you your time spent in the country; the first days of spring and last of autumn should never be spent between brick houses and stone pavements. I am truly sorry for the anxieties you have undergone; your father is, I trust, quite recovered; and as to your dear baby (Mrs. Jameson's niece), remember it is but beginning to make you anxious, and will continue to do so as long as it lives, which is a perfect Job's comforter, is it not? The story of your old man interested me very much; I suppose a parent can love all through a whole lifetime of absence: but do you think there can be a very strong and enduring affection in a child's bosom for a parent hardly known except by hearsay? I should doubt it. I must leave off now, and remain,

Always yours most truly,

F. A. KEMBLE.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March 29, 1831.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

Will you be kind enough to forward my very best acknowledgments to Sir Gerard Nöel, both for his good wishes and the more tangible proof of interest he sent me (a considerable payment for a box on my benefit night)? I am sorry you were alarmed on Monday. You alarmed us all; you looked so exceedingly ill that I feared something very serious had occurred to distress and vex you. Thank you for your critique upon my Constance; both my mother and myself were much delighted with it; it was every way acceptable to me, for the censure I knew to be deserved, and the praise I hoped was so, and they were blended in the very nicest proportions. We dine at six to-morrow. Lady Cork insisted upon five, but that was really too primitive, because, as the dandy said, "we cannot eat meat in the morning."

Ever yours most truly,

F. A. K.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March 30, 1831.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

Thank you for your money; it is necessary to be arithmetical if one means to be economical, and I receive your tribute with more pleasure than that of a duchess. I sometimes hear people lament that they have anything to do with money. I do not at all share that feeling; money, after all, only

represents other things. If one has much, it is always well to look to one's expenditure, or the much will become much less; and if one has little, and works hard for it, I cannot understand being above receiving the price of one's labor. In all kinds "the laborer is worthy of his hire," and I think it very foolish to talk as if we set no value upon that which we value enough to toil for. With regard to the tickets you wish me to send you, I must refer you to the theater; for, finding that my wits and temper were both likely to be lost in the box-book, I sent the whole away to Mr. Notter, the box-book keeper, to whom you had better apply.

Yours ever truly,

F. A. K.

This and the preceding note refer to my benefit, of which, according to a not infrequent custom with the more popular members of the profession, I had undertaken to manage the business details, but found myself, as I have here stated, quite incompetent to encounter the worry of applications for boxes, and seats, and special places, etc., etc., and have never since, in the course of my whole public career, had anything to do with the management of my own affairs.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March, 1831.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I was not at home yesterday afternoon when you sent to our house, and all the evening was so busy studying that I had not time to

answer your dispatch. Thank you for your last year's letter; it is curious to look back, even to so short a time, and see how the past affected one when it was the present. I remember I was very happy and comfortable at Bath, the critics notwithstanding. Thank you, too, for your more recent epistle. I am grateful for, and gratified by, your minute observation of my acting. I am always thankful for your criticisms, even when I do not quite agree with them; for I know that you are always kindly anxious that I should not destroy my own effects, which I believe I not unfrequently do. With regard to my action, unless in passages which necessarily require a specific gesture, such as, "You'll find them at the Marchesa Aldabella's," I never determine any one particular movement; and, of course, this must render my action different almost every time; and so it depends upon my own state of excitement and inspiration, so to speak, whether the gesture be forcible or not. My father desires me to send you Retsch's "Hamlet;" it is his, and I request you not to judge it too hastily: I have generally heard it abused, but I think in many parts it has very great merit. I am told that Retsch says he has no fancy for illustrating "Romeo and Juliet," which seems strange. One would have thought he would have delighted in portraying those lovely human beings, whom one always imagines endowed with an outward and visible form as youthful, beautiful, and full of grace, as their passion itself was. Surely the balcony, the garden, and grave-yard scenes, would

> have furnished admirable subjects for his delicate and powerful hand. Is it possible that he thinks the thing beyond him? I must go to work. Good-by.
>
> Ever yours truly,
>
> F. A. K.
>
> You marked so many things in my manuscript book that I really felt ashamed to copy them all, for I should have filled more than half yours with my rhymes. I have just added to those I did transcribe a sonnet I wrote on Monday night after the play.

It may have been that the execution of "Faust," his masterpiece, disinclined Retsch for the treatment of another love story. He did subsequently illustrate "Romeo and Juliet" with much grace and beauty; but it is, as a whole, undoubtedly inferior to his illustrations of Goethe's tragical love story. Retsch's genius was too absolutely German to allow of his treating anything from any but a German point of view. Shakespeare, Englishman as he is, has written an Italian "Romeo and Juliet;" but Retsch's lovers are Teutonic in spite of their costume, and nowhere, as in the wonderful play, is the Southern passion made manifest through the Northern thought.

The private theatricals at Bridgewater House were fruitful of serious consequences to me, and bestowed on me a lasting friendship and an ephemeral love: the one a source of much pleasure, the other of some pain. They entailed much intimate intercourse with Lord and Lady Francis Leveson Gower, afterward Egerton, and finally Earl and Countess of Ellesmere, who became kind and constant friends of mine.

Victor Hugo's play of "Hernani," full of fine and striking things, as well as of exaggerations verging on the ludicrous, had been most admirably rendered into rhymed verse by Lord Ellesmere. His translations from the German and his English version of "Faust," which was one of the first attempts to give a poetical rendering in our language of Goethe's masterpiece, had won him some literary reputation, and his rhymed translation of "Hernani" was a performance calculated to add to it considerably. He was a very accomplished and charming person; good and amiable, clever, cultivated, and full of fine literary and artistic taste. He was singularly modest and shy, with a gentle diffidence of manner and sweet, melancholy expression in his handsome face that did no justice to a keen perception of humor and relish of fun, which nobody who did not know him intimately would have suspected him of.

Of Lady Ellesmere I have already said that she was a sort of idol of mine in my girlhood, when first I knew her, and to the end of her life continued to be an object of my affectionate admiration. She was excellently conscientious, true, and upright; of a direct and simple integrity of mind and character which her intercourse with the great world to which she belonged never impaired, and which made her singular and unpopular in the artificial society of English high life. Her appearance always seemed to me strikingly indicative of her mind and character. The nobly delicate and classical outline of her face, her pure, transparent complexion, and her clear, fearless eyes were all outward and visible expressions of her peculiar qualities. Her beautifully shaped head and fine profile always reminded me of the Pallas Athene on some antique gem, and the riding cap with the visor, which she first made fashionable,

increased the classical resemblance. She was curiously wanting in imagination, and I never heard anything more comically literal than her description of her own utter *destitution* of poetical taste. After challenging in vain her admiration for the great poets of our language, I quoted to her, not without misgiving, some charmingly graceful and tender lines, addressed to herself by her husband, and asked her if she did not like those: "Oh yes," replied she, "I think they are very nice, but you know I think they would be just as nice *if they were not verses*; and whenever I hear any poetry that I like at all, I always think how much better I should like it if it was prose;" an explanation of her taste that irresistibly reminded me of the delightful Frenchman's sentiment about spinach: "Je n'aime pas les épinards, et je suis si content que je ne les aime pas! parce que si je les aimais, j'en mangerais beaucoup, et je ne peux pas les souffrir."

My intercourse with Lady Ellesmere, which had been a good deal interrupted during the years I passed out of England, was renewed the year before her death, when I visited her at Hatchford, where she was residing in her widowhood, and where I promised her when I left her I would return and stay with her again, but was never fortunate enough to do so, her death occurring not long afterward.

During one of my last visits to Worsley Hall, Lord Ellesmere's seat in Lancashire, Lady Ellesmere had taken me all over the beautiful church they were building near their house, which was to be his and her final resting-place. After her death I made a pilgrimage to it for her sake, and when the service was over and the young members of the family had left their place of worship near the grave of their

parents, I went into their chapel, where a fine monument with his life-sized effigy in marble had been dedicated to him by her love, and where close beside it and below it lay the marble slab on which her name was inscribed.

Our performance at Bridgewater House was highly successful and created a great sensation, and we repeated it three times for the edification of the great gay world of London, sundry royal personages included. Two of our company, Mr. Craven and Mr. St. Aubin, were really good actors; the rest were of a tolerably decent inoffensiveness. Mrs. Bradshaw, the charming Maria Tree of earlier days, accepted the few lines that had to be spoken by Donna Sol's duenna, and delivered the epilogue, which, besides being very graceful and playful, contains some lines for which I felt grateful to Lord Ellesmere's kindness, though he had certainly taken a poet's full license of embellishing his subject in his laudatory reference to his Donna Sol.

The whole thing amused me very much, and mixed up, as it soon came to be for me, with an element of real and serious interest, kept up the atmosphere of nervous excitement in which I was plunged from morning till night.

The play which Sheridan Knowles came to read to us was "The Hunchback." He had already produced several successful dramas, of which the most striking was Virginius, in which Mr. Macready performed the Roman father so finely. The play Knowles now read to us had been originally taken by him to Drury Lane in the hope and expectation that Kean would accept the principal man's part of Master Walter. Various difficulties and disagreements arising, however,

about the piece, the author brought it to my father; and great was my emotion and delight in hearing him read it. From the first moment I felt sure that it would succeed greatly, and that I should be able to do justice to the part of the heroine, and I was anxious with my father for its production. The verdict of the Green Room was not, however, nearly as favorable as I had expected; and I was surprised to find that when the piece was read to the assembled company it was received with considerable misgiving as to its chance of success.

CHAPTER XXI.

It is very curious that their experience tells so little among theatrical people in their calculation of the probable success of a new piece; perhaps it may be said that they cannot positively foresee the effect each actor or actress may produce with certain parts; but given the best possible representation of the piece, the precise temper of the particular audience who decides its fate on the first night of representation is always an unknown quantity in the calculation, and no technical experience ever seems to arrive at anything like even approximate certainty with regard to that. I felt perfectly sure of the success of "The Hunchback," but I think that was precisely because of my want of theatrical experience, which left me rather in the position of one of the public than one of the players, and there was much grave head-shaking over it, especially on the part of our excellent stage-manager, Mr. Bartley, who was

exceedingly faint-hearted about the experiment.

My father, with great professional disinterestedness, took the insignificant part of the insignificant lover, and Knowles himself filled that of the hero of the piece, the hunchback; a circumstance which gave the part a peculiar interest, and compensated in some measure for the loss of the great genius of Kean, for whom it had been written.

The same species of uncertainty which I have said characterizes the judgments of actors with regard to the success of new pieces sometimes affects the appreciation authors themselves form of the relative merits of their own works, inducing them to value more highly some which they esteem their best, and to which that pre-eminence is denied by popular verdict. Knowles, while writing "The Hunchback," was so absorbed with the idea of what Kean's impersonation of it would probably be, that he was entirely unconscious of what the great actor himself probably perceived, that on the stage the part of Julia would overweigh and eclipse that of Master Walter. Knowles felt sure he had written a fine man's part, and was really not aware that the woman's part was still finer. What is yet more singular is that while he was writing "The Wife," which he did immediately afterward, with a view to my acting the principal female character, he constantly said to me, "I am writing *such* a part for you!" and had no notion that the only part capable of any effect at all in the piece was that of Julian St. Pierre, the good-for-nothing brother of the duchess.

The play of "The Wife" was singularly wanting in interest, and except in the character of St. Pierre was ineffective and flat from beginning to end, in that

respect a perfect contrast to "The Hunchback," in which the interest is vivid and strong, and never flags from the first scene to the last. I was quite unable to make anything at all of the part of Marianna, nor have I ever heard of its becoming prominent or striking in the hands of any one else.

"The Hunchback," according to my confident expectation, succeeded. Knowles played his own hero with great force and spirit, though he was in such a state of wild excitement that I expected to see him fly on the stage whenever he should have been off it, and *vice versâ*, and followed him about behind the scenes endeavoring to keep him in his right mind with regard to his exits and his entrances, and receiving from him explosive Irish benedictions in return for my warnings and promptings. Throughout the whole first representation I was really as nervous for and about him as I was about the play itself and my own particular part in it. My father did the impossible with Sir Thomas Clifford, in making him both dignified and interesting; and Miss Taylor was capital in the saucy Helen. My part played itself and was greatly liked by the audience; the piece was one of the most popular original plays of my time, and has continued a favorite alike with the public and the players. The part of the heroine is one, indeed, in which it would be almost impossible to fail; and every Julia may reckon upon the sympathy of her audience, the character is so pre-eminently effective and dramatic.

Of the play as a composition not much is to be said; it has little poetical or literary merit, and even the plot is so confused and obscure that nobody to my knowledge (not even the author himself, of whom I once asked an explanation of it) was ever able to

make it out or give a plausible account of it. The characters are inconsistent and wanting in verisimilitude to a degree that ought to prove fatal to them with any tolerably reasonable spectators; in spite of all which the play is interesting, exciting, affecting, and humorous. The powerfully dramatic effect of the situations, and the two characters of Master Walter and Julia, the great scope for good acting in all the scenes in which they appear, the natural fire, passion, and pathos of the dialogue, in short the great merits of the piece as an acting play cover all its defects; even the heroine's vulgar, flighty folly and the hero's absurd eccentricity interfering wonderfully little with the sympathy of the audience for their troubles and their final triumph over them. "The Hunchback" is a very satisfactory play to *see*, but let nobody who has seen it well acted attempt to read it in cold blood!

It had an immense run, and afforded me an opportunity of testing the difference between an infinite repetition of the text of Shakespeare and that of any other writer. I played Juliet upward of a hundred nights without any change of part and did not weary of it; Julia, in "The Hunchback," after half the repetition became so tiresome to me that I would have given anything to have changed parts with my sprightly Helen, if only for a night, to refresh myself and recover a little from the extreme weariness I felt in constantly repeating Julia. The audience certainly would have suffered by the exchange, for Miss Taylor would not have played my part so much better than I, as I should have played hers worse than she did. Indeed, her performance of the character of Helen saved it from the reproach of coarseness, which very few actresses would have been able to avoid while giving it all the point and lively humor which she

threw into it. I had great pleasure in acting the piece with her, she did her business so thoroughly well and was so amiable and agreeable a fellow-worker.

In my last letter to Miss S—— I have spoken of a party at the Countess of Cork's, to which I went. She was one of the most curious figures in the London society of my girlish days. Very aged, yet retaining much of a vivacity of spirit and sprightly wit for which she had been famous as Mary Monckton, she continued till between ninety and a hundred years old to entertain her friends and the gay world, who frequently during the season assembled at her house.

I have still a note begging me to come to one of her evening parties, written under her dictation by a young person who used to live with her, and whom she called her "Memory;" the few concluding lines scrawled by herself are signed "*M. Cork, æt.* 92." She was rather apt to appeal to her friends to come to her on the score of her age; and I remember Rogers showing me an invitation he had received from her for one of the ancient concert evenings (these were musical entertainments of the highest order, which Mr. Rogers never failed to attend), couched in these terms: "Dear Rogers, leave the ancient music and come to ancient Cork, 93." Lady Cork's drawing-rooms were rather peculiar in their arrangement: they did not contain that very usual piece of furniture, a pianoforte, so that if ever she especially desired to have music she hired an instrument for the evening; the rest of the furniture consisted only of very large and handsome armchairs placed round the apartments against the walls, to which they were *made fast* by some mysterious process, so that it was quite impossible to form a small circle or coterie of one's own at one of her assemblies. I remember when

first I made this discovery expressing my surprise to the beautiful Lady Harriet d'Orsay, who laughingly suggested that poor old Lady Cork's infirmity with regard to the property of others (a well-known incapacity for discriminating between *meum* and *tuum*) might probably be the cause of this peculiar precaution with regard to her own armchairs, which it would not, however, have been a very easy matter to have stolen even had they not been chained to the walls. In the course of the conversation which followed, Lady E——, apparently not at all familiar with Chesterfield's Letters, said that it was Lady Cork who had originated the idea that after all heaven would probably turn out very dull to her *when she got there; sitting on damp clouds and singing "God save the King*" being her idea of the principal amusements there. This rather dreary image of the joys of the blessed was combated, however, by Lady E——, who put forth her own theory on the subject as far more genial, saying, "Oh dear, no; she thought it would be all splendid *fêtes* and delightful dinner parties, and charming, clever people; *just like the London season, only a great deal pleasanter because there would be no bores.*" With reference to Lady Cork's theory, Lady Harriet said, "I suppose it would be rather tiresome for her, poor thing! for you know she hates music, and there would be nothing to steal *but one another's wings*."

Lady Cork's great age did not appear to interfere with her enjoyment of society, in which she lived habitually. I remember a very comical conversation with her in which she was endeavoring to appoint some day for my dining with her, our various engagements appearing to clash. She took up the pocket-book where hers were inscribed, and began reading them out with the following running

commentary: "Wednesday—no, Wednesday won't do; Lady Holland dines with me—naughty lady!—won't do, my dear. Thursday?" "Very sorry, Lady Cork, we are engaged." "Ah yes, so am I; let's see—Friday; no, Friday I have the Duchess of C——, another naughty lady; mustn't come then, my dear. Saturday?" "No, Lady Cork, I am very sorry—Saturday, we are engaged to Lady D——." "Oh dear, oh dear! improper lady, too! but a long time ago, everybody's forgotten all about it—very proper now! quite proper now!"

Lady Cork's memory seemed to me to stretch beyond the limits of what everybody had forgotten. She was quite a young woman at the time of the youth of George III., and spoke of Frederick, Prince of Wales, to whose wife she, then the Honorable Mary Monckton, was maid of honor. It is a most tantalizing circumstance to me now, to remember a fragment of a conversation between herself and my mother, on the occasion of the first visit I was ever taken to pay her. I was a very young girl; it was just after my return from school at Paris, and the topics discussed by my mother and her old lady friend interested me so little that I was looking out of the window, and wondering when we should go away, when my attention was arrested by these words spoken with much emphasis by Lady Cork: "Yes, my dear, I was alone in the room, and the picture turned in its frame, and Lord Bute came out from behind it;" here, perceiving my eyes riveted upon her, she lowered her voice, and I distinctly felt that I was expected to look out of the window again, without having any idea, however, that the question was probably one of the character of a "naughty lady" of higher rank than those so designated to me some years later by old Lady Cork, who, if I may judge by this fragment of gossip, might have cleared up some disputed points

as to the relations between the Princess of Wales and the Prime Minister.

I do not know that Lady Cork's reputation for beauty ever equaled that she had for wit, but when I knew her, at upward of ninety, she was really a very comely old woman. Her complexion was still curiously fine and fair, and there was great vivacity in her eyes and countenance, as well as wonderful liveliness in her manner. Her figure was very slight and diminutive, and at the parties at her own house she always was dressed entirely in white—in some rich white silk, with a white bonnet covered with a rich blonde or lace vail on her head; she looked like a little old witch bride. I recollect a curious scene my mother described to me, which she witnessed one day when calling on Lady Cork, whom she had known for many years. She was shown into her dressing-room, where the old lady was just finishing her toilet. She was about to put on her gown, and remaining a moment without it showed my mother her arms and neck, which were even then still white and round and by no means unlovely, and said, pointing to her maid, "Isn't it a shame! she won't let me wear my gowns low or my sleeves short any more." To which the maid responded by throwing the gown over her mistress's shoulders, exclaiming at the same time, "Oh, fie, my lady! you ought to be ashamed of yourself to talk so at your age!"—a rebuke which the nonagenarian beauty accepted with becoming humility.

The unfortunate propensity of poor Lady Cork to appropriate all sorts of things belonging to other people, valueless quite as often as valuable, was matter of public notoriety, so that the fashionable London tradesmen, to whom her infirmity in this

respect was well known, never allowed their goods to be taken to her carriage for inspection, but always exacted that she should come into their shops, where an individual was immediately appointed to follow her about and watch her during the whole time she was making her purchases.

Whenever she visited her friends in the country, her maid on her return home used to gather together whatever she did not recognize as belonging to her mistress, and her butler transmitted it back to the house where they had been staying. I heard once a most ludicrous story of her carrying off, *faute de mieux*, a *hedgehog* from a place where the creature was a pet of the porters, and was running tame about the hall as Lady Cork crossed it to get into her carriage. She made her poor "Memory" seize up the prickly beast, but after driving a few miles with this unpleasant spiked foot-warmer, she found means to dispose of it at a small town, where she stopped to change horses, to a baker, to whom she gave it in payment for a sponge cake, assuring him that a hedgehog would be invaluable in his establishment for the destruction of black beetles, with which she knew, from good authority, that the premises of bakers were always infested.

The following note was addressed to Lady Dacre on the subject of a pretty piece called "Isaure," which she had written and very kindly wished to have acted at Covent Garden for my benefit. It was, however, judged of too slight and delicate a texture for that large frame, and the purpose was relinquished. I rather think it was acted in private at Hatfield House, Lady Salisbury filling the part of the heroine, which I was to have taken had the piece been brought out at Covent Garden.

>My dear Lady Dacre,

Will you be kind enough to send "Isaure" to my father? We will take the greatest possible care of her, and return her to you in all safety. I am only sorry that he cannot have the pleasure of hearing you read it; for though it can take its own part very well, you know even Shakespeare is not the worse for the interpretation of a sweet voice, musical accent, and correct emphasis. With regard to the production of the piece on the stage, I do not like to venture an opinion, because my short experience has been long enough already to show me how easily I might be mistaken in such matters.

There is no rule by which the humors of an audience can be predicted. On a benefit night, indeed, I feel sure that the piece would succeed, and answer your kind intention of adding to the attractions of the bill, be they what they might; but our judges are not the same, you know, two consecutive evenings, and therefore it is impossible to foretell the sentence of a second representation, for no "benefit" but that of the public itself. Isaure is a refined patrician beauty, and I am sometimes inclined to think that the Memphian head alone is of fit proportions for uttering oracles in the huge space of our modern stage. My father, however, is, from long experience, the best guesser of these riddles, and he will tell you honestly his opinion as to your heroine's public capacity. I am sure he will find his own reward in making her acquaintance. I am, my dear

Lady Dacre, faithfully yours,

FANNY KEMBLE.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

Thank you for the book you were so good as to send me. I have read that which concerns the Cenci in it, and think Leigh Hunt's reflections on the story and tragedy very good. I am glad you were at the play last night, because I thought I acted well—at least, I tried to do so. I stayed the first act of the new after-piece, and was rather amused by it. I do not know how the ladies' "inexpressibles" might affect the fortunes of the second act, but I liked all their gay petticoats in the first, extremely. The weather is not very propitious for us; we start to-morrow at nine. I send you the only copy of Sophocles I can lay my hand on this morning. Yours ever truly,

F. A. KEMBLE.

A little piece called "The Invincibles," in which a smart corps of young Amazons in uniform were officered by Madame Vestris in the prettiest regimentals ever well worn by woman, was the novelty I alluded to. The effect of the female troop was very pretty, and the piece was very successful.

I had only lately read Shelley's great tragedy, and Mrs. Jameson had been so good as to lend me various notices and criticisms upon it. The hideous subject itself is its weak point, and his selection of it

one cause for doubting Shelley's power as a dramatic writer. Everything else in the terrible play suggests the probable loss his death may have been to the dramatic literature of England. At the same time, the tenor of all his poems denotes a mind too unfamiliar with human life and human nature in their ordinary normal aspects and conditions for a good writer of plays. His metaphysical was almost too much for his poetical imagination, and perhaps nothing between the morbid horror of that Cenci story and the ideal grandeur of the Greek Prometheus would have excited him to the dramatic handling of any subject.

His translation from Calderon's "El Magico Prodigioso," and his bit of the Brocken scene from "Faust," are fine samples of his power of dramatic style; he alone could worthily have translated the whole of "Faust;" but I suppose he really was too deficient in the vigorous flesh-and-blood vitality of the highest and healthiest poetical genius to have been a dramatist. He could not deal with common folk nor handle common things; humor, that great *tragic* element, was not in him; the heavens and all their clouds and colors were his, and he floated and hovered and soared in the ethereal element like one native to it. Upon the firm earth his foot wants firmness, and men and women as they are, are at once too coarse and complex, too robust and too infinitely various for his delicate, fine, but in some sense feeble handling.

Browning is the very reverse of Shelley in this respect; both have written one fine play and several fine dramatic compositions; but throughout Shelley's poetry the dramatic spirit is deficient, while in Browning's it reveals itself so powerfully that one wonders how he has escaped writing many good

plays besides the "Blot on the Scutcheon" and that fine fragmentary succession of scenes, "Pippa Passes."

GREAT RUSSELL STREET.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I fear I am going to disappoint you, and 'tis with real regret that I do so, but I have been acting every night almost for the last month, and when to-day I mentioned my project of spending this my holiday evening with you, both my aunt and my father seemed to think that in discharging my debt to you I was defrauding nearer and older creditors; and suggested that my mother, who really sees but little of me now, might think my going out to-night unkind. I cannot, therefore, carry out my plan of visiting you, and beg that you will forgive my not keeping my promise this evening. I am moreover so far from well that my company would hardly give you much pleasure, nor could I stay long if I came, for early as it is my head is aching for its pillow already.

As soon as a week occurs in which I have *two* holidays I will try to give you one of them. I send you back Crabbe, which I have kept for ever; for a great poet, which he is, he is curiously unpoetical, I think. Yours ever truly,

F. A. KEMBLE.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

> My mother bids me say that you certainly will suppose she is mad, or else *Mother Hubbard's dog*; for when you called she was literally ill in bed, and this evening she cannot have the pleasure of receiving you, because she is engaged out, here in our own neighborhood, to a very quiet tea. She bids me thank you very much for the kindness of your proposed visit, and express her regret at not being able to avail herself of it. If you can come on Thursday, between one and two o'clock, I shall be most happy to see you. Thank you very much for Lamb's "Dramatic Specimens;" I read the scene you had copied from "Philaster" directly; how fine it is! how I should like to act it! Mr. Harness has sent me the first volume of the family edition of the "Old Plays." I think sweeping those fine dramas clean is a good work that cannot be enough commended. What treasures we possess and make no use of, while we go on acting "Gamesters" and "Grecian Daughters," and such poor stuff! But I have no time for ecstasies or exclamations. Yours ever most truly,
>
> F. A. KEMBLE.

I have said that hardly any new part was ever assigned to me that I did not receive with a rueful sense of inability to what I called "do anything with it." Julia in "The Hunchback," and Camiola in "The Maid of Honor," were among the few exceptions to this preparatory attack of despondency; but those I in some sort choose myself, and all my other characters were appointed me by the management, in obedience to whose dictates, and with the hope of

serving the interests of the theater, I suppose I should have acted Harlequin if I had been ordered to do so.

Lady Teazle and Mrs. Oakley were certainly no exceptions to this experience of a cold fit of absolute incapacity with which I received every new part appointed me, and my studying of them might have been called lugubrious, whatever my subsequent performance of them may have been. My mother was of invaluable assistance to me in the process, and I owe to her whatever effect I produced in either part. She had great comic as well as pathetic power, and the incisive point of her delivery gave every shade of meaning of the dialogue with admirable truth and pungency; her own performance of Mrs. Oakley had been excellent; I acted it, even with the advantage of her teaching, very tamely. Jealousy, in any shape, was not a passion that I sympathized with; the tragic misery of Bianca's passion was, however, a thing I could imagine sufficiently well to represent it; but not so Mrs. Oakley's fantastical frenzies. But the truth is that it was not until many years later and in my readings of Shakespeare that I developed any real comic faculty at all; and I have been amused in the later part of my public career to find comedy often considered my especial gift, rather than the tragic and pathetic one I was supposed at the beginning of it to possess.

The fact is that except in broad farce, where the principal ingredient being humor, animal spirits and a grotesque imagination, which are of no particular age, come strongly into play, comedy appears to me decidedly a more mature and complete result of dramatic training than tragedy. The effect of the latter may, as I myself exemplified, be tolerably achieved by force of natural gifts, aided but little by

study; but a fine comedian *must* be a fine artist; his work is intellectual, and not emotional, and his effects address themselves to the critical judgment and not the passionate sympathy of an audience. Tact, discretion, fine taste, are quite indispensable elements of his performance; he must be really a more complete actor than a great tragedian need be. The expression of passion and emotion appears to be an interpretation of nature, and may be forcibly rendered sometimes with but little beyond the excitement of its imaginary experience on the actor's own sensibility; while a highly educated perfection is requisite for the actor who, in a brilliant and polished representation of the follies of society, produces by fine and delicate and powerful delineations the picture of the vices and ridicules of a highly artificial civilization.

Good company itself is not unapt to be very good acting of high comedy, while tragedy, which underlies all life, if by chance it rises to the smooth surface of polite, social intercourse, agitates and disturbs it and produces even in that uncongenial sphere the rarely heard discord of a natural condition and natural expression of natural feeling.

Of my performance of Mrs. Oakley I have but one recollection, which is that of having once, while acting it with my father, disconcerted him to such a degree as to compel him to turn up the stage in an uncontrollable fit of laughter. I remember the same thing happening once when I was playing Beatrice to his Benedict. I have not the least notion what I did that struck my father with such irrepressible merriment, but I suppose there must have been something in itself irresistibly ludicrous to him, toward whom my manner was habitually respectfully

deferential (for our intercourse with our parents, though affectionate, was not familiar, and we seldom addressed them otherwise than as "sir" and "ma'am"), to be pelted by me with the saucy sallies of Beatrice's mischievous wit, or pummeled with the grotesque outbursts of poor Mrs. Oakley's jealous fury.

Our personal relation, which thus rendered our performance of comedy together especially comical to my father, added infinitely to my distress in all tragedies in which we acted together; the sense of his displeasure or the sight of his anguish invariably bringing him, my father, and not the part he was acting, before me; and, as in the play of "The Stranger" and the pathetic little piece of "The Deserter," affecting me with almost uncontrollable emotion.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, April 10, 1831.
MY DEAREST H——,

I owe you something like an explanatory note after that ejaculatory one I sent you the other day. You must have thought me crazy; but indeed, since all these late alarming reports from Spain, until the news came of John's safety, I did not know how much fear and anxiety lay under the hope and courage I had endeavored to maintain about him.

From day to day I had read the reports and tried to reason with regard to their probability, and to persuade my mother that we had every cause for hoping the best; and it was really not until that hope was realized that it seemed as if all my mental nerves and muscles, braced to the resistance of calamity,

had suddenly relaxed and given way under the relief from all further apprehension of it. I have kept much of my forebodings to myself, but they have been constant and wretched enough, and my gratitude for this termination of them is unspeakable.

I heard last night a report which I have not mentioned to my mother for fear it should prove groundless. Horace Twiss showed me a note in which a gentleman assured him that John had positively taken his passage in a Government vessel, and was now on his way home; even if this is true, I am afraid to tell my mother, because if the vessel should be delayed a day or two by weather or any other cause, her anxiety will have another set of apprehensions to feed upon, and to prey upon her with. She desires her best love to you; she likes your pamphlet on "The Education of the People" very much, at the same time that it has not convinced her that instruction is wholesome for the lower orders; she thinks the dependence of helplessness and ignorance a better security (for them, or for those above them, I wonder?) than the power of reasoning rightly and a sense of duty, in which opinion, as you will believe, I do not agree.

Thank you for your account of your visit to Wroxton Abbey [the seat of the Earl of Guilford]; it interested me very much; trees are not to me, as they seem to be to you, the most striking and beautiful of all natural objects, though I remember feeling a good deal of pain at the cutting down of a

particular tree that I was very fond of.

At the entrance of Weybridge was a deserted estate and dilapidated mansion, Portmore Park, once a royal domain, through which the river ran and where we used to go constantly to fish. There was a remarkably beautiful cedar tree whose black boughs spread far over the river, and whose powerful roots, knotted in every variety of twist, formed a cradle from which the water had gradually washed away the earth. Here I used to sit, or rather lie, reading, or writing sometimes, while the others pursued their sport, and enjoying the sound and sight of the sparkling water which ran undermining my bed and singing treacherous lullabies to me the while. For two years this tree was my favorite haunt; the third, on our return to Weybridge from London, on my running to the accustomed spot, I found the hitherto intercepted sun staring down upon the water and the bank, and a broad, smooth, white *tabula rasa* level with the mossy turf, which was all that remained of my cedar canopy; and though it afforded an infinitely more commodious seat than the twisted roots, I never returned there again.

To-morrow we dine with the F——s, and there is to be a dance in the evening; on Wednesday I act Constance; Thursday there is a charade party at the M——s'; Friday I play Mrs. Beverley; and Monday and Wednesday next, Camiola. I hope by and by to act Camiola very well, but I am afraid the play itself can never become popular; the

size of the theater and the public taste of the present day are both against such pieces; still, the attempt seemed to me worth making, and if it should prove successful we might revive one or two more of Massinger's plays; they are such sterling stuff compared with the Isabellas, the Jane Shores, the everything but Shakespeare. You saw in my journal what I think about Camiola. I endeavor as much as I can to soften her, and if I can manage to do so I shall like her better than any part I have played, except my dear Portia, who does not need softening.

I am too busy just now to read "Destiny" [Miss Ferrier's admirable novel]; my new part and dresses and rehearsals will occupy me next week completely. I have taken a new start about "The Star of Seville" [the play I was writing], and am working away hard at it. I begin to see my way through it. I wish I could make anything like an acting play of it; we want one or two new ones so very much.

My riding goes on famously, and Fozzard thinks so well of my progress that the other day he put me upon a man's horse—an Arab —which frightened me half to death with his high spirits and capers; but I sat him, and what is more, rode him. Tuesday we go to a very gay ball a little way out of town; Saturday we go to a party at old Lady Cork's, who calls you Harriet and professes to have known you well and to remember you perfectly.

> Now, H——, as to what you say of fishing, if you are bloody-minded enough to desire to kill creatures for sport, in Heaven's name why don't you do it? The sin lies in the inclination (by the bye, I think that's *half* a mistake). Never mind, your inclination to fish and my desire to be the tigress at the Zoological Gardens have nothing whatever in common. I admire and envy the wild beast's swiftness and strength, but if I had them I don't think I would tear human beings to bits unless I were *she*, which was not what I wished to be, only as strong and agile as she; do you see? I am in a great hurry, dear, and have written you an inordinately stupid letter; never mind, the next shall be inconceivably amusing. Just now my head is stuffed full of amber-colored cashmere and white satin. My mother begs to be kindly remembered to Mrs. Kemble. Always affectionately yours,
>
> F. A. K.

My determination to *soften* the character of Camiola is another indication of my imperfect comprehension of my business as an actress, which was not to reform but to represent certain personages. Massinger's "Maid of Honor" is a stern woman, not without a very positive grain of coarse hardness in her nature. My attempt to *soften* her was an impertinent endeavor to alter his fine conception to something more in harmony with my own ideal of womanly perfection. I was a very indifferent actress and had not begun to understand my work, nor was Mr. Macready far wrong when, many years after, he spoke to me as "not knowing the rudiments of my

profession."

JOURNAL, 1831.

Thursday, April 21st.—Walked in the square, and studied Lady Teazle. The trees are thickly clothed with leaves, and the new-mown grass, even in the midst of London, smelt fresh and sweet; I was quite alone in the square, and enjoyed something like a *country* sensation. I went to Pickersgill, and Mrs. Jameson came while I was sitting to him; that Medora of his is a fine picture, full of poetry. We dined with the Harnesses; Milman and Croly were among the guests (it was a sort of *Quarterly Review* in the flesh). I like Mr. Milman; not so the other critic.

Friday, 22d.—Visiting with my mother; called on Lady Dacre, who gave me her pretty little piece of "Wednesday Morning," with a view to our doing it for my father's benefit. It is really very pretty, but I fear will look in our large theater as a lady's water-color sketch of a landscape would by way of a scene. I walked in the square in the afternoon, and studied Lady Teazle, which I do not like a bit, and shall act abominably. At the theatre to-night the house was not very full, and the audience were unpleasantly inclined to be political; they took one of the speeches, "The king, God bless him," and applied it with vehement applause to his worthy Majesty, William IV.

Saturday, 23d.—After my riding lesson, went and sat in the library to hear Sheridan

Knowles's play of "The Hunchback." Mr. Bartley and my father and mother were his only audience, and he read it himself to us. A real play, with real characters, individuals, human beings, it is a good deal after the fashion of our old playwrights, and does not disgrace its models. I was delighted with it; it is full of life and originality; a little long, but that's a trifle. There is a want of clearness and coherence in the plot, and the comic part has really no necessary connection with the rest of the piece; but none of that will signify much, or, I think, prevent it from succeeding. I like the woman's part exceedingly, but am afraid I shall find it very difficult to act.

After dinner there was a universal discussion as to the possibility and probability of Adorni's self-sacrifice in "The Maid of Honor," and as the female voices were unanimous in their verdict of its truth and likelihood, I hold it to be likely and true, for Dante says we have the "intellect of love," and Cherubino (a very different kind of authority) says the same thing; and I suppose we are better judges of such questions than men. The love of Adorni seems to me, indeed, more like a woman's than a man's, but that does not tell against its verisimilitude. Our love is characterized generally by self-devotion and self-denial, but the qualities which naturally belong to our affection were given to Adorni by his social and conventional position. He was by birth and fortune dependent on and inferior to Camiola, as women are by nature

dependent on and inferior to men; and so I think his love for her has something of a feminine quality.

In the evening went with my mother to a party at old Lady Cork's. We started for our assembly within a few minutes of Sunday morning. Such rooms—such ovens! such boxes full of fine folks and foul air! in which we stood and sat, and looked and listened, and talked nonsense and heard it talked, and perspired and smothered and suffocated. On our arrival, as I was going upstairs, I was nearly squeezed flat against the wall by her potent grace, the Duchess of St. Albans. We remained half an hour in the steaming atmosphere of the drawing-rooms, and another half-hour in the freezing hall before the carriage could be brought up; caught a dreadful cold and came home; did not get to bed till two o'clock, with an intolerable face-ache and tooth-ache, the well-earned reward of a well-spent evening.

[The career of the Duchess of St. Albans was, as far as worldly circumstances went, a curious one. As Miss Mellon she was one of my mother's stage contemporaries; a kind-hearted, good-humored, buxom, rather coarse actress, with good looks, and good spirits of a somewhat unrefined sort, which were not without their admirers; among these the old banker, Mr. Coutts, married her, and dying, left her the sole possessor and disposer of his enormous wealth. My mother, who had always remained on friendly though not intimate terms with her old stage-mate, went to see her in the early days of her widowhood, when Mrs. Coutts gave her this

moderate estimate of her "money matters:" "Ah, I assure you, dear Mrs. Charles, the reports of what poor, dear Mr. Coutts has left me are very much exaggerated—not, I really believe, more than a few hundred thousand pounds. To be sure" (after a dejected pause), "there's the bank—they say about fifty thousand a year."

This small fortune and inconsiderable income proved sufficient to the moderate desires of the young Duke of St. Albans, who married this destitute widow, who thenceforth took her place (and a large one) in the British aristocracy, and chaperoned the young Ladies Beauclerc, her husband's sisters, in society. She was a good-natured woman, and more than once endeavored to get my father and mother to bring me to her balls and magnificent parties. This, however, they steadily declined, and she, without resenting it, sent her invitations to my youngest brother alone, to whom she took a great fancy, and to whose accepting her civilities no objection was made. At her death she left her great wealth to Mr. Coutts's granddaughter, Miss Burdett Coutts, the lady whose excellent use of her riches has made her known all over the world as one of the most munificently charitable of Fortune's stewards.

The Duchess of St. Albans was not without shrewd sense and some humor, though entirely without education, and her sallies were not always in the best possible taste. Her box at Covent Garden could be approached more conveniently by crossing the stage than by the entrance from the front of the house, and she sometimes availed herself of this easier exit to reach her carriage with less delay. One night when my father had been acting Charles II., the Duchess of St. Albans crossing her old work-ground, the stage,

with her two companions, the pretty Ladies Beauclerc, stopped to shake hands with him (he was still in his stage costume, having remained behind the scenes to give some orders), and presenting him to her young ladies, said, "There, my dears; there's your ancestor." I suppose in her earlier day she might not have been a bad representative of their "ancestress."]

Monday, April 25th.—Finished studying Lady Teazle. In the evening at the theater the house was good, but the audience was dull and I was in wretched spirits and played very ill.

Dall was saying that she thought in two years of hard work we might—that is, my father and myself—earn enough to enable us to live in the south of France. This monstrous theater and its monstrous liabilities will banish us all as it did my uncle Kemble. But that I should be sorry to live so far out of the reach of H——, I think the south of France would be a pleasant abode: a delicious climate, a quiet existence, a less artificial state of society and mode of life, a picturesque nature round me, and my own dear ones and my scribbling with me—I think with all these conditions I could be happy enough in the south of France or anywhere.

The audience were very politically inclined, applied all the loyal speeches with fervor, and called for "God save the King" after the play. The town is illuminated, too, and one hopes and prays that the "Old Heart of Oak"

will weather these evil days, but sometimes the straining of the tackle and the creaking of the timbers are suggestive of foundering even to the most hopeful. The lords have been vindicating their claim to a share in *common* humanity by squabbling like fishwives and all but coming to blows; the bishops must have been scared and scandalized, lords spiritual not being fighting men nowadays.

After the play Mr. Stewart Newton, the painter, supped with us—a clever, entertaining man and charming artist; a little bit of a dandy, but probably he finds it politic to be so. He told us some comical anecdotes about the Royal Academy and the hanging of the pictures.

The poor, dear king [William IV.], who it seems knows as much about painting as *una vacca spagnuola*, lets himself, his family, and family animals be painted by whoever begs to be allowed that honor. So when the pictures were all hung the other day, somebody discovered in a wretched daub close to the ceiling a portrait of Lady Falkland [the king's daughter], and another of his Majesty's favorite *cat*, which were immediately *lowered* to a more honorable position, to accomplish which desirable end, Sir William Beechey [then president of the academy] removed some of his own paintings. On a similar occasion during the late King George IV.'s life, a wretched portrait of him having been placed in one of the most conspicuous situations in the room,

the Duke of Wellington and sundry other distinguished *cognoscenti* complimented Sir Thomas Lawrence on it *as his*; this was rather a bitter pill, and must have been almost too much for Lawrence's courtierly equanimity.

Wednesday, April 27th.—To the riding school, where Miss Cavendish and I discoursed on the *stay-at-home* sensation, and agreed that it is bad to encourage it too far, as one may narrow one's social circle till at last it resolves itself into *one's self*.

Wrote to thank Dr. Thackeray [provost of King's College, Cambridge, and father of my life-long friend A—— T——] for the Shakespeare he has sent me, and Lady Dacre for her piece of "Wednesday Morning." In the evening they all drove out in the open carriage to see the illuminations; I stayed at home, for the carriage was full and I had no curiosity about the sight. The town is one blaze of rejoicing for the Reform Bill triumph; the streets are thronged with people and choked up with carriages, and the air is flashing and crashing with rockets and squibs and crackers, to the great discomfort of the horses. So many R's everywhere that they may stand for reform, revolution, ruin, just as those who run may choose to read, or according to the interpretation of every individual's politics; the most general acceptation in which they will be taken by the popular understanding will assuredly be *row*.

Friday, 29th.—Went off to rehearsal without

any breakfast, which was horrible! but not so horrible as my performance of Lady Teazle promises to be. If I do the part according to my notion, it will be mere insipidity, and yet all the traditional pokes and pats with the fan and *business* of the part, as it is called, is so perfectly unnatural to me that I fear I shall execute it with a doleful bad grace. It seems odd that Sir Peter always wears the dress of the last century, while the costume of the rest of the *dramatis personæ* is quite modern. Indeed, mine is a ball dress of the present day, all white satin and puffs and clouds of white tulle, and garlands and wreaths of white roses and jasmine; it is very anomalous, and makes Lady Teazle of no date, as it were, for her mariners are those of a rustic belle of seventeen hundred and something, and her costume that of a fine lady of the present day in the height of the present fashion, which is absurd.

Mrs. Jameson paid me a long visit; she threatens to write a play; perhaps she might; she is very clever, has a vast fund of information, a good deal of experience, and knowledge and observation of the world and society. She wanted me to have spent the evening with her on the 23d, Shakespeare's birth and death day, an anniversary all English people ought to celebrate. Lady Dacre called, in some tribulation, to say that she had committed herself about her little piece of "Wednesday Morning," and that Lady Salisbury, who wants it for Hatfield, does not like its being brought out on the stage.

Lady Dacre says Lady Salisbury is "afraid of comparisons" (between herself and me, in the part), *I* think Lady Salisbury, would not like "our play" to be made "common and unclean" by vulgar publicity. In the evening I went to the theater to see a new comedy by a Spaniard. The house was literally empty, which was encouraging to all parties. The piece is slightly constructed in point of plot, but the dialogue is admirably written, and, as the work of a foreigner, perfectly surprising. I was introduced to Don Telesforo de Trueba, the author, an ugly little young man, all hair and glare, whiskers and spectacles; he must be very clever and well worth knowing, Mr. Harness took tea with us after the play.

[The comedy, in five acts, of "The Exquisites" was a satirical piece showing up the ridiculous assumption of affected indifference of the young dandies of the day. The special airs of impertinence by which certain officers of a "crack" regiment distinguished themselves had suggested several of the most telling points of the play, which was in every respect a most remarkable performance for a foreigner.]

Saturday, April 30th.—Received a letter from John; he has determined not to leave Spain at present; and were he to return, what is there for him to do here? In the evening to Mrs. C——'s ball; it was very gay, but I am afraid I am turning "exquisite," for I didn't like the music, and my partners bored me, and the dancing tired me, and my journal is getting like K——'s head—full of naked facts, unclothed with a single thought.

Sunday, May 1st.—As sulky a day as ever *glouted* in an English sky. The "young morn" came picking her way from the east, leading with her a dripping, draggled May, instead of Milton's glorious vision.

After church, sundry callers: Mr. C—— bringing prints of the dresses for "Hernani," and the W——s, who seem in a dreadful fright about the present state of the country. I do not suppose they would like to see Heaton demolished.

In the evening we went to the Cartwrights'. It is only in the morning that one goes there to be tortured; in the evening it is to eat delicious dinners and hear delightful music.

Hummel, Moscheles, Neukomm, Horsley, and Sir George Smart, and how they did play! *à l'envi l'un de l'autre*. They sang, too, that lovely glee, "By Celia's Arbor." The thrilling shudder which sweet music sends through one's whole frame is a species of acute pleasure, very nearly akin to pain. I wonder if by any chance there is a point at which the two are one and the same thing!

Tuesday, May 3d.—I wrote the fourth scene of the fifth act of my play ["The Star of Seville"], and acted Lady Teazle for the first time; the house was very good, and my performance, as I expected, very bad; I was as flat as a lady amateur. I stayed after the play to hear Braham sing "Tom Tug," which was a refreshment to my spirit after my own acting; after I came home, finished the fifth act of "The Star of Seville." "Joy, joy for ever,

my task is done!" I have not the least idea, though, that "heaven is won."

Wednesday, May 4th.—A delightful dinner at the B——s', but in the evening a regular crush; however, if one is to be squeezed to death (though 'tis an abolished form of torture), it may as well be in good company, among the fine world, and lots of pleasant people besides: Milman, Sotheby, Lockhart, Sir Augustus Calcott, Harness, Lady Dacre, Joanna Baillie, Lady Calcott, etc.

Friday, May 6th.—Real March weather: cold, piercing, damp, wretched, in spite of which I carried Shakespeare to walk with me in the square, and read all over again for the fiftieth time all the conjectures of everybody about him and his life. How little we know *about him*, how intimately we seem to know *him*! I had the square all to myself, and it was delicious: lilac, syringa, hawthorn, lime blossoms, and new-mown grass in the midst of London—and Shakespeare to think about. How grateful I felt for so much enjoyment! When I got home, corrected the proof-sheets of "Francis I.," and thought it looked quite pretty in print.

Out so late dancing, Wednesday and Thursday nights, or rather *mornings*, that I had no time for journal-writing. What a life I do lead!

Friday, May 13th.—At twelve o'clock to Bridgewater House for our first rehearsal of "Hernani." Lady Francis wants us to go down to them at Oatlands. I should like of all

things to see Weybridge once more; there's many a nook and path in those woods that I know better than their owners. The rehearsal lasted till three, and was a tolerably tidy specimen of amateur acting. Mr. Craven is really very good, and I shall like to act with him very much, and Mr. St. Aubin is very fair. Was introduced to Mrs. Bradshaw, whose looks rather disappointed me, because she "did contrive to make herself look so beautiful" on the stage, in Clari and Mary Copp and everything she did; I suppose her exquisite acting got into her face, somehow. Henry Greville is delightful, and I like him very much. When we left Bridgewater House we drove to my aunt Siddons's. Every time I see that magnificent ruin some fresh decay makes itself apparent in it, and one cannot but feel that it must soon totter to its fall.

What a price she has paid for her great celebrity!—weariness, vacuity, and utter deadness of spirit. The cup has been so highly flavored that life is absolutely without savor or sweetness to her now, nothing but tasteless insipidity. She has stood on a pinnacle till all things have come to look flat and dreary; mere shapeless, colorless, level monotony to her. Poor woman! what a fate to be condemned to, and yet how she has been envied, as well as admired!

After dinner had only just time to go over my part and drive to the theater. My dear, delightful Portia! The house was good, but the audience dull, and I acted dully to suit them; but I hope my last dress, which was

beautiful, consoled them. What with sham business and real business, I have had a busy day.

Saturday, May 14th.—Received a note from Theodosia [Lady Monson], and a whole cargo of delicious flowers from Cassiobury. She writes me that poor old Foster [an old cottager who lived in Lord Essex's park and whom my friend and I used to visit] is dying. The last I saw of that "Old Mortality" was sitting with him one bright sunset under his cottage porch, singing to him and dressing his hat with flowers, poor old man! yet after walking this earth upward of ninety-seven years the spirit as well as the flesh must be weary. His cottage will lose half its picturesqueness without his figure at the door; I wonder who will take care now of the roses he was so fond of, and the pretty little garden I used to forage in for lilies of the valley and strawberries! I shall never see him again, which makes me sad; I was often deeply struck by the quaint wisdom of that old human relic, and his image is associated in my thoughts with evening walks and summer sunsets and lovely flowers and lordly trees, and he will haunt Cassiobury always to me. I went with my mother to buy my dresses for "Hernani," which will cost me a fortune and a half.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, Saturday.

MY DEAREST H——,

You see I have taken your advice, and,

moreover, your paper, in order that, in spite of the dispersion of Parliament and the unattainability of franks, our correspondence may lose nothing in bulk, though it must in frequency. I think you are behaving very shabbily in not writing to me. Are you consulting your own pleasure, or my purse? I dedicate so much of my income to purposes which go under the head of "money thrown away;" don't you think the cost of our correspondence may be added to that without seriously troubling my conscience? What shall I say to you? "Reform" is on the tip of my pen, and great as are our private matters of anxiety, they scarcely outweigh in our minds the national interest that is engrossing almost every thinking person throughout the country. You know I am no politician, and my shallow causality and want of adequate information alike unfit me from understanding, much less discussing, public questions of great importance; but the present crisis has aroused me to intense interest and anxiety about the course events are taking. You can have no conception of the state of excitement prevailing in London at this moment. The scene in the House of Lords immediately preceding the dissolution the papers will have described to you, though if the spectators and participators in it may be believed, the tumult, the disorder, the Billingsgate uproar on that occasion would not be easy to describe. Lord Londonderry, it seems, thought that the days of *faust-recht* had come back again, and I fancy more than he are of that opinion.

An illumination was immediately ordered by the Lord Mayor Donkin (or *key*, as "t'other side" call him); but, owing to the shortness of the notice he gave, it seems the show of light was not satisfactory to the tallow chandler part of the population, so another was appointed two nights after. My mother and the two Harrys went out in the open carriage to drive through the streets. I was depressed and disinclined for sight-seeing, and did not go, which I regretted afterward, as all strong exhibitions of public feeling are curious and interesting. They say the crowd was immense in all the principal thoroughfares, and of the lowest order. They testified their approbation of the various illuminated devices by shouts and hurrahs and applause; their displeasure against the various non-illuminators was more violently manifested by assailing their houses and breaking their windows.

Sundry were the glass sacrifices offered at the shrine of consistent Tory patriotism at the West End of the town. The mottoes and sentences on some of the illuminations were noteworthy for their democratic flavor: "The king and the people," "The people of England," "The glorious dissolution," "The glorious reform," "The people and the press," "The people's triumph." A man who seemed by his dress to belong to the very lowest class (a cross apparently between a scavenger and a rag-seller), with a branch of laurel waving in his tattered hat, stopped before this last sentence and exclaimed, "No —they don't yet; but they will."

I have been having quite a number of holidays at the theater lately. They have brought out a comedy in which I do not play, and are going to bring out a sort of historical melodrama on the life of Bonaparte, so that I think I shall have easy work, if that succeeds, for the rest of the season. I have just finished correcting the proof-sheets of "Francis I.," and think it looks quite pretty in print, and have dedicated it to my mother, which I hope will please her....

Dear H——, this is Saturday, the 14th, and 'tis now exactly three weeks since I began this letter. I know not what you will think of this, but, indeed, I am almost worn out with the ceaseless occupations of one sort and another that are crowded into every day, and the impossibility of commanding one hour's quiet out of the twenty-four....

I am afraid we shall not come to Ireland this summer, after all, my dear H——. The Dublin manager and my father have not come to terms, and I hear Miss Inverarity (a popular singer) is engaged there, so that I conclude we shall not act there this season. This is so great a disappointment to me that I cannot say anything whatever about it. I have been acting Lady Teazle for Mr. Bartley and my father's benefit. It seems to have pleased the public very well. Without caring for it much myself, I find it light and amusing work, and much easier for me than Lady Townley, because it is a natural and that an entirely artificial character; the whole tone and manners, too, of Sheridan's

rustic belle are much more within my scope than those of the woman of fashion of Sir John Vanbrugh's play.

On Friday we had our first rehearsal of "Hernani," at Bridgewater House, and I was greatly surprised with some of the acting, which, allowing for a little want of technical experience, was, in Mr. Craven's instance, really very good. He is the grandson of old Lady Craven, the Margravine of Anspach, and enacts the hero of the piece, which I think he will do very well. The whole play, I think, will be fairly acted for an amateur performance. Lord and Lady Francis have pressed my mother very much to go down for a little while to Oatlands, the beautiful place close to Weybridge, which belonged to the Duke of York, and of which they have taken a lease. My mother has accepted their invitation, and looks forward with great pleasure to revisiting her dear Weybridge. I know a good deal more of that lovely neighborhood and all its wild haunts than the present proprietors of Oatlands. Lady Francis is a famous horsewoman, and told me by way of inducement to go there that we would gallop all over the country together, which sounded very pleasant....

I called on my aunt Siddons the other day, and was shocked to find her looking wretchedly ill; she has not yet got rid of the erysipelas in her legs, and complained of intense headache. Poor woman! she suffers dreadfully.... Cecilia's life has been one enduring devotion and self-sacrifice. I cannot

help wishing, for both their sakes, that the period of her mother's infirmity and physical decay may be shortened. I received a charming letter from Theodosia yesterday, accompanying a still more charming basketful of delicious flowers from dear Cassiobury—how much nicer they are than human beings! I don't believe I belong to man (or woman) kind, I like so many things —the whole material universe, for example —better than what one calls one's fellow-creatures. She told me that old Foster (you remember the old cottager in Cassiobury Park) was dying. The news contrasted sadly with the sweet, fresh, living blossoms that it came with. The last time that I saw that old man I sat with him under his porch on a bright sunny evening, talking, laughing, winding wreaths round his hat, and singing to him, and that is the last I shall ever see of him. He was a remarkable old man, and made a strong impression on my fancy in the course of our short acquaintance. There was a strong and vivid *remnant* of mind in him surviving the contest with ninety and odd years of existence; his manner was quaint and rustic without a tinge of vulgarity; he is fastened to my memory by a certain wreath of flowers and sunset light upon the brook that ran in front of his cottage, and the smell of some sweet roses that grew over it, and I shall never forget him.

I went to the opera the other night and saw Pasta's "Medea" for the first time. I shall not trouble you with any ecstasies, because, luckily for you, my admiration for her is

quite indescribable; but I have seen grace and majesty as perfect as I can conceive, and so saying I close my account of my impressions. I fancied I was slightly disappointed in Taglioni, whose dancing followed Pasta's singing, but I suppose the magnificent tragical performance I had just witnessed had numbed as it were my power of appreciation of her grace and elegance, and yet she seemed to me like a *dancing flower*; so you see I must have like her very much.

God bless you, dear; pray write to me very soon. I want some consolation for not seeing you, nor the dear girls, nor the sea. I could think of that fresh, sparkling, fresh looking, glassy sea till I cried for disappointment.

Ever yours,

F. A. K.

The Miss Inverarity mentioned in this letter was a young Scotch singer of very remarkable talent and promise, who came out at Covent Garden just at this time. She was one of the tallest women I ever saw, and had a fine soprano voice as high as herself, and sang English music well. She was a very great favorite during the short time that I remember her on the stage.

MY DEAREST H——,

My mother has just requested me to talk with A—— about her approaching first communion, and it troubles me because I fear I cannot do so satisfactorily to her (I

mean my mother) and myself. I think my feeling about the sacrament, or rather the preparation necessary for receiving it, is different from hers. It is not so much to me an awful as a merciful institution. One goes to the Lord's Table because one is weak and wicked and wretched, not because one is, or even has striven to be, otherwise. A holy reverence for the holy rite is indispensable, but not, I think, such a feeling as would chill us with fear, or cast us down in despondency. The excess of our poverty and humility is our best claim to it, and therefore, though the previous "preparations," as it is rather technically called, may be otherwise beneficial, it does not seem to me necessary, much less indispensable. Our Lord did not say, "Cleanse yourselves, amend yourselves, strip yourselves of your own burdens and come to me;" but, "Come to me and I will cleanse you, I will cure you, I will help you and give you rest." It is remembering this that I venture to take the sacrament, but I know other people, and I believe my mother among them, think a much more specific preparation necessary, and I am afraid, therefore, that I might not altogether meet my mother's views in what I might say to A—— upon the subject. I wish you would tell me what your opinion and feeling is about this.

Your affectionate F. A. K.

Sunday, May 15th.—Walked home from church with Mrs. Montagu and Emily and Mrs. Procter, discussing among various things the necessity for "preparation" before taking the sacrament. I suppose the publican in the parable had not prepared his prayer, and I suppose he would have been a worthy communicant.

They came in and sat a long time with my mother talking about Sir Thomas Lawrence, of whom she spoke as a perfect riddle. I think he was a dangerous person, because his experience and genius made him delightfully attractive, and the dexterity of his flattery amounted in itself to a fine art. The talk then fell upon the possibility of friendship existing between men and women without sooner or later degenerating, on one part or the other, into love. The French rhymster sings—

"Trop tot, hélas, l'amour
s'enflamme,
  Et je sens qu'il est mal aisé;
Que l'ami d'une belle dame,
  Ne soit un amant déguisé."

My father came in while the ladies were still here, and Mrs. Procter behaved admirably well about her husband's play....

I do think it is too bad of the management to have made use of my name in rejecting that piece, when, Heaven knows, so far from *rejecting*, I never even *object* to anything I am bidden to do; that is, never visibly or audibly....

Mrs. P—— called, and the talk became political and lugubriously desponding, and I suddenly found myself inspired with a contradictory vein of hopefulness, and became vehement in its defense. In spite of all the disastrous forebodings I constantly have, I cannot but trust that the spread of enlightenment and general progress of intelligence in the people of this country—the good judgment of those who have power and the moderation of those who desire improvement—will effect a change without a *crash* and achieve reform without revolution.

Wednesday, May 18th.—My mother and I started at two o'clock for Oatlands. The day was very enjoyable, for the dust and mitigated east wind were in our backs; the carriage was open, and the sun was almost too powerful, though the earth has not yet lost its first spring freshness, nor the trees, though full fledged, their early vivid green. The turf has not withered with the heat, and the hawthorn lay thick and fragrant on every hedge, like snow that the winter had forgotten to melt, and the sky above was bright and clear, and I was very happy. I had taken "The Abbot" with me, which I had never read; but my mother did not sleep, so we chatted instead of my reading. She recalled all our former times at Weybridge. It was a great pleasure to retrace this well-known road, and again to see dear old Walton Bridge and the bright, broad Thames, with the noble chestnut trees on its banks, the smooth, smiling fields stretching beyond it, and the swans riding in such happy

majesty on its bosom. I really think I do deserve to live in the country, it is so *delightsome* to me. We reached Oatlands an hour before dinner-time and found the party just returned from riding. We sauntered through part of the grounds to the cemetery of the Duchess of York's dogs.... We had some music in the evening. Lady Francis sang and I sang, and was frightened to death, as I always am when asked to do so....

Thursday, 19th.—A bright sunny morning, the trees all bowing and bending, and the water chafing and crisping under a fresh, strong, but not cold, wind. I lost my way in the park and walked toward Walton, thinking I was going to Weybridge, but, discovering my mistake, turned about, and crossing the whole park came out upon the common and our old familiar cricketing ground. I flew along the dear old paths to our little cottage, but "Desolate was the dwelling of Morna"—the house closed, the vine torn down, the grass knee-deep, the shrubs all trailing their branches and blossoms in disorderly luxuriance on the earth, the wire fence broken down between the garden and the wood, the gate gone; the lawn was sown with wheat, and the little pine wood one tangled maze, without path, entrance, or issue. I ran up the mound to where John used to stand challenging the echo with his bugle....

O tempo passato!—the absent may return and the distant be brought near, the dead be raised and in another world rejoin us, but a

day that is gone is gone, and all eternity can give us back no single minute of the past! I gathered a rose and some honeysuckle from the poor disheveled shrubs for my mother, and ran back to Oatlands to breakfast. After breakfast we went over "Hernani," with Mrs. Sullivan for prompter, and when that was over everybody went out walking; but I was too tired with my morning's tramp, and sat under a tree on the lawn reading a very good little book on the sacrament, which went over the ground of my late discussion with Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Procter on the subject of "preparation" for taking it.

After lunch there was a general preparation for riding, and just as we were all mounted it began to rain, and persevered till, in despair, Mr. and Mrs. Sullivan rode off without our promised escort. Mr. C—— arrived just as we had disequipped, and the gentlemen all dispersed. Lady Francis and I sang together for some time, and suddenly the clouds withholding their tears, she and I, in one of those instants of rapid determination which sometimes make or mar a fate, tore on our habits again, jumped on our horses, and galloped off together over the park. We had an enchanting, gray, soft afternoon, with now and then a rain-drop and sigh of wind, like the last sob of a fit of crying. The earth smelt deliriously fresh, and shone one glittering, sparkling, vivid green. Our ride was delightful, and we galloped back just in time to dress for dinner.

In the evening, sauntering on the lawn and

pleasant, bright talk indoors. Lord John (the present venerable Earl Russell) would be quite charming if he wasn't so afraid of the rain. I do not think he is made of sugar, but, politically, perhaps he is the salt of the earth; he certainly succeeds in keeping himself *dry*.

Friday, Oatlands.—Walked out before breakfast; the night's rain had refreshed the earth and revived every growing thing, the east wind had blown itself away, and a warm, delicious western breeze came fluttering fitfully over the new-mown lawn. After breakfast we rehearsed Mr. Craven's and Captain Shelley's and my scenes in "Hernani." I think they will do very well if they do not shy at the moment of action, or rather acting. We had some music, and then the gentlemen went out shooting. I took "The Abbot" and established myself on a hay-cock, leaving Lady Francis to her own indoor devices. By and by the whole party came out, and we sat on the lawn laughing and talking till the gentlemen's carriage was announced, and our rival heroes took their departure for town, cheek by jowl, in a pretty equipage of Mr. Craven's, in the most amicable mood imaginable. As soon as they were off we mounted and rode out, past our old cottage, down by Brooklands, through the second wood, and by the Fairies' Oak. O Lord King, Lord King (we were riding through the property of the Earl of Lovelace, then Lord King), if I was one of those bishops whom you do not love, I would curse, excommunicate, and anathematize you for cutting down all those splendid trees and

laying bare those deep, dark, leafy nooks, the haunts of a thousand "Midsummer Night's Dreams," to the common air and the staring sun. The sight of the dear old familiar paths brought the tears to my eyes, for, stripped and thinned of their trees and robbed of their beauty, my memory restored all their former loveliness. On we went down to Byefleet to the mill, to Langton's through the sweet, turfy meadows, by hawthorn hedges musical as sweet, over the picturesque little bridge and along that deep, dark, sleepy water flowing so silently in its sullen smoothness. On we went a long way over a wide common, where the coarse-grained peaty earth and golden glory of the flowering gorse reminded me of Suffolk's motto—

> "Cloth of gold, do not despise
> That thou art mix'd with cloth of frieze;
> Cloth of frieze, be not too bold
> That thou art mix'd with cloth of gold."

Back by St. George's Hill, snatching many a leaf and blossom as I rode to carry back to A —— mementoes of our dear Weybridge days, and so home by half-past seven, just time to dress for dinner. As we rode along, Lord Francis and I discussed poets and poetry *in general*—more particularly Byron, Keats, and Shelley; it was a very pretty and proper discourse for such a ride.

In the evening heard all manner of delicious ghost stories; afterward made music, Lady

Francis and I trying all sorts of duets, my mother keeping up a "humming" third and Lord Francis listening and applauding with equal zeal and discretion....

Saturday, May 21st.—My brother John come home from Spain....

Sunday, 22d.—What a very odd process dreaming is! I *dreamt* in the night that John had come home, and flung myself out of bed in my sleep to run downstairs to him, which naturally woke me; and then I remembered that he was come home and that I had seen and welcomed him, which it seems to me I might as well have dreamed too while I was about it, and saved myself the jump out of bed. I hate dreaming; it's like being mad—having one's brain work without the control of one's will.

Dear A—— took the sacrament for the first time at the Swiss church. On my return from church in the afternoon found Sir Ralph and Lady Hamilton and Don Telesforo de Trueba. I like that young Spaniard; he's a clever man. It was such fun his telling me all the story of the Star of Seville, little imagining I had just perpetrated a five-act tragedy on that identical subject.

Tuesday, May 24th.—Drove down to Clint's studio to see Cecilia's (Siddons's) portrait. It's a pretty picture of a "fine piece of a woman," as the Italians say, but it has none of the very decided character of her face....

Wednesday, May 25th.—After dinner went

over my part, dressed and set off for Bridgewater House for our dressed rehearsal of "Hernani." Found the stage in a state of *unfinish*, the house topsy-turvy, and every body to the right and left. Sat for an hour in the drawing-room while our very specially small and select audience arrived. Then heard Lady Francis, Henry Greville, Mrs. Bradshaw, and Mr. Mitford try their glee—one of Moore's melodies arranged for four voices—which they sang at the top of their lungs in order to hear themselves, while the carpenters and joiners hammered might and main at the other end of the gallery finishing the theater.

About nine they were getting under way, and we presently began the rehearsal. The dresses were all admirable; they (not the clothes, but the clothes pegs) were all horribly frightened. I was a little nervous and rather sad, and I felt strange among all those foolish lads, taking such immense delight in that which gives me so very little, dressing themselves up and acting. To be sure, "nothing pleaseth but rare accidents." Mr. M ——, our prompter, thought fit by way of prompting to keep up a rumbling bass accompaniment to our speaking by reading every word of the play aloud, as the singers are prompted at the opera house, which did not tend much to our assistance. Everything went very smoothly till an unlucky young "mountaineer" rushed on the stage and terrified me and Hernani half to death by *in*articulating some horrible intelligence of the utmost importance to us, which his fright

rendered quite incomprehensible. He stood with his arms wildly spread abroad, stuttering, sputtering, madly ejaculating and gesticulating, but not one articulate word could he get out. I thought I should have exploded with laughter, but as the woman said who saw the murder, "I knew I mustn't (faint), and I didn't." With this trifling exception it all went off very well. Either I was fagged with my morning's ride or the constitution of the gallery is bad for the voice; I never felt so exhausted with the mere effort of speaking, and thought I should have died prematurely and in earnest in the last scene, I was so tired. When it was over we adjourned with Lord and Lady Francis and the whole *dramatis personæ* to Mrs. W ——'s magnificent house and splendid supper....

While we were at table everybody suddenly stood up, my mother and myself reverently with the rest, when the whole company drank my health, and I collapsed down into my chair as red and as *limp* as a skein of scarlet wool, and my mother with some confusion expressed my obligation and her own surprise at the compliment. I talked a good deal to Captain Shelley, who is a nice lad, and, considering his beauty, and the admiration bestowed on him by all the fine ladies in London, remarkably unaffected. We are asked down to Oaklands again, and I hope my work at the theater will allow of my going. What a shocking mess those young gentlemen actors did make of their greenroom this evening, to be sure! rouge,

swords, wine, mustaches, soda water, and cloaks strewed in every direction. I wonder what they would say to the drawing-room decorum of our Covent Garden greenroom.

Thursday, May 26th.—Tried on dresses with Mrs. Phillips, and talked all the while about the characteristics of Shakespeare's women with Mrs. Jameson, who had come to see me. I pity her from the bottom of my heart; she has a heavy burden to carry, poor woman.... Went in the evening to rather a dull dinner, after which, however, I had the pleasure of hearing Mrs. Frere sing, which she did very charmingly, and so as quite to justify her great society musical reputation. After our dinner at the F——s' we went to Mrs. W ——'s evening party, where I sat alone, heard somebody sing a song, was introduced to a man, spoke incoherently to several people, got up, was much jostled in a crowd of human beings, and came home—and that's society. We are asked to a great supper at Chesterfield House, after a second representation which is to be given of "Hernani." My mother thinks it is too much exertion and dissipation for me, and as it is not a ball I do not care to go.

Friday, May 27th.—At eight o'clock drove with my mother to Bridgewater House. We went into the library, where there was nobody, and Lady Francis, Henry Greville, and Lady Charlotte came and sat with us. I was literally crying with fright. Lady Francis took me to my dressing-room, my mother rouged me, blessed me, and went off to join

the audience assembled in the great gallery. I went over my part once and my room a hundred times in every direction. At nine they began; the audience very wisely were totally in the dark, which threw out the brilliantly illuminated stage to great advantage, and considering that they were the finest folk in England they behaved remarkably well—listened quietly and attentively, and applauded like Covent Garden galleries. It all went well except poor Mr. Craven's first speech, in which he got out. I don't know whether Lady L—— was among the spectators, and gave him *des éblouissements*. It all went off admirably, however, and oh, how glad I was when it was over!

Saturday, May 28th.—I was awakened by a basket of flowers from Cassiobury, and a letter from Theodosia. Old Foster is dead. I wish he might be buried near the cottage. I should like to know where to think of his resting-place, poor old man!...

In the evening Mrs. Jameson, the Fitzhughs, R—— P——, and a Mr. K——, a friend of John's, and sundry and several came.... We acted charades, and they all went away in high good humor.

Sunday, May 29th.—An "eternal, cursed, cold, and heavy rain," as Dante sings. My mother, A——, and I went to the Swiss church; the service is shorter and more unceremonious than I like; that sitting to sing God's praise, and standing to pray to Him, is displeasing to

all my instincts of devotion.

After church my mother was reading Milton's treatise on Christian doctrine, and read portions of it aloud to me. I always feel afraid of theological or controversial writings, and yet the faith that shrinks from being touched lest it should totter is certainly not on the right foundation. I suppose we ought, on the contrary, to examine thoroughly the reason of the faith that is in us. Declining reading upon religious subjects may be prudent, but it may be indolence, cowardice, or lack of due interest in the matter. I think I must read that treatise of Milton's.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, May 29th, 1831.

MY DEAREST H——,

I have but little time for letter-writing, getting daily "deeper and deeper still" in the incessant occupations of one sort and another that crowd upon and almost overwhelm me; and now my care is not so much whether I shall have time to write you a long letter, as how I shall get leisure to write to you at all. You complain that, in spite of the present interest I profess in public affairs, I have given you no details of my opinion about them—my hopes or fears of the result of the Reform movement. I have other things that I care more to write to you about than politics, and am chary of my space, because, though I can cross my letter, I can only have one sheet of paper. "The Bill,"

modified as it now is, has my best prayers and wishes, for to say that the removal of certain abuses will not give the people bread which they expect is nothing against it; but, at the same time that I sincerely hope this measure will be carried, I cannot conceive what Government will do *next*, for though trade is at this moment prosperous, great poverty and discontent exist among large classes of the people, and as soon as these needy folk find out that Reform is really not immediate bread *and* cheese *and* beer, they will seek something else which they may imagine will be those desired items of existence, and that is what it may be difficult to give them. In the mean time party spirit here has reached a tremendous pitch; old friendships are broken up and old intimacies cease; former cordial acquaintances refuse to meet each other, houses are divided, and the dearest relations disturbed, if not destroyed. Society is become a sort of battle-field, for every man (and woman too) is nothing if not political. In fact, there really appears to be no middle or moderating party, which I think strange and to be deplored. It seems as if it were a mere struggle between the nobility and the mobility, and the middle-class—that vast body of good sense, education, and wealth, and efficient to hold the beam even between the scales—throws itself man by man into one or the other of them, and so only swells the adverse parties on each side.

Parliament meets again in a few days, and then comes the tug of war. Lord John Russell was at Oatlands while we were there, and as

the Francis Egertons and their guests were all anti-Reformers, they led him rather a hard life. He bore all their attacks with great good humor, however, and with the well-satisfied smile of a man who thinks himself on the right, and knows himself on the safe side, and wisely forbore to reply to their sallies. Our visit there was delightful.

As the distance is but one and twenty miles, my mother and I posted down in the open carriage. The only guests we found on our arrival were Mr. and Mrs. Sullivan (she is a daughter of Lady Dacre's, and a charming person), Lord John Russell, and two of our *corps dramatique*, Mr. Craven and Captain Shelley, son of Sir John Shelley, a handsome, good-humored, pleasant young gentleman, who acts Charles V. in "Hernani." I got up very early the first morning I was there and went down before breakfast to our little old cottage. In the lane leading to it I met a poor woman who lived near us, and whom we used to employ. I spoke to her, but she did not know me again. I wonder if these four years can have changed me so much? The tiny house had not been inhabited since we lived there.... My aunt Siddons is better, and Cecy very well.

Your affectionate

F. A. K.

[The beautiful domain of Oatlands was only rented at this time by Lord Francis Egerton, who delighted so much in it that he made overtures for the purchase of it. The house was by no means a good

one, though it had been the abode of royalty; but the park was charming, and the whole neighborhood, especially the wooded ranges of St. George's Hill, extremely wild and picturesque.... Lord Francis Egerton bought St. George's Hill, at the foot of which he built Hatchford, Lady Ellesmere's charming dower house and residence after his death, and the house of Oatlands became a country inn, very pleasant to those who had never known it as the house of former friends, and therefore did not meet ghosts in all its rooms and garden walks; and the park was cut up into small villa residences and rascally inclined citizen's boxes. Hatchford, the widowed home of Lady Ellesmere and burial-place of her brother, to whose memory she erected there an elaborate mausoleum, has passed out of the family possessions and become the property of strangers. One son of the house lives on St. George's Hill, and has his home where I have so often drawn rein while riding with his father and mother to look over the wild, wooded slopes to the smiling landscape stretching in sunny beauty far below us.]

Monday, May 30th. ... The Francis Egertons called, and sat a long time discussing "Hernani." ... I must record such a good pun of his, which he only, alas, *dreamt*. He dreamt Lord W—— came up to him, covered with gold chains and ornaments of all sorts, and that he had called him the "Chain Pier." ... In the evening to Bridgewater House. As soon as we arrived, I went to my own private room, and looked over my part. We began at nine. Our audience was larger than the last time. The play went off extremely well; we were all improved. I was very anxious to play well, for the Archbishop of York was in the front row, and he (poor gentleman!) had never had the happiness of seeing me, the play-house being forbidden ground to him. [This seems rather inconsistent, as all the lesser clergy at this time frequented the theater without fear or reproach. Dr. Hughes, the Very Reverend Prebend of St. Paul's, Milman, Harness, among our own personal friends, were there constantly, not to speak of my behind-the-scenes acquaintance, the Rev. A.F.] I should like to seduce an old Archbishop into a liking for the wickedness of my mystery, so I did my very best to edify him, according to my kind and capacity.... At the end of the play, as I lay dead on the stage, the king (Captain Shelley) was cutting three great capers, like Bayard on his field of battle, for joy his work was done, when his pretty dancing shoes attracted, in spite of my decease, my attention, and I asked, with rapidly reviving interest in existence, what

they meant, on which I was informed that the supper at Mrs. Cunliffe's was indeed a ball. I jumped up from the dead, hurried off my stage robes, and hurried on my private apparel, and followed my mother into the saloon. Here I had delightful talk (though I believe I was dancing on my mind's feet all the while) with Lord John Russell, Miss Berry, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, and that charming person, James Wortley, and I got a glimpse of Lord O——'s lovely face, who is a beautiful creature. After being duly stared at by the crowds of my exalted fellow-beings who filled the room, Lady Francis said she would send them away, and we adjourned to Mrs. Cunliffe's, and had a very fine ball; that is to say, we had neither room to dance, nor space to sit, nor power to move.

"Oh, pleasure is a very pleasant thing," as Byron sings and H—— for ever says, and certainly a good ball is a pleasant thing, and in spite of the above drawbacks I was enchanted with everything. Such shoals of partners! such nice people! such perfect music! such a delightful floor! Danced till the day had one eye wide open, and then home to bed—what a good thing it is to have one under the circumstances! I hope I have not been very tipsy to-night, but it is difficult with so many stimulants to keep *quite* sober. Broad daylight! Six o'clock!

Tuesday, May 21st.—My feet ache so with dancing that I can hardly stand. Did not some traditional princesses of German fairyland dance their shoes and stockings to

pieces?

Going into the drawing-room I found my darling Dr. Combe there, and if I had not been so tired I must have made a jump at his neck, I was so very glad to see him. He brought me a letter from Mr. Combe, whom I love only one step lower. He sat with us but a short time, and leaves town to-morrow, which I am sorry for, first, because I should like to have seen him again so very much, and next, because I should have been glad that my mother became better acquainted with the mental charms and seductions of the man whose outward appearance seems to have allayed some of her apprehensions for the safety of my heart and those of my Edinburgh cousins. Mrs. W—— called soon after. She is intent upon my acting Mlle. Mar's part in "Henri Trois." I can do nothing with any French part in Covent Garden. If they can find a theater of half that size to get it up in, well and good; but seen from a distance, which defies discrimination of objects, a thistle is as good as a rose, and in that enormous frame refinement is mere platitude, and finish of detail an unnecessary minutia.

We went to the theater to see a new piece, I believe by Mrs. Norton. The pit and galleries were very indifferent; the dress circle and private boxes full of fine folk. Lady St. Maur (Georgiana Sheridan, Mrs. Norton's youngest sister, afterward Duchess of Somerset and Queen of Beauty) and her husband, with Corinne and Mr. Norton, in a box opposite

ours. What a terrible piece! what atrocious situations and ferocious circumstances! tinkering, starving, hanging—like a chapter out of the Newgate Calendar. But, after all, she's in the right; she has given the public what they desire, given them what they like. Of course it made one cry horribly; but then of course one cries when one hears of people reduced by sheer craving to eat nettles and cabbage-stalks. Destitution, absolute hunger, cold and nakedness, are no more subjects for artistic representation than sickness, disease, and the *real* details of idiotcy, madness, and death. All art should be an idealized; elevated representation (not imitation) of nature; and when beggary and low vice are made the themes of the dramatist, as in this piece, or of the poet, as in the works of Crabbe, they seem to me to be clothing their inspirations in wood or lead, or some base material, instead of gold or ivory. The clay of the modeler is more *real*, but the marble of the sculptor is the clay glorified. In Crabbe's writings one has at least the comfort and consolation of a high moral sense, charming versification, and an occasional tender, exquisite expression of the beauties of nature. Our play to-night could not boast of these *alleviations*.

Wednesday, June 1st.—At the riding school saw Miss C——, who wants me to get the play changed at Covent Garden *for this evening*—"rien que cela!" What a fine thing it is to be "one of those people!" They fancy that anybody's business of any sort can be postponed to the first whim that enters their

head. My mother came with Dr. Combe in the carriage to fetch me from the riding school. At home found a note from Lady Francis and the epilogue Lord Francis has written to "Hernani," which I am certainly bound to like, for it is highly complimentary to me.

I went to the real theater in the evening to do real work. The house was good, but I played like a wretch—ranted, roared, and acted altogether infamously. The fact was I was tired to death, and of course violence always has to supply the place of strength. Unluckily all the F——s were there, and I felt sorry for them. To be sure, they had never seen "The Hunchback" before, and I should think would heartily desire never to see it again; my performance was shameful.

Thursday, June 2d.—Mr. Hayter called. Lord Francis has spoken to him about the picture he wishes him to do of me, and he came to take the position, and I gave him his choice of three or four. I dare say he will make a very pretty picture. As for my likeness, that *I* am not hopeful about. I have gone through the operation in vain so very often. Murray has sent me some beautiful and delightful books.... A third representation of "Hernani" is called for, it seems, and, as far as I am concerned, they are welcome to it; but Lady Francis came to say that the Duchess of Gloucester wants it to be acted on the 23d, and I am afraid that will not do for my theater arrangements; they must try and have it earlier, if possible. Lady Francis has

> half bribed me with a ball. They want us to go down to Oatlands for Saturday and Sunday, and I hope we may be able to manage it.... After Lady F—— was gone, my mother had a visit from Mrs. B——; her manner is bad, her matter is good. She is clever and excellent, and I have a great respect for her. She interested me immensely by her account of Mrs. Fry's visits to Newgate. What a blessed, happy woman to do so much good; to be the means of comfort and consolation, perhaps of salvation, to such desolate souls! How I did honor and love what I heard of her. Mrs. B—— said Mrs. Fry would be delighted to take me with her some day when she went to the prison. My mother laughingly said she was afraid Mrs. Fry would convert me—surely not to Quakerism. I do not think I need a new faith, but power to act up to the one I profess. I need no Quaker saint to tell me I do not do that.

[I had the great honor of accompanying Mrs. Fry in one of her visits to Newgate, but from various causes received rather a painful impression instead of the very different one I had anticipated. Her divine labor of love had become *famous*, and fine ladies of fashion pressed eagerly to accompany her, or be present at the Newgate exhortations. The unfortunate women she addressed were ranged opposite their less excusable sister sinners of the better class, and I hardly dared to look at them, so entirely did I feel out of my place by the side of Mrs. Fry, and so sick for their degraded attitude and position. If I had been alone with them and their noble teacher I would

assuredly have gone and sat down among them. On the day I was there a poor creature sat in the midst of the congregation attired differently from all the others, who was pointed out to me as being under sentence of transportation for whatever crime she committed. Altogether I felt broken-hearted for *them* and ashamed for *us*.]

My mother has had a letter from my father (he was acting in the provinces), who says he has met and shaken hands with Mr. Harris (his co-proprietor of Covent Garden, and antagonist in our ruinous lawsuit about it). I wonder what benefit is to be expected from that operation with—such a person.

Sunday, June 5th. ... On my return from afternoon service found Mr. Walpole with my mother; they amused me extremely by a conversation in which they ran over, as far as their memories would stretch (near sixty years), the various fashions and absurd modes of dress which have prevailed during that period. Toupees, fêtes, toques, bouffantes, hoops, bell hoops, sacques, polonaises, levites, and all the paraphernalia of horsehair, powder, pomatum, and pins, in the days when court beauties had their heads dressed over-night for the next day's drawing-room, and sat up in their chairs for fear of destroying the edifice by lying down. No wonder they were obliged to rouge themselves—the days when once in a fortnight was considered often enough for ridding the hair of its horrible paste of flour and grease. We are certainly cleaner than our grandmothers, and much more comfortable,

though it is not so long since my own head was dressed *à la giraffe*, in three bows over pins half a foot high, so that I could not sit upright in the carriage without knocking against the top of it. My mother's and Mr. Walpole's recollections and descriptions were like seeing a set of historical caricatures pass before one.

Monday, June 6th.—The house was very full at the theater this evening, and Miss C—— sent me round a delicious fresh bouquet. I acted well, I think; the play was "Romeo and Juliet." It is so very pleasant to return to Shakespeare, after *reciting* Bianca and Isabella, etc. I reveled in the glorious poetry and the bright, throbbing *reality* of that Italian girl's existence; and yet Juliet is nothing like as nice as Portia—*nobody* is as nice as Portia. But the oftener I act Juliet the oftener I think it ought never to be acted at all, and the more absurd it seems to me to try to act it. After the play my mother sent a note with the carriage to say she would not go to the ball, so I dressed myself and drove off with my father from the theater to the Countess de S——'s. At half-past eleven the ball had not begun. Mrs. Norton was there in splendid beauty; at about half-past twelve the dancing began, and it was what is called a very fine ball. While I was dancing with Mr. C——, I saw my father talking to a handsome and very magnificent lady, who my partner told me was the Duchess of B ——; after our quadrille, when I rejoined my father, he said to me, "Fanny, let me present you to ——" here he mumbled something

perfectly inaudible, and I made a courtesy, and the lady smiled sweetly and said some civil things and went away. "Whose name did you mention," said I to my father, with some wickedness, "just now when you introduced me to that lady?" "Nobody's, my dear, nobody's; I haven't the remotest idea who she is." "The Duchess of B——," said I, glibly, strong in the knowledge I had just acquired from my partner. "Bless my soul!" cried the poor man, with a face of the most ludicrous dismay, "so it was! I had quite forgotten her, though she was good enough to remember me, and here I have been talking cross-questions and crooked answers to her for the last half-hour!"

Was ever any thing so terrible! I feared my poor father would go home and remain awake all night, sobbing softly to himself, like the eldest of the nine Miss Simmonses in the ridiculous novel, because in her nervous flurry at a great dinner party she had refused instead of accepting a gentleman's offer to drink wine with her. Lady G—— then came up, whom he did remember, and who was "truly gracious;" and I left him consoled, and, I hope, having forgotten his dreadful duchess again. All the world, as the saying is, was at this ball, and it certainly was a very fine assembly. We danced in a splendid room hung with tapestry—a magnificent apartment, though it seemed to me incongruous for the purpose; dim burning lights and flitting ghosts and gusts of wind and distant footfalls and sepulchral voices being the proper *furniture* of the "tapestried

chamber," and not wax candles, to the tune of sunlight and bright eyes and dancing feet and rustling silks and gauzes and laughing voices, and all the shine and shimmer and flaunting flutter of a modern ball....

At half-past two, though the carriage had been ordered at two, my father told me he would not "spoil sport," and so angelically stayed till past four. He is the best of fathers, the most affectionate of parents, the most benevolent of men! There is a great difference between being chaperoned by one's father instead of one's mother: the latter, poor dear! never flirts, gets very sleepy and tired, and wants to go home before she comes; the former flirts and talks with all the pretty, pleasant women he meets, and does not care till what hour in the morning—a frame of mind favorable to much dancing for the *youngers*. After all, I had to come away in the middle of a delightful mazurka.

Tuesday, June 7th.— ... We had a very pleasant dinner at Mr. Harness's. Moore was there, but Paganini was the chief subject discussed, and we harped upon the one miraculous string he fiddles on without pauses.... After dinner I read one of Miss Mitford's hawthorny sketches out of "Our Village," which was lying on the table; they always carry one into fresh air and green fields, for which I am grateful to them.

Wednesday, June 8th.—While I was writing to H—— my mother came in and told me that

Mrs. Siddons was dead. I was not surprised; she has been ill, and gradually failing for so long.... I could not be much grieved for myself, for of course I had had but little intercourse with her, though she was always very kind to me when I saw her.... She died at eight o'clock this morning—peaceably, and without suffering, and in full consciousness.... I wonder if she is gone where Milton and Shakespeare are, to whose worship she was priestess all her life—whose thoughts were her familiar thoughts, whose words were her familiar words. I wonder how much more she is allowed to know of all things now than she did while she was here. As I looked up into the bright sky to-day, while my father and mother were sadly recalling the splendor of her day of beauty and great public power, I thought of the unlimited glory she perhaps now beheld, of the greater holiness and happiness I trust she now enjoys, and said in my heart, "It must be well to be as she is." I had never thought it must be well to be as she *was*....

As soon as the news came my father went off to see what he could do for Cecilia, poor thing, and to bring her here, if she can be persuaded to leave Baker Street. He was not much shocked, though naturally deeply grieved by the event; my aunt has now been ill so long that any day might have brought the termination of the protracted process of her death. When he returned he said Cecilia was composed and quiet, but would not leave the house at present. I have written to Lady Francis to decline going to Oatlands,

which we were to have done this week.

At dinner my father told me some of the arrangements he has made for the summer. We are to act at Bristol, Bath, Exeter, Plymouth, and Southampton. He then said, "Suppose we take steamer thence to Marseilles, and so on to Naples?" My heart jumped into my mouth at the thought; but how should I ever come back again?... Everything here is *so ugly*, even without comparison with that which is beautiful elsewhere; from Italy how should one come back to live in London?

Thursday, June 9th.— ... And so I am to act Lady Macbeth! I feel as if I were standing up by the great pyramid of Egypt to see how tall I am! However, it must be done; perhaps I may even do it less ill than Constance—the greater intensity of the character may perhaps render majesty less *indispensable*. Power (if one had enough of it) might atone for insufficient dignity. Lady Macbeth made herself a queen by dint of wickedness; Constance was royal born—a radical difference, which ought to be in my favor. But dear, dear, dear, what a frightful undertaking for a poor girl, let her be never so wicked!

And *the* Lady Macbeth will never be seen again! I wish just now that in honor of my aunt the play might be forbidden to be performed for the next ten years. My father and myself have a holiday at the theater—but only for the week—because of Mrs.

Siddons's death, and we are to go down to Oatlands—nobody being there but ourselves, that is my brother and I—for the rest and quiet and fresh air of these few days.

Friday, June 10th.—Before three the carriage was announced, and we started for the country. We dropped Henry at Lord Waldegrave's and had a very pleasant drive, though the day was as various in its moods as if we were in April instead of June. We arrived at about six, and found Mr. C—— had been made an exception to the "positively nobody" who was to meet us....

Saturday, June 11th.—Read the French piece called "Une Faute," which half killed me with crying. It is exceedingly clever, but altogether *too* true, in my opinion, for real art. It is not dramatic truth, but absolute imitation of life, and instead of the mitigated emotion which a poetical representation of tragic events excites, it produces a sense of positive suffering too acutely painful for an artistic result; it is a perfectly prosaical reproduction of the familiar vice and its inseparable misery of modern everyday life; it wants elevation and imagination—aërial perspective; it is close upon one, and must be agonizing to see well acted. My studies were certainly not of the most cheerful order, for after finishing this morbid anatomy of human hearts I read an article in the *Phrenological Journal* on Bouilland's "Anatomy of the Brain," which made me feel as if my brain was stuck full of pins and needles.

Perhaps a certain amount of experience must be attained through experiment, and if the wits of the human species are to be better understood, governed, and preserved by the results obtained by cutting and hacking the brains of living animals, *perhaps* some of our more immediate mercy is to be sacrificed to our humanity in the lump; but if this is not the forbidden doing evil that good may come of it, I do not know what is. One of the effects of Mr. Bouilland's excruciating experiments on his victims was to turn me already sick and give me an agonizing pain in *my* brain. I hope their beneficial consequences did not end there.

I did all this reading before breakfast, and when I left my room it was still too early for any one to be up, so I set off for a run in the park. The morning was lovely, vivid, and bright, with soft shadows flitting across the sky and chasing one another over the sward, while a delicious fresh wind rustled the trees and rippled the grass; and unable to resist the temptation, bonnetless as I was, I set off at the top of my speed, running along the terrace, past the grotto, and down a path where the syringa pelted me with showers of mock-orange blossoms, till I came under some magnificent old cedars, through whose black, broad-spread wings the morning sun shone, drawing their great shadows on the sweet-smelling earth beneath them, strewed with their russet-colored shedding. I thought it looked and smelt like a Russia-leather carpet. Then I came to the brink of the water, to a little deserted fishing pavilion

surrounded by a wilderness of bloom that was once a garden, and then I ran home to breakfast. After breakfast I went over the very same ground with Lady Francis, extremely demure, with my bonnet on my head and a parasol in my hand, and the utmost propriety of decorous demeanor, and said never a word of my mad morning's explorings. A girl's run and a young lady's walk are very different things, and I hold both pleasant in their way. The carriage was ordered to take my mother to Addlestone to see poor old Mrs. Whitelock, and during her absence Lady Francis and I repaired to her own private sitting-room, and we entertained each other with extracts from our respective journals. I was struck with the high esteem she expressed for Lord Carlisle; in one place in her journal she said she wished she could hope her boys would grow up as excellent men as he is, and this in spite of her party politics, for she is a Tory and he a Whig, and she is really a partisan politician.

In the afternoon, after a charming meandering ride, we determined to go to Monks Grove, the place Lady Charlotte Greville has taken on St. Anne's Hill.... In the evening we had terrifical ghost stories, which held, us fascinated till *one o'clock in the morning*.

> "The stones done, to bed they creep,
> By whispering winds soon lull'd
> asleep."

Sunday, June 12th.— ... It's nearly five years

since I said my prayers in that dear old little Weybridge church....

On our return, as the horses are never used on Sunday, we went down to the water and got into the boat. The day was lovely, and as we glided along the bright water my mother and Lady Francis and I murmured, half voice, all sorts of musical memories, which made a nice accompaniment to Lord Francis's occasional oar-dip that just kept the boat in motion. When we landed, my mother returned to the house, and the rest of us set off for a long delightful stroll to the farm, where I saw a monstrous and most beautiful dog whom I should like to have hugged, but that he looked so grave and wise it seemed like a liberty. We walked on through a part of the park called America, because of the magnificent rhododendrons and azaleas and the general wildness of the whole. The mass was so deep one's feet sank into it; the sun, setting, threw low, slanting rays along the earth and among the old tree trunks. It was a beautiful bit of forest scenery; how like America I do not know. Upon the racecourse we emerged into a full, still afternoon atmosphere of brilliant and soft splendor; the whole park was flooded with sunshine, and little creeks of light ran here and there into the woods we had just left, touching with golden radiance a solitary tree, and glancing into leafy nooks here and there, while the mass of woodland was one deep shadow....

Much discussion as to the possibilities and probabilities of our being able to stay here

another day. When we came back from our afternoon ride at near eight, found Mr. Greville and Lady Charlotte here, and a letter from my father, saying that I could be spared from my work at the theater a little longer, and promising to come down to us.... In the evening Mr. C—— and I acted some of Racine's "Andromaque" for them; my old school part of Hermione which I have not forgotten, and then two scenes from Scribe's pretty piece of "*les premières Amours*." He acts French capitally, and, moreover, bestowed upon me the two following ridiculous conundrum puns, for which I shall be forever grateful to him:

"Que font les Vaches à Paris?"

"Des Vaudevilles" (des Veaux de Ville).

"Quelle est la sainte qui n'a pas lesoin de Jarretières?"

"Ste. Sébastienne" (ses has se tiennent).

What absurd, funny stuff!

Tuesday, June 14th.—Gardening on the lawn —hay-making in the meadow—delightful ride in the afternoon, the beginning of which, however, was rather spoiled by some very disagreeable accounts Mr. C—— was giving us of Lord and Lady ——'s *mènage*. What might, could, would, or *should* a woman do in such a case? Endure and endure till her heart broke, I suppose. Somehow I don't think a man would have the heart to *break* one's heart; but, to be sure, I

don't know....

We did not return home till near nine, and so, instead of dinner, all sat down to high tea, at which everybody was very cheerful and gay, and the talk very bright....

I wish I could have painted my host and hostess this morning as they stood together on the lawn; she with her beautiful baby in her arms, her bright, fair forehead and eyes contrasting so strikingly with his fine, dark head. I never saw a more charming picture. (Landseer has produced one version of it in his famous "Return from Hawking.") Are not all such groups "Holy Families"? They looked to me holy as well as handsome and happy.

Wednesday, June 15th.— ... The races in the park were to begin at one, and we wished, of course, to keep clear of them and all the gay company; so at twelve my mother and I got into the pony carriage, and drove to Addlestone to my aunt Whitelock's pretty cottage there. It rained spitefully all day, and the races and all the fine racing folk were drenched. At about six o'clock my father came from London, bringing me letters; the weather had brightened, and I took a long stroll with him till time to dress for dinner.... In the evening music and pleasant talk till one o'clock.

Thursday, June 16th.—At eight o'clock my mother and I walked with my father to meet the coach, on the top of which he left us for London. After breakfast took my mother down to my "Cedar Hall," and established her

there with her fishing, and then walked up the hill to the great trees and amused myself with bending down the big branches, and, seating myself on them, let them spring up with me. Climbing trees, as poor Combe would say, excites one's "wonder" and one's "caution" very agreeably, and I like it. I took Lord Francis's translation of "Henri Trois" back to the "Cedar Hall," where my mother was still watching her float. I was a good deal struck with it. He has not finished the whole of the first act yet, but there is one scene between the Duchess of Guise and St. Megrin that I should think ought to be very effective on the stage; and I can imagine how charming Mdlle. Mars must have been in her sleep-walking gestures and intonations. The situation, which is highly dramatic, is, I think, quite new; I cannot recollect any similar one in any other play....

After lunch my mother, Lady Charlotte, and Mr. Greville drove off to Monks Grove, and we followed them on horse-back; it is a little paradise of a place, with its sunny, smooth sloping lawns and bright, sparkling piece of water, the masses of flowers blossoming in profuse beauty, and the high, overhanging, sheltering woods of St. Anne's Hill rising behind it. On our way home much talk of Naples. I might like to go there, no doubt; the question is how I should like to come back to London after Naples, and I think not at all. In the evening read the pretty French piece of "Michel et Christine" which my father had sent me.

Friday, June 17th.— ... My mother, Mr. C ——, and I drove together back to town; so good-by, Oatlands.

Monday, June 20th.—Went to rehearsal at half-past ten for John Mason, who is to come out in Romeo to-night; he had caught a dreadful cold and could hardly speak, which was terribly provoking, poor fellow! After my theater rehearsal of "Romeo and Juliet" drove to Bridgewater House to rehearse "Hernani." In the evening the house was very good at Covent Garden; I played well. John Mason was suffering dreadfully from cold and hoarseness; the audience were very good-natured, however, and he got through uncommonly well. My mother said I played "beautifully," which was saying much indeed for her. I was delighted, especially as the Francis Levesons and —— were all there.

Tuesday, June 21st.—Went to Bridgewater House to rehearse. Charles Young was among our morning audience; I was so glad to see him, for dear old acquaintanceship. The king was going to the House of Parliament, and Palace Yard was thronged with people, and we sat round one of the Bridgewater House windows to see the show. At about one the royal carriages set out—such lovely cream-colored horses, with blue and silver trappings; such splendid, shining, coal-black ones, with coral-colored trappings. The equipages looked like some enchanted present in a fairy story. The king—God bless him!—cannot, I should think, have been much annoyed by the clamorous greetings of

his people. I'm afraid that ominous, sullen silence is a bad sign of the times. We rehearsed very steadily. Lord Francis, who is taking the old duke's part because of Mr. St. Aubin going abroad, is much improved by some teaching Young has bestowed upon him; but still he is by no means so good as Mr. St. Aubin was....

Wednesday, 22d.—Read "La Chronique de Charles Neuf," which is very clever, but the history of that period in France is so revolting that works of fiction founded upon it are as disagreeable as the history itself. Hogarth's pictures and Le Sage's novels are masterpieces, and yet admirable only as excellent representations of what in itself is odious. However, they are satirical works, and so have their *raison d'être*, which I do not think a serious novel about detestable times and people has. Drove to Bridgewater House, feeling so unwell that I could scarcely stand, and was obliged to lie down till I was called to go on the stage. We had a magnificent audience—all the grandeurs in England except the King. The Queen, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland, Princess Elizabeth, Prince Leopold, the Duke of Brunswick. And lesser magnificoes the room full. Such very superior people make a dull audience, of course; the presence of royalty is always understood to bar applause, which is not etiquette when a Majesty is by. I played very ill; my voice was quite unmanageable, and broke twice, to my extreme dismay. The fact is, I am fagged *half* to death; but as I cannot

give up my work and cannot *bear* to give up my play, the only wonder is that I am not fagged *whole* to death. Mr. Craven acted really capitally, and I wondered how he could. They put us out terribly in one scene by forgetting the bench on which I have to sit down. Hernani managed with great presence of mind and cleverness in its absence, but it spoilt our prettiest picture. After the play Lady Francis came to fetch me to be presented to the Queen; her Majesty was most gracious in her reception of me, and so were the Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Gloucester, who came and had quite a long chat with me. When I had received my dismissal from her Majesty I ran to disrobe, and returned to join the crowd in the drawing-room.... When they were all gone we adjourned to Lady Gower's—a most magnificent supper, which *we* enjoyed in the perfection of comfort, in a small boudoir opening into and commanding the whole length of the supper saloon. Our snuggery just held my mother, Lady Francis, myself, Charles Greville, and three of our *corps dramatique*, and we not only enjoyed a full view of the royal table, but what was infinitely amusing, poor Lord Francis's disconsolate countenance, which half killed us with laughing. Supper done, we all proceeded downstairs to see the Royalty depart, and looked at a fine picture of Lawrence's of that handsome creature, Lord Clanwilliam. Took leave of my friends for some months, I am sorry to say; took Mr. ——home in our carriage and set him down

just at day-dawn. It was past four o'clock before I saw my bed; and the life I am leading is really enough to kill any one.

Thursday, June 23d.—Quite unwell, and in bed all day. Mrs. Jameson came and sat with me some time. We talked of marriage, and a woman's chance of happiness in giving her life into another's keeping. I said I thought if one did not expect too much one might secure a reasonably fair amount of happiness, though of course the risk one ran was immense. I never shall forget the expression of her face; it was momentary, and passed away almost immediately, but it has haunted me ever since.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET.

DEAR LADY DACRE,

I am commissioned by my mother to request your kind permission to bring my brother to your evening party on Saturday; she hopes you will have no scruple in refusing this request, if for any reason you would rather not comply with it.... I have been thinking much about what you said to me both *viva voce* and in your note upon that "obnoxious word" in my play. Let me entreat you to put aside conventional regards of age and sex, which have nothing to do with works of art or literature, and view the subject without any of those considerations, which have their own proper domain, doubtless—although I think you have in this instance admitted their jurisdiction out of it.... I hope as long as

I live that I shall never write anything offensive to decency or morality, or their pure source, religion; and I hope in my own manners and conversation always to preserve the decorum prescribed by society, good taste, and good feeling; but as a dramatic writer, supposing I am ever to be one, I shall have to depict men as well as women, coarse and common men as well as refined and courtly ones, and all and each, if I fulfill my task, must speak the language that their nature under their several circumstances points out as individually appropriate. But I forget that I am addressing one far better able than I am to say what belongs to all questions of poetry and art. Forgive me, my dear Lady Dacre, and allow me to add that, as when I put my play into your hands I told you that should you find it too intolerably dull and bad I would release you from your kind promise of accepting its dedication to yourself, I can only repeat my readiness to do so if upon any other ground whatever you feel reluctant to grace my title-page with your name. Pray tell me so without hesitation, as I had rather forego that honor than owe it to your courtesy without your entire good-will.

In any event pray accept my best acknowledgments for your kindness, and believe me always

Your very truly obliged

F. A. K.

This letter was written in answer to some strictures

of Lady Dacre's on what appeared to her coarseness of language in my play of "The Star of Seville," which she thought unbecoming a "young lady." If I remember rightly, too, she said that the introduction of a scene in a bedchamber might be deemed objectionable. I had asked her permission to dedicate the play to her, which she had granted; and though she failed to convince me that a young-lady element had any business whatever in a play, she very kindly allowed her name to adorn the title-page of my *un*-young ladylike drama.

Soon after this my father and aunt and myself left London for our summer tour in the provinces, which we began at Bristol.

> *Monday, July 4th, Bristol.*—The play was "Romeo and Juliet," and the nurse was a perfect farce in herself; she really was worth any money, and her soliloquy when she found me "up and dressed and down again," very nearly made me scream with laughter in the middle of my trance. Indeed, the whole play was probably considered an "improved version" of Shakespeare's Veronese story, both in the force and delicacy of the text. Sundry wicked words and coarse appellations were decorously dispensed with; many fine passages received judicious additions; not a few were equally judiciously omitted altogether. What a shocking hash!
>
> *Tuesday, July 5th.*—After breakfast we sallied forth to the market, to my infinite delight and amusement. It is most beautifully clean; the fruit and vegetables look so pretty, and smell so sweet, and give such an idea of

plentiful abundance, that it is delightful to walk about among them. Even the meat, which I am generally exceedingly averse to go near, was so beautifully and nicely arranged that it had none of its usual repulsiveness; and the sight of the whole place, and the quaint-looking rustic people, was so pleasantly envious. We stopped to gossip with a bewitching old country dame, whose market stock might have sat, with her in the middle of it, for its picture; the veal and poultry so white and delicate-looking, the bacon like striped pink and white ribbons, the butter so golden, fresh, and sweet, in a great basket trimmed round with bunches of white jasmine, the green leaves and starry blossoms and exquisite perfume making one believe that butter ought always to be served, not in a "lordly dish," but in a bower of jasmine. The good lady told us she had just come up from "the farm," and that the next time she came she would bring us some home-made bread, and that she was going back to brew and to bake. She looked so tidy and *rural*, and her various avocations sounded so pleasant as she spoke of them, that I felt greatly tempted to beg her to let me go with her to "the farm," which I am sure must be an enchanting place, neat and pretty, and flowery and comfortable, and full of rustic picturesqueness; and *while the sun shone*, I think I should like a female farmer's life amazingly. Went to the theater and rehearsed "Venice Preserved," which is an entirely different kind of thing. Charles Mason dined with us. After dinner I finished

reading Miss Ferrier's novel of "Destiny," which I like very much; besides being very clever, it leaves a pleasant taste, in one's mind's mouth. Went to the theater at six; the play was "Venice Preserved," and I certainly have seldom seen a more shameful exhibition. In the first place C—— did not even know his words, and that was bad enough; but when he was out, instead of coming to a stop decently, and finishing at least with his cue, he went on extemporizing line after line, and speech after speech, of his own, by way of mending matters. I think I never saw such a performance. He stamps and bellows low down in his throat like an ill-suppressed bull; he rolls his eyes till I feel as if they were flying out of their sockets at me, and I must try and catch them. He quivers and quavers in his speech, and pulls and *wrenches* me so inhumanly, that what with inward laughter and extreme rage and pain, I was really all but dead in earnest at the end of the play. I acted very ill myself till the last scene, when my Jaffier having been done justice to by the Venetian Government, I was able to do justice to myself, and having gone mad, and no wonder, died rather better than I had lived through the piece.

July 6th, Bristol.—Walked out to order the horses, and afterwards went on to look at the Abbey Church. We examined one or two interesting old monuments; but were obliged to curtail our explorings, as the doors were about to be closed. We have been talking much lately of a remote possibility of going to America; and as I left this old brown pile

to-day, it seemed to me curious to think of a country which has no cathedrals, no monuments of the Old Faith. How venerable, in spite of its superstitions and abuses; for its long undisputed sway over all civilized lands; for the great and good men who honored it by their lives and works—the religion of Augustine, of Bruno, Benedict, Francis d'Assisi, Francis de Sales, Fénelon, and how many more—the Christianity of Europe in its feudal, chivalrous times, those days of noble, good, as well as fierce, evil deeds and lives, the faith that kings and warriors bowed to when sovereignty was absolute and military power supreme. America has no gray abbeys, no ruined cloisters, to tell of monastic brotherhoods—the preserves of ancient historic chronicles, the guardians of the early wells and springs of classic learning and genius. In America there are no great, old, time-stained, weather-beaten, ivy-mantled churches full of tombs, such as we saw to-day, with curious carvings and quaint effigies, and where the early rulers of the land embraced the faith and received the baptism of Christ. That must be a very strange country. But they have Plymouth Rock, on the shore where the Protestant Pilgrims landed.

The horses having come to the door, we set off for our ride; our steeds were but indifferent hacks, but the road was charming, and the evening serene and pure, and I was with my father, a circumstance of enjoyment to me always. The characteristic feature of the scenery of this region is the

vivid, deep-toned foliage of the hanging woods, through whose dense tufts of green, masses of gray rock and long scars of warm-colored red-brown earth appear every now and then with the most striking effect. The deep-sunk river wound itself drowsily to a silver thread at the base of steep cliffs, to the summit of which we climbed, reaching a fine level land of open downs carpeted with close, elastic turf. On we rode, up hill and down dale, through shady lanes full of the smell of lime-blossom, skirting meadows fragrant with the ripe mellow hay and honey-sweet clover, and then between plantations of aromatic, spicy fir and pine, all exhaling their perfumes under the influence of the warm sunset. At last we made a halt where the road, winding through Lord de Clifford's property, commanded an enchanting view. On our right, rolling ground rising gradually into hills, clothed to their summits with flourishing evergreens, firs, larches, laurel, arbutus—a charming variety in the monotony of green. On the farthest of these heights Blaise Castle, with two gray towers, well defined against the sky, looked from its bosky eminence over the whole domain, which spread on our left in sloping lawns, where single oaks and elms of noble size threw their shadows on the sunlit sward, which looked as if none but fairies' feet had ever pressed it. Beyond this, through breaks and frames, and arches made by the trees, the broad Severn glittered in the wavy light. It was a beautiful landscape in every

direction. We returned home by sea wall and the shore of the Severn, which seemed rather bare and bleak after the soft loveliness we had just left....

Thursday, July 7th.—Went to the theater to rehearse "The Gamester." In the afternoon strolled down to the river with my father and Dall. We took boat and rowed toward the cliffs. Our time, however, was limited; and just as we reached the loveliest part of the river, we were obliged to turn home again.... At dinner, as we were talking about America, and I was expressing my disinclination ever to go thither, my father said: "If my cause (our Chancery suit) goes ill before the Lords, I think the best thing I can do will be to take ship from Liverpool and sail to the United States." I choked a little at this, but presently found voice to say, "Ebben son pronta;" but he replied, "No, that he should go alone." That you never should, my own dear father!... But I do hate the very thought of America.

Saturday, July 9th. ... In the afternoon drove out in an open carriage with Dall to Shirehampton, by the same road my father and I took in our ride the other day.

BRISTOL, July 10th, 1831.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I can neither bid you confirm nor deny any "*reports* you may hear," for I am in utter ignorance, I am happy to say, of the world's

surmisings on my behalf, and had indeed supposed that my time for being honored by its notice in any way was pretty well past and over.

I am glad you are having rest, as you speak of it with the enjoyment which those alone who work hard are entitled to. I trust, too, that in the instance of your eyes no news is good news, for you say nothing of them, and I therefore like to hope that they have suffered you to forget them.

I'm disappointed about your Shakespeare book. I should like to have had it by my next birthday, which is the 27th of November, and to which I look forward with unusually mingled feelings. However, it cannot be helped; and I have no doubt the booksellers are right in point of fact, for we are embarked on board too troublous times to carry mere *passe temps* literature with us. "We must have bloody noses and cracked crowns," I am afraid, and shall find small public taste or leisure for *polite letters*.

I like this place very well; it is very quiet, and my life is always a happy one with my father. He always spoils me, and that is always pleasant, you know.

The Bristol people are rather in a bad state just now for our purposes, for trade here is in a very unprosperous condition; and the recent failure of many of their great mercantile houses does no good to our theatrical ones. The audiences are very pleasant, however, and the company by no

means bad. We are here another week, and then take ship for Ilfracombe, and thence by land to Exeter; after that Plymouth and Southampton.... I wish I could be in London for "Anna Bolena." I cannot adequately express my admiration for Madame Pasta; I saw her in Desdemona the Saturday night on which I scrawled those few lines to you. I think if you knew how every look and tone and gesture of hers affects me, you would be satisfied. She is almost equal to an imagination; more than that I cannot say. If you rate "imagination" as I think you must, I need say nothing more. We shall certainly be back in London by the end of September, if not before. In the mean time believe me ever yours most truly,

F. A. K.

Sunday, July 10th.—My father wickedly *dawdled* about till we were nearly late for church, and had to scamper along the quays and up the steep street, to poor dear Dall's infinite discomfiture, who grumbled and puffed, and shuffled and shambled along, while I plunged on, breathlessly ejaculating, "It is so hateful to be late for church!" The cathedral (which I believe it is not) was quite full, but we obtained seats in the organ gallery, where we could not hear very well, but had a very fine view of the *coup d'œil* presented by the choir and church below us. The numerous and many-colored

congregation, the white surpliced choristers, the charity-school children in their uniforms surrounding the altar, all framed in by the dark old oak screens with their quaint readings, and partially vividly illuminated by occasional gleams of strong sunlight which poured suddenly through the colored windows, presented a beautiful picture. The service was very well performed: the organ is a remarkably good one, and one or two of the boys' voices were exquisitely soft and clear. It is a fine service, and yet I do not like it by way of religious worship. It does not make me devout, in the proper form of the term; it appeals too much to my senses and my imagination; it is religion *set* to music and painting, and artistic religion does not suit me. The incessant passing of people through the church, too, disturbs one, and gives an unpleasant air of irreverence to the whole.... I think I might like to go to a cathedral for afternoon service, much as I like to spend my Sunday leisure in reading Milton, though I should not be satisfied to make my whole devotional *exercises* consist in reading "Paradise Lost." A wretchedly weak, poor sermon; how strange that such a theme should inspire nothing better than such a discourse! However, I suppose this sort of ministering is the inevitable result of a "ministry" embraced merely as a means of subsistence. No one could paint pictures or compose music, *only* because they wanted bread, so I do not see why any one should preach sermons fit to be heard, only because they want bread. If I was a despot, I would

suppress hebdomadal writing of sermons, and people should be *forbidden* instead of *bidden* to talk nonsense upon sacred subjects.

Monday, 11th.—At night the theater was very full, and the audience pleasant. During supper my father, Charles Mason, and I had a long discussion about Kean. I cannot help thinking my father wrong about him. Kean *is* a man of decided genius, no matter how he neglects or abuses nature's good gift. He has it. He has the first element of all greatness—power. No taste, perhaps, and no industry, perhaps; but let his deficiencies be what they may, his faults however obvious, his conceptions however erroneous, and his characters, each considered as a whole, however imperfect, he has the one atoning faculty that compensates for everything else, that seizes, rivets, electrifies all who see and hear him, and stirs down to their very springs the passionate elements of our nature. Genius alone can do this.

As an actor, one whose efforts are the result of study, of mental research, reflection, and combination; as an intellectual anatomist, whose knowledge must dissect, and then re-form and reproduce again in beauty and harmony the image he has taken to pieces; as an artist, who is bound to conceal both the first and last processes, the dismembering of the parts and the reuniting them in a whole, and whose business is to make the most deliberate mental labor and the most studied personal effects appear the spontaneous result of unpremeditated passion and

emotion (feigned passion and emotion, which are to appear real)—in capacity for all this Kean may be defective. He may not be an actor, he may not be an artist, but he *is* a man of genius, and instinctively with a word, a look, a gesture, tears away the veil from the heart of our common humanity, and lays it bare as it beats in every human heart, and as it throbs in his own. Kean speaks with his whole living frame to us, and every fiber of ours answers his appeal.

I do not know that I ever saw him in any character which impressed me as a *whole work of art*; he never seems to me to intend to be any one of his parts, but I think he intends that all his parts should be *him*. So it is not Othello who is driven frantic by doubt and jealousy, nor Shylock who is buying human flesh by its weight in gold, nor Sir Giles Overreach who is selling his child to hell for a few years of wealth and power; it is Kean, and in every one of his characters there is an intense personality of his *own* that, while one is under its influence, defies all criticism—moments of such overpowering passion, accents of such tremendous power, looks and gestures of such thrilling, piercing meaning, that the excellence of those *parts* of his performances more than atones for the want of greater unity in conception and smoothness in the entire execution of them.

The discussion about Kean led naturally to some talk about his most famous parts, particularly Shylock. My father's conception of Shylock seems to me less the right one

than Kean's; but then, if my father took what *I* think the right view of the part, he would have to give up acting it. The real Shylock—that is, Shakespeare's—is a creature totally opposite in his whole organization, physical and mental, to my father's; and as my father cannot force his nature in any particular into uniformity with that of Shylock, he endeavors to persuade himself that the theory by which he tries to bring it into harmony with his individuality, and within the compass of his powers, is the right one; but I think him entirely mistaken about it. Kean did with the part exactly what my father wants to do—adapted his conceptions to his means of execution; but Kean's physical constitution was much better suited to express Shylock as Shylock should be expressed than my father's. My father attempts to make Shylock "poetical" (in the superficial sense), because that is the bias of his own mind in matters of art. Classical purity and refinement of taste are his specialties as an actor, and neither power nor intensity.

Shylock's master passion is not revenge, which is a savage, but avarice, which is a sordid motive. His hatred is inspired more by defeated hope of gain and positive losses and threatened ventures, than by the personal insults and contumely he has received.

Avarice is an absolutely base passion, and a grand poetical character cannot consistently be raised upon such a foundation, nor can a nature be at once groveling and majestic.

Besides, Shakespeare has not made Shylock "poetical." The concentrated venom of his passion is prosaic in its vehement utterance —close, concise, vigorous, logical, but not imaginative; and in the scenes where his evil nature escapes the web of his cunning caution, and he is stung to fury by his complicated losses, there is intense passion but no elevation in his language.

There is a vein of humor in Shylock. A grim, bitter, sardonic flavor pervades the part, that blends naturally with the sordid thrift and shrewd, watchful, eager vigilance of the miser. It infuses a terrible grotesqueness into his rage, and curdles one's blood in the piercing, keen irony of his mocking humility to Antonio, and adds poignancy to the ferocity of his hideous revenge. This Kean rendered admirably, and in this my father entirely fails, but it is an important element of the character.

My father is hard upon Kean's defects because they are especially antagonistic to his artistic taste and tendency, but I think, too, there is a slight infusion of the vexation of unappreciated labor in my father's criticism of Kean. He forgets that power is universally felt and understood, and refinement seldom the one or the other, and for a thousand who applaud Kean's "What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?" probably not ten people are aware of his exquisite "nevertheless" in the reading of Antonio's letter. Most eyes can "see a church by daylight;" not many stop to look at the

lights and shadows that are forever varying and adding to the beauty of its aspect. I wonder how, being as well aware as my father is of all the fine work that escapes the eyes of the public, he can care for this kind of thing as he does.

Tuesday, 12th.—We are having events at the theater, and not of a pleasant sort. Mr. Brunton, the manager, is in "difficulties" (civilized plural for debt), and it seems that last night during the play one of his creditors put an execution into the theater, and laid violent hands upon the receipts, which, as it was my father's benefit, rather dismayed us. So after breakfast this morning, having put out my dresses for my favorite Portia for to-night, I went to the theater to ascertain if there was to be a rehearsal or not. My father had gone in search of Mr. Brunton to see how matters could be arranged, and at all events to represent that we could not go on acting unless our money was secured to us. Charles Mason, Dall, and I in the mean time found the poor actors in the theater very much at a loss how to proceed, as it seemed extremely doubtful whether there would be any performance; so we returned home, where we found my father, who said that at all events there must be a rehearsal, for it was absolutely necessary if we did act to-night, and could do us no harm if we did not; so we repaired again to the theater, where the scattered and scared *corps dramatique* having been got together again, we proceeded to business.

Wednesday, 13th.—Mr. K—— called and told us that some arrangement had been made with the truculent creditor of our poor manager by which *we* shall not lose any more in this unlucky business. My father will be quit for about a hundred pounds. I am very sorry for Mr. Brunton, but he should not have placed us in such an uncomfortable position. My father has offered to act one night beyond our engagement for the sake, if possible, of making up to the actors the arrears of salary Mr. Brunton owes them. They are all poor, hard-working people, earning no more than the means of subsistence, and this withholding of their due falls very heavily on them.

Thursday, 14th.— ... At the theater the house was very good, and the audience very pleasant. The play was "The Provoked Husband," and I'm sure I play his provoking wife badly enough to provoke anybody; but she's not a person to my mind, which is an artistic view of the case.

[My modes of dealing with my professional duties at this very unripe stage of my career irresistibly remind me of a not very highly educated female painter who had taken it into her head to make an historical picture of Cleopatra. Sending to a friend for a few "references" upon the subject of that imperial gypsy's character and career, she sent them hastily back, saying she had relinquished her purpose, "having really no idea Cleopatra was that sort of person."]

Friday, July 15th.—Miserrima! I have broken

a looking-glass! and on Friday, too! What do I think will happen to me! Had a long talk this morning with dear Dall about my dislike to the stage. I do not think it is the acting itself that is so disagreeable to me, but the public personal exhibition, the violence done (as it seems to me) to womanly dignity and decorum in thus becoming the gaze of every eye and theme of every tongue. If my audience was reduced to my intimates and associates I should not mind it so much, I think; but I am not quite sure that I should like it then.

At the theater the house was very full, and the audience particularly amiable. In the interval between the fourth and fifth acts Charles Mason made a speech to them, informing them of Mr. Brunton's distress, and our intention of acting for him on Monday. They applauded very much, and I hope they will do more, and come. My part of the charity is certainly not small; to be pulled and pushed and dragged hither and thither, and generally "knocked about," as the miserable Belvidera, for three mortal hours, is a sacrifice of self which my conscience bears me witness is laudable. I would much rather pay with my purse than my person in this case. Unfortunately, je n'ai pas de quoi.

Sunday, July 17th.—To Redcliffe Church with my father and Dall. What a beautiful old building it is!... What a sermon! Has the truth, as our Church holds it, no fitter expounders than such a preacher? Are these its stays, props, and pillars—teachers to

guide, enlighten, and instruct people as cultivated and intelligent as the people of this country on the most momentous of all subjects? Are these the sort of adversaries to oppose to men like Channing? As for not going to church because of bad or foolish sermons, that is quite another matter, though I not unfrequently hear that reason assigned for staying away. One goes to church to say one's prayers, and not to hear more or less fine discourses; one goes because it is one's duty, and a delight and comfort, and a quite distinct duty and delight from that of private prayer. A good sermon, Heaven knows, is a rare blessing to be thankful for, but if one went to church only in the expectation of that blessing, one might stay away most Sundays in the year.

[My youthful scorn of "poor preaching" reminds me of what I once heard Edward Everett say, who, before becoming his country's "Minister," in the diplomatic sense of the word, had been a powerful and eloquent Unitarian preacher: "I hear a good deal of criticism upon sermons which are supposed to be religious or moral exhortations, not intellectual exercises. I dare say many sermons are not *first rate*, but moderate good preaching is not a bad thing, and *pretty poor preaching* is better than most men's practice."]

Monday, July 18th.—The theater was crowded to-night, which delighted me. It is pleasant to see malicious and evil actions produce such a result. I was very nervous and excited, and nearly went into hysterics over one small incident of the evening. At

the close of the first separation scene—the play was "Venice Preserved"—when Jaffier is carried out by the nape of the neck by Pierre, and Belvidera *extracted* on the other side in the arms (and iron ones they were) of Bedamar, the audience of course were affected, harrowed, overcome by the poignant pathos of the situation. Charles looked woebegone. I called upon him in tones of the most piercing anguish (an agony not entirely feigned, as my bruises can bear witness). The curtain descended slowly amidst sympathetic sobs and silence—the musicians themselves, deeply moved, no doubt, with the sorrows of the scene, mournfully resumed their fiddles, and struck up "ti *ti* tum *tiddle* un *ti* tum *ti*"—the jolliest jig you ever heard. The bathos was irresistible; we behind the scenes, the principal sufferers (perhaps) in the night's performance, were instantly comforted, and all but shouted with laughter. I hope the audience were equally revived by this grotesque sudden cheering of their spirits. After the tragedy a Bristolian Paganini performed a concerto on one string. Dall declares that the whole orchestra played the whole time—but some sounds reached me in my dressing-room that were decidedly *unique* more ways than one, not at all unlike our favorite French fantasia—"Complainte d'un cochon au lait qui rêve." But the audience were transported; they clapped and the fiddle squeaked, they shouted and the fiddle squealed, they hurrahed and the fiddle uttered three terrific screams, and it was

over and Paganini is done for—here, at any rate. He need never show face or fiddle here; he hasn't a string (even one) left to his bow in Bristol. "So Orpheus fiddled," etc.

Tuesday, July 19th.—Dinner-party at the —— which ought to have been chronicled by Jane Austen. I sat by a gentleman who talked to me of the hanging gardens of Semiramis and what might have been cultivated therein (hemp perhaps), then of the derivation of languages—he still kept among roots—and finally of *tea*, which he told me he was endeavoring to grow on the Welsh mountains. Some of the table-talk deserved printing *verbatim*, only it was almost too good to be true, or at any rate believed.

Wednesday, July 20th.—Charles Mason came after breakfast, and told us that there was some chance of poor Mr. Brunton's getting out of prison (into which his creditor has thrust him), for that the latter had been so universally scouted for his harsh proceeding that he probably would be shamed into liberating him.

We shall not leave Bristol to-day. The wind is contrary and the weather quite unfavorable for a party of pleasure, which our trip by sea to Ilfracombe was to be. It's very disagreeable living half in one's trunks and traveling-bags, as this sort of uncertainty compels one to do. I studied Dante, wrote verses and sketched, and tried to be busy; but a defeated departure leaves one's mind and thoughts only half unpacked, and I felt

idle and unsettled, though I worked at "The Star of Seville" till dinner-time.

After dinner I studied politics in the Examiner and read an article on Cobbett, which made me laugh, and the motto to which might have been "Malvolio, thou art sick of self-conceit." ...

Thursday, July 21st.—At dinner a discussion, suggested by Mr. D——'s conduct to Mr. Brunton, on the subject of returning evil for evil, and the difficulty of not doing so, if not deliberately and in deed, upon impulse and by thought. Nothing is easier in such matters than to say what one would do, and nothing, I suppose, more difficult than to do what one should do. So God keep us all from convenient opportunities of revenging ourselves....

[Occasionally one hears in the streets voices in which the making of a fortune lies, and when one remembers what fortunes some voices have commanded, it seems bitterly cruel to think of such a possession begging its bread for want of the chance that might have made it available by culture. A woman, some years ago, used to sing at night in the neighborhood of St. James's Street, whose voice was so exquisite, so powerful, sweet, and thrilling, a mezzo soprano of such pure tone and vibrating quality, that Lady Essex, my sister, and myself, at different times, struck by the woman's magnificent gift and miserable position, had her into our houses, to hear her sing and see if nothing could be done to give her the full use of her noble natural endowment. She was a plain young woman of about thirty,

tolerably decently dressed, and with a quiet, simple manner. She said her husband was a house-paperer in a small way, and when he was out of employment she used to go out in the evening and see what her singing would bring her. Poor thing! it was impossible to do anything for her; she was too old to learn or unlearn anything. No training could have corrected the low cockney vulgarity and coarse, ignorant indistinctness and incorrectness of her enunciation. And so in after years, as I returned repeatedly to England, after longer or shorter intervals of time, and always inhabited the same neighborhood in London, I still continued to hear, on dark drizzly evenings (and never without a thrill of poignant pain and pity) this angel's voice wandering in the muddy streets, its perfect, round, smooth edge becoming by degrees blunted and broken, its tones rough and coarse and harsh, some of the notes fading into feeble indistinctness—the fine, bold, true intonation hiding its tremulous uncertainty in trills and quavers, alternating with pitiful husky coughing, while every now and then one or two lovely, rich, pathetic notes, surviving ruin, recalled the early sweetness and power of the original instrument. The idea of what that woman's voice might have been to her used to haunt me.

It was hearing Rachel singing (barefoot) in the streets of Paris that Jules Janin's attention was first excited by her. Her singing, as I heard it on the stage in the drinking song of the extraordinary piece called "Valeria," in which she played two parts, was really nothing more than a chanting in the deep contralto of her speaking voice, and could hardly pass for a musical performance at all, any more than her wonderful uttering of the "Marseillaise," with which she made the women's blood run cold, and the men's

hair stand on end, and everybody's flesh creep.

My sister and I used often to plan an expedition of street-singing for the purpose of seeing how much we could collect in that way for some charity. We were to put ourselves in "poor and mean attire"—I do not know that we were to "smirch our faces" with brown paint; we thought large battered poke-bonnets would answer the purpose, and, thus disguised, we were to go the rounds of the club windows, my father walking at a discreet distance for our protection on one side of the street, and our formidable pirate friend Trelawney on the other. We never carried out this project, though I have no doubt it would have brought us a very pretty penny for any endowment we might have wished to make.]

Friday, July 22d.—Long and edifying talk with dear Dall upon my prospects in marrying. "While you remain single," says she, "and choose to work, your fortune is an independent and ample one; as soon as you marry, there's no such thing. Your position in society," says she, "is both a pleasanter and more distinguished one than your birth or real station entitles you to; but that also is the result of your professional exertions, and might, and probably would, alter for the worse if you left the stage; for, after all, it is mere frivolous fashionable popularity." I ought to have got up and made her a courtesy for that. So that it seems I have fortune and fame (such as it is)—positive real advantages, which I cannot give with myself, and which I cease to own when I give myself away, which certainly makes my marrying any one or any one marrying me

rather a solemn consideration; for I lose everything, and my marryee gains nothing in a worldly point of view—says she—and it's incontrovertible and not pleasant. So I took up Dante, and read about devils boiled in pitch, which refreshed my imagination and cheered my spirits very much.

[How far my ingenious mind was from foreseeing the days when men of high rank and social station would marry singers, dancers, and actresses, and be condescending enough to let their wives continue to earn their bread by public exhibition, and even to appropriate the proceeds of their theatrical labors! I have not yet made up my mind whether, in these cases, the *gentleman* ought not to take his wife's name in private, as a compensation for her not taking his in public. Poor Miss Paton's noble husband was the only Englishman, that I know of, who committed that act of self-effacement. To go much further back in dramatic and social history, the old, accomplished, mad Earl of Peterborough married the famous singer Anastasia Robinson, and refused to acknowledge the fact till her death. To be sure, this was a more cowardly, but a less dirty meanness. He withheld his name from her, but did not take her money.]

It is settled now that we go to Exeter by coach, and now that we have given up our pretty sea trip to Ilfracombe, the weather has become lovely—perverse creature!—but I am glad we are going away in every way.

Saturday, Bristol, July 23d. ... We started at eight, and taking the whole coach to ourselves as we do, I think traveling by a public conveyance the best mode of getting

over the road. They run so rapidly; there is so little time lost, and so much trouble with one's luggage saved. The morning was gray and soft and promised a fine day, but broke its promise at the end of our second stage, and began to pelt with rain, which it continued to do the live-long blessed day. We could see, however, that the country we were passing through was charming. One or two of the cottages by the roadside, half-smothered in vine and honeysuckle, reminded me of Lady Juliana,[B] who, when she said she could live in a desert with her lover, thought that it was a "sort of place full of roses." ... These laborers' cottages were certainly the poor dwellings of very poor people, but there was nothing unsightly, repulsive, or squalid about them—on the contrary, a look of order, of tidy neatness about the little houses, that added the peculiarly English element of comfort and cleanliness to the picturesqueness of their fragrant festoons of flowery drapery, hung over them by the sweet season. The little plots of flower-garden one mass of rich color; the tiny strip of kitchen-garden, well stocked and trimly kept, beside it; the thriving fruitful orchard stretching round the whole; and beyond, the rich cultivated land rolling its waving corn-fields, already tawny and sunburnt, in mellow contrast with the smooth green pasturages, with their deep-shadowed trees and bordering lines of ivied hawthorn hedgerows, marking boundary-lines of division without marring the general prospect—a lovely landscape that sang aloud

of plenty, industry, and thrift. I wonder if any country is more blessed of God than this precious little England? I think it is like one of its own fair, nobly blooming, vigorous women; her temper—that's the climate—not perfection, to be sure (but, after all, the old praise of it is true; it admits of more constant and regular out-of-door exercise than any other); the religion it professes, pure; the morality it practises, pure, probably by comparison with that of other powerful and wealthy nations. Oh, I trust that neither reform nor its extreme, revolution, will have power to injure this healthily, heartily constituted land....

[B] In Miss Ferrie's novel, "Marriage."

EXETER, July 24th, 1831.

DEAREST H——,

We arrived here last night, or rather evening, at half-past six o'clock, and I found your letter, which, having waited for me, shall not wait for my answer....

Thank you for John's translation of the German song, the original of which I know and like very much. The thoughts it suggested to you must constantly arise in all of us. I believe that in these matters I feel all that you do, but not with the same intensity. To adore is most natural to the mind contemplating beauty, might, and majesty beyond its own powers; to implore is most natural to the heart oppressed with suffering,

or agitated with hopes that it cannot accomplish, or fears from which it cannot escape. The difference between natural and revealed religion is that the one worships the loveliness and power it perceives, and the other the goodness, mercy, and truth in which it believes. The one prays for exemption from pain and enjoyment of happiness for body and mind in this present existence; the other for deliverance from spiritual evils, or the possession of spiritual graces, by which the soul is fitted for that better life toward which it tends....

I do not think "Juliet" has written to you hitherto, and I am rather affronted at your calling me so. I have little or no sympathy with, though much compassion for, that Veronese young person.... There is but one sentiment of hers that I can quote with entire self-application, and that is—

> "I have no joy of this contract to-night;
> It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden."

In spite of which the foolish child immediately secures her lover's word, appoints the time for meeting, and makes every arrangement for following up the declaration she thought too sudden by its as sudden execution. Poor Juliet! I am very sorry for her, but do not like to be called after her, and do not think I am like her. I have been working very hard every day since you left Bristol (my belief is that Juliet was

very idle). I am sorry to say I find my playing very hard work; but easy work, if there is such a thing, would not be best for me just now.

Yours ever,

F. A. K.

Sunday, Exeter.—To church with Dall and my father, a blessing that I can never enjoy in London, where he is all but stared out of countenance if he shows his countenance in a church, and it requires more devotion to the deed than I fear he possesses to encounter the annoyance attendant upon it. We heard an excellent sermon, earnest, sober, simple, which I was especially grateful for on my father's account. Women don't mind bad preaching; they have a general taste for sermons, and, like children with sweeties, will swallow bad ones if they cannot get good. "We have a natural turn for religion," as A.F. said of me; but men, I think, get a not unnatural turn against it when they hear it ill advocated....

The day has been lovely, and from my perch among the clouds here I am looking down upon a lovely view. Following the irregular line of buildings of the street, the eye suddenly becomes embowered in a thick rich valley of foliage, beyond which a hill rises, whose sides are covered with ripening corn-fields, meadows of vivid green, and fields

where the rich red color of the earth contrasts beautifully with the fresh hedgerows and tall, dark elm trees, whose shadows have stretched themselves for evening rest down in the low rosy sunset. It is all still and bright, and the Sabbath bells come up to me over it all with intermitting sweetness, like snatches of an interrupted angels' chorus, floating hither and thither about the earth.

Monday.—We contrived to get some saddle-horses, and rode out into the beautiful country round Exeter, but the preface to our poem was rather dry prose. We rode for about an hour between powdery hedges all smothered in dust, up the steepest of hills, and under the hottest of suns; but we had our reward when we halted at the top, and looked down upon a magnificent panorama of land and water, hill and dale, broad smiling meadows, and dark shadowy woodland—a vast expanse of various beauty, over which the eye wandered and paused in slow contentment. As we came leisurely down the opposite side of the hill, we met a gypsy woman, and I reined up my horse and listened to my fortune: "I have a friend abroad who is very fond of me." I hope so. "I have a relation far abroad who is very fond of me too." I know so. "I shall live long." More is the pity. "I shall marry and have three children." Quite enough. "I shall take easily to love, but it will not break my heart." I am glad to hear that. "I shall cross the sea before I see London again." Ah! I am afraid not. "The end of my summer will be happier

than its beginning"—and that may very easily be. For that I gave my prophetess a shilling. Oh, Zingarella! my blessing on your black eyes and red-brown cheeks! May you have spoken true!...

Meantime, my companions, my father and Mr. Kean, were discussing the fortunes of Poland. If I were a man, with a hundred thousand pounds at my disposal, I would raise a regiment and join the Poles. The Russians have been beaten again, which is good hearing. Is it possible this cause should fall to the earth? On our way home, had a nice smooth, long canter by the river-side. We turned off our road to visit a pretty property of Mr. F——'s, the house half-way up a hill, prettily seated among pleasant woods. We galloped up some fields above it to the brow of the rise, and had three mouthfuls of delicious fresh breeze, and a magnificent view of Exeter and the surrounding country.... After dinner, off to the theater; it was my benefit, "The Gamester." The house was very full, and I played and looked well; but what a Stukely! I was afraid my eyes would scarcely answer my purpose, but that I should have been obliged to "employer l'effort de mon bras" to keep him at a proper distance. What ruffianly wooing! and not one of the actors knew their parts. Stukely said to me in his love-speech, "Time has not gathered the roses from your cheeks, though often washed them." I had heard of Time as the thinner of people's hair, but never as the washer of their faces.

Sunday, July 31st.—Went to church, to St. Sidwell's.... We had another good sermon; that preacher must be a good man, and I should like to know him....

Our dinner-party this evening was like nothing but a chapter out of one of Miss Austen's novels. What wonderful books those are! She must have written down the very conversations she heard *verbatim*, to have made them so like, which is Irish.... How many things one ought to die of and doesn't! That dinner did come to an end. In the drawing-room afterward, in spite of the dreadful heat, two fair female friends actually divided one chair between them; I expected to see them run into one every minute, and kept speculating then which they would be, till the idea fascinated me like a thing in a nightmare. As we were taking our departure, and had got half way down the stairs, a general rush was made at us, and an attempt, upon some pretext, to get us back into that dreadful drawing-room. I thought of Malebranche hooking the miserable souls that tried to escape back again into the boiling pitch. But we got away and safe home, and leave Exeter to-morrow.

EXETER, July 31, 1831.

DEAREST H——,

I am content to be whatever does not militate against your affection for me.... I had a long letter from dear A——, a day ago, from Weybridge. She is quite well, and says

my mother is as happy as the day is long, now she is once more in her beloved haunts. I love Weybridge too very much.... It seems to me that memory is the special organ of pain, for even when it recalls our pleasures, it recalls only the past, and half their sweetness becomes bitter in the process. I have a tenacious and acute memory, and, as the phrenologists affirm, no hope, and feel disposed to lament that, not having both, I have either. The one seems the necessary counterpoise of the other; the one is the source of most of the pain, as the other is of most of the pleasure, which we derive from the things that are not; and I feel daily more and more my deficiency in the more cheerful attribute....

You have been to the Opera, and seen what even one's imagination does not shrug its shoulders at; I mean Madame Pasta. I admire her perfectly, and she seems to me perfect. How I wish I had been with you! And yet I cannot fancy you in the Opera House; it is a sort of atmosphere that I find it difficult to think of your breathing.... I wish you had not asked me to write verses for you upon that picture of Haydon's "Bonaparte at St. Helena." Of course, I know it familiarly through the engraving, and, in spite of its sunshine, what a shudder and chill it sends to one's heart! It is very striking, but I have neither the strength nor concentrativeness requisite for writing upon it. The simplicity of its effect is what makes it so fine; and any poetry written upon it would probably fail to be as simple, and therefore as powerful, as

itself. I cannot even promise you to attempt it, but if ever I fall in with a suitable frame of mind for so bold an experiment, I will remember you and the rocks of St. Helena. "My lady" (an Italian portrait on which I had written some verses) "Mia Donna," or "Madonna," more properly to speak, was a most beautiful Italian portrait that I saw, not in Augustin's gallery, but in a small collection of pictures belonging to Mr. Day, and exhibited at the Egyptian Hall. Sir Thomas Lawrence told me when I described it to him, that he thought it was a painting of Giordano's. It was a lovely face, not youthful in its character of beauty; there is a calm seriousness about the brow and forehead, a clear, intellectual severity about the eye, and a sweet, still placidity round the mouth, that united, to my fancy, all the elements of beauty, physical, mental, and moral. What an incomparable friend that woman must have been! Why is it that we rejoice that a soul fit for heaven is constrained to tarry here, but that, in truth, the fittest for this is also the fittest for that life? For it seems to me more natural not to wish to detain the bright spirit from its brighter home, and not to sorrow at the decree which calls it hence to perfect its excellence in higher spheres of duty....

I think a blight of uncertainty must have pervaded the atmosphere when I was born, and penetrated, not certainly my nature, but my whole earthly destiny, with its influence; from my plans and projects for to-morrow on to those of next year, all is mist and

indistinct indecision. I suppose it is the trial that suits my temper least, and therefore fits it best. It surely is that which "willfulness, conceit, and egotism" find hardest to endure. Yesterday I determined so far to escape from, or cheat, my destiny as to have a peep into futurity by the help of a gypsy. Riding with my father, and the whole hour, time, day, and scene, were in admirable harmony: the dark, sunburnt face, with its bright, laughing eyes and coal-black curls and flashing teeth; the old gateway against which she was leaning; the blue summer sky and sunny road skirted with golden corn-fields—the whole picture in which she was set was charming.

"I know it is a sin to be a mocker;"

and I am sure I need not tell you that I am sincerely grateful for all the kindness and civility that is bestowed upon us wherever we go.... What with riding, rehearsing, and acting, my days are completely filled. We start for Plymouth to-morrow at eight, and act "Romeo and Juliet" in the evening, which is rather laborious work. We play there every night next week. When next I write I will tell you of our further plans, which are at this moment still uncertain....

Affectionately yours,

F. A. K.

[These were the days before railroads had run everything and everybody up to London. There were still to be found then, in various parts of England, life that was peculiar and provincial, and manners

that had in them a character of their own and a stamp of originality that had often quite as much to attract as to repel. Men and women are, of course, still the same that sat to that enchanting painter, Jane Austen, but the whole form and color and outward framing and various countenance of their lives have merged its distinctiveness in a commonplace conformity to universal custom; and in regard to the more superficial subjects of her fine and gentle satire, if she were to return among us she would find half her occupation gone.]

Monday, August 1st.—I got some books while waiting for the coach, and we started at half-past eight. The heat was intolerable and the dust suffocating, but the country through which we passed was lovely. For a long time we drove along the brow of a steep hill. The valley was all glorious with the harvest: corn-fields with the red-gold billows yet untouched by the sickle; others full of sunburnt reapers sweeping down the ripe ears; others, again, silent and deserted, with the tawny sheaves standing, bound and dry, upon the bristling stubble, on the ground over which they rippled and nodded yesterday, a great rolling sea of burnished grain. All over the sunny landscape peace and prosperity smiled, and gray-steepled churches and red-roofed villages, embowered in thick protecting shade, seemed to beckon the eye to rest as it wandered over the charming prospect. The white-walled mansions of the lords of the land glittered from the verdant shelter of their surrounding plantations, and the thirsty cattle, beautiful

in color and in grouping, stood in pools in the deeper parts of the brooks, where some giant tree threw its shadow over the water and the smooth sheltered sward round its feet. In spite of this charming prospect I was very sad, and the purple heather bordering the road, with its thick tufts, kept suggesting Weybridge and the hours I had lately spent there so happily.... To shake myself I took up "Adam Blair;" and, good gracious! what a shaking it did give me! What a horrible book! And how could D—— have recommended me to read it? It is a very fine and powerful piece of work, no doubt; but I turned from it with infinite relief to "Quentin Durward." Walter Scott is quite exciting enough for wholesome pleasure; there is no poison in anything that he has ever written: for how many hours of harmless happiness the world may bless him!

At Totnes we got out of the coach to shake ourselves, for we were absolute dust-heaps, and then resumed our powdery way, and reached Plymouth at about four o'clock. As we walked up toward our lodgings, we were met by Mr. Brunton, with the pleasing intelligence that those we had bespoken had been let, by some mistake, to another family. Dusty, dreary, and disconsolate, I sat down on the stairs which were to have been ours, while Dall upbraided the hostess of the house, and my father did what was more to the purpose—posted off to find other apartments for us; no easy matter, for the town is crammed to overflowing. In the mean time a little blue-eyed fairy, of about

two years old, came and made friends with me, and I presently had her fast asleep in my lap. After carrying my prize into an empty room, and sitting by it for nearly half an hour while it slept the sleep of the blessed, I was called away from this very new interest, for my father had succeeded in finding house-room for us, and I had yet all my preparations to make for the evening.

The theater is a beautiful building for its purpose, of a perfectly discreet size, neither too large nor too small, of a very elegant shape, and capitally constructed for the voice. The house was very *full*; the play, "Romeo and Juliet." I played abominably ill, and did not like my audience, who must have been very good-natured if they liked me.

Tuesday, August 2d.—Rose at seven, and went off down to the sea, and that was delightful. In the evening the play was "Venice Preserved." I acted very well, notwithstanding that I had to prompt my Jaffier through every scene, not only as to words, but position on the stage, and "business," as it is called. How unprincipled and ungentlemanlike this is! The house was very fine, and a pleasanter audience than the first night. Found a letter from Mrs. Jameson after the play, with an account of Pasta's "Anna Bolena." How I wish I could see it!

Wednesday, August 3d.—Rose at seven, and went down to the sea to bathe. The tide was out, and I had to wait till the nymphs had

filled my bath-tub.... At the theater in the evening, the play was "The Stranger." The house not so good as last night, and the audience were disagreeably noisy....

Thursday, August 4th.—They will not let me take my sea-bath every morning; they say it makes me too weak. Do they mean in the head, I wonder?... "Let the sanguine then take warning, and the disheartened take courage, for to every hope and every fear, to every joy and every sorrow, there comes a last day," which is but a didactic form of dear Mademoiselle Descuillier's conjuring of our impatiences: "Cela viendra, ma chère, cela viendra, car tout vient dans ce monde; cela passera, ma chère, cela passera, car tout passe dans ce monde." ... I finished my drawing, and copied some of "The Star of Seville." I wonder if it will ever be acted? I think I should like to see a play of mine acted. In the evening at the theater, the play was "Isabella." The house was very full, and I played well. The wretched manager will not afford us a green baize for our tragedies, and we faint and fall and die upon bare boards, and my unhappy elbows are bruised black and blue with their carpetless stage, barbarians that they be!

Friday, August 5th.—Down to the sea at seven o'clock; the tide was far out, the lead-colored strand, without its bright foam-fringes, looked bleak and dreary; it was not expected to be batheable till eleven, and as I had not breakfasted, I could not wait till then. Lingered on the shore, as Tom Tug says,

thinking of nothing at all, but inhaling the fresh air and delicious sea-smell. I stood and watched a party of pleasure put off from the shore, consisting of a basket of fuel, two baskets of provisions, a cross-looking, thin, withered, bony woman, wrapped in a large shawl, and with boots thick enough to have kept her dry if she had walked through the sea from Plymouth to Mount Edgecombe. Her *tête-à-tête* companion was a short, thick, squat, stumpy, dumpy, dumpling of a man, in a round jacket, and very tight striped trousers. "Sure such a pair were never seen." The sour she, stepped into their small boat first, but as soon as her fat playfellow seated himself by her, the poor little cockle-shell dipped so with the increased weight that the tail of the cross-shawl hung deep in the water. I called after them, and they rectified the accident without sending me back a "Thank you." I love the manners of my country-folk, they are so unsophisticated with civility.

At the theater the play was "The Gamester," for my benefit, and the house was very fine. My father played magnificently; I "not even excellent well, but only so-so." The actors none of them knew their parts, abominable persons; and as for Stukely—well! Mdlle. Dumesnil, in her great, furious scene in Hermione, ended her imprecations against Orestes by spitting in her handkerchief and throwing it in his face. The handkerchief spoils the frenzy. I wonder if it ever occurred to Mrs. Siddons so to wind up her abuse of Austria in "King John." By the by, it was

when asked to give his opinion of the comparative merits of Clairon and Dumesnil, that Garrick said, "Mdlle. Clairon was the greatest actress of the age, but that for Mdlle. Dumesnil he was not aware that he had seen her, but only Phedre, Rodogund, and Hermione, when she did them." After the play the audience clamored for my father. He thought that "l'envie leur en passerait;" and not being in a very good humor, he declined appearing. The uproar went on, the overture to the farce was inaudible, and the curtain drew up amid the deafening shouts of "Kemble! Kemble!"—they would not suffer the poor *farçeurs* to go on, even in dumb show. I was at the side scene, and thought it really a pity not to put an end to all the fuss; so I went to my father, who was standing at the stage door in the street, and requested him to stop the disturbance by coming forward at once. He turned round, and without saying anything but "Tu me le conseilles," walked straight upon the stage, and addressed the audience as follows: "Ladies and gentlemen, I had left the theater when word was brought to me that you had done me the honor to call for me; as I conclude you have done so merely in conformity to a custom which is becoming the fashion of calling for certain performers after the play, I can only say, ladies and gentlemen, that I enter my protest against such a custom. It is a foreign fashion, and we are Englishmen; therefore I protest against it. I will take my leave of you by parodying Mercutio's words: Ladies and gentlemen, *bon*

soir; there's a French salutation for you." So saying he walked off the stage, leaving the audience rather surprised; and so was I. I think he is laboring under an incipient bilious attack.

We had a long discussion to-day as to the possibility of women being good dramatic writers. I think it so impossible that I actually believe their physical organization is against it; and, after all, it is great nonsense saying that intellect is of no sex. The brain is, of course, of the same sex as the rest of the creature; besides, the original feminine nature, the whole of our training and education, our inevitable ignorance of common life and general human nature, and the various experience of existence, from which we are debarred with the most sedulous care, is insuperably against it. Perhaps some of the manly, wicked Queens Semiramis, Cleopatra, could have written plays; but they lived their tragedies instead of writing them.

Saturday, August 6th.—After breakfast our excellent architect came to fetch us for our expedition to the breakwater. My father complained of being dreadfully bilious, a bad preparation for the purpose. I wanted to stay at home with him, or at all events to put off the party for an hour or two; but he would not hear of either plan. So as soon as I was ready we set off. We walked first to the M ——s', and then proceeded in a body to the shore, where a Government boat was waiting for us; and what a cargo we were, to be sure!

My father, certainly no feather; our worthy friend, who must weigh eighteen stone, if a pound; Mr. and Mrs. W——, thinnish bodies; but her friend, Dall, and myself decidedly thickish ones; then the pilot, a gaunt, square Scotchman; and four stout sailors. The gallant little craft courtesied and courtesied as she received us, one by one, and at length, when we were all fairly and pretty closely packed, she put off, and breasted the water bravely, rising and dancing on the back of the waves like a dolphin. I should have enjoyed it but for my father's ghastly face of utter misery. The day was dull, the sky and sea lead-colored, the brown coast by degrees lost its distinctness, and became covered with a dark haze that seemed to blend everything into a still, stony, threatening iron-gray mass. The wind rose, the sea became inky black and swelled into heavy ridges, which made our little vessel dip deep and spring high, as she toiled forward; and then down came the rain—such tremendous rain! Cloaks, shawls, and umbrellas were speedily produced; but we were two miles from shore, between the rising sea and the falling clouds, sick, wet, squeezed. Oh the delights of that party of pleasure! My father looked cadaverous, Dall was portentously silent, I shut my eyes and tried to sleep, being in that state when to see, or hear, or speak, or be spoken to, is equally fatal. At length we reached the foot of the breakwater, and I sprang out of the boat, too happy to touch the stable rock. The rain literally fell in sheets from the sky, and the

wind blew half a hurricane; but I was on firm ground, and taking off my bonnet, which only served the purpose of a water-spout down my back, I ran, while Mr. M——, holding my arm, strode along the mighty water-based road, while the angry sea, turning up black caldrons full of boiling foam, dashed them upon the barrier man has raised against its fury in magnificent, solemn wrath. This breakwater is a noble work; the daring of the conception, its vast size and strength, and the utility of its purpose, are alike admirable. We do these things and die; we ride upon the air and water, we guide the lightning and we bridle the sea, we borrow the swiftness of the wind and the fine subtlety of the fire; we lord it in this universe of ours for a day, and then our bodies are devoured by these material slaves we have controlled, and helplessly mingle their dust with the elements that have obeyed our will, who reabsorb the garment of our soul when that has fled—whither?

The rain continuing to fall in torrents, and my father being wretchedly unwell, we gave up our purpose of visiting Mount Edgecombe, and returned to Plymouth. The sea was horribly rough, even inside the breakwater; but I shut my eyes that I might not see how we heaved, and sang that I might not think how sick I was: and so we reached shore, and I ran up and down the steep beach while the rest were disembarking, and the wind soon dried my light muslin clothes. The other poor things continued drenched till we reached home.

After a good rest, we went to our dinner at Mr. W——'s; my father was all right again, and our party, that had separated in such dismal plight, met again very pleasantly in the evening. Mr. W—— got quite tipsy with talking, an accident not uncommon with eager, excitable men, and all but overwhelmed me with an argument about dramatic writing, in which he was wrong from beginning to end.... We leave Plymouth to-morrow.

Sunday, August 7th.—Started for Exeter at seven, and slept nearly the whole way by little bits; between each nap getting glimpses of the pleasant land that blended for a moment with my hazy, dream-like thoughts, and then faded away before my closing eyes. One patch of moorland that I woke to see was lovely—all purple heather and golden gorse; nature's royal mantle thrown, it is true, over a barren soil, whose gray, cold, rifted ridges of rock contrasted beautifully with its splendid clothing. We got to Exeter at two o'clock, and I was thankful to rest the rest of the day.

Monday, August 8th.—I read old Biagio's preface to Dante, which, from its amazing classicality, is almost as difficult as the crabbed old Florentine's own writing. Worked at a rather elaborate sketch tolerably successfully, and was charmingly interrupted by having our landlady's pretty little child brought in to me. She is a beautiful baby, but will be troublesome enough by and by.... At the theater the house was very good; I

played tolerably well upon the whole, but felt so fagged and faint toward the end of the play that I could hardly stand.

Tuesday, August 9th.—I sometimes wish I was a stone, a tree, some senseless, soulless, irresponsible thing; that ebbing sea rolling before me, its restlessness is obedience to the law of its nature, not striving against it, neither is it "the miserable life in it" urging it to ceaseless turmoil and agitation. We dined early, and then started for Dorchester, which we reached at half-past ten, after a most fatiguing journey. It was a still, gray day, an atmosphere and light I like; there is a clearness about it that is pleasanter sometimes than the dazzle of sunshine. Some of the country we drove through was charming, particularly the vale of Honiton.... I have an immense bedroom here; a whole army of ghosts might lodge in it. I hope, if there are any, they will be civil, well-behaved, and, above all, invisible.

Wednesday, August 10th. ... At ten o'clock we started for Weymouth, where we arrived in the course of an hour, and found it basking on the edge of a lovely summer sea, with a dozen varying zones of color streaking its rippling surface; from the deep, dark purple heaving against the horizon to the delicate pearl-edged, glassy golden-green that spreads its transparent sheets over the sparkling sand of the beach. The bold chalky cliffs of the shore send back the burning sunlight with blinding brightness, and stretch away as far as eye can follow in hazy outlines, that

glimmer faintly through the shimmering mist. It is all very beautiful.... I got ready my things for the theater, ... and when I got there I was amused and amazed at its absurdly small proportions; it is a perfect doll's playhouse, and until I saw that my father really could stand upon the stage, I thought that I should fill it entirely by myself. How well I remember all the droll stories my mother used to tell about old King George III. and Queen Charlotte, who had a passion for Weymouth, and used to come to the funny little theater here constantly; and how the princesses used to dress her out in their own finery for some of her parts. [I long possessed a very perfect coral necklace of magnificent single beads given to my mother on one of these occasions by the Princess Amelia.] The play was "Romeo and Juliet," and our masquerade scene was in the height of the modern fashion, for there was literally not room to stir; and what between my nurse and my father I suffered very nearly total eclipse, besides much danger of being knocked down each time either of them moved. In the balcony, besides me, there was a cloud, which occasionally interfered with my hair, and I think must have made my face appear to the audience like a chin and mouth speaking out of the sky. To be sure, this inconvenient scenic decoration made rather more appropriate the lines which Shakespeare wrote (only unfortunately Romeo never speaks them), "Two of the stars," etc. I acted very well, but was so dreadfully tired at the end of the play

that they were obliged to carry me up to my dressing-room, where I all but fainted away; in spite of which, as I got out of the carriage at the door of our lodging, hearing the dear voice of the sea calling me, I tried to persuade Dall to come down to it with me; but she, thinking I had had enough of emotion and exertion, made me go in and eat my supper and go to bed, which was detestable on her part, and so I told her, which she didn't mind in the least.

Thursday, August 11th.—A kind and courteous and most courtly old Mr. M—— called upon us, to entreat that we would dine with him during our stay in Weymouth; but it is really impossible, with all our hard work, to do society duty too, so I begged permission to decline. After he was gone we walked down to the pier, and took boat and rowed to Portland. The sky was cloudless, and the sea without a wave, and through its dark-blue transparent roofing we saw clearly the bottom, one forest of soft, undulating weeds, which, catching the sunlight through the crystal-clear water, looked like golden woods of some enchanted world within its depths; and it looks just as weird and lovely when folks go drowning down there, only they don't see it. I sang Mrs. Hemans's "What hid'st thou in thy treasure-caves and cells?" and sang and sang till, after rowing for an hour over the hardly heaving, smooth surface, we reached the foot of the barren stone called Portland. We landed, and Dall remained on the beach while my father and I toiled up the steep ascent. The sun's rays fell

perpendicularly on our heads, the short, close grass which clothed the burning, stony soil was as slippery as glass with the heat, and I have seldom had a harder piece of exercise than climbing that rock, from the summit of which one wide expanse of dazzling water and glaring white cliffs, that scorched one's eyeballs, was all we had for our reward. To be sure, exertion is a pleasure in itself, and when one's strength serves one's courage, the greater the exertion the greater the pleasure. We saw below us a railroad cut in the rock to convey the huge masses of stone from the famous quarries down to the shore. The descent looked almost vertical, and we watched two immense loads go slowly down by means of a huge cylinder and chains, which looked as if the world might hang upon them in safety. I lay down on the summit of the rock while my father went off exploring further, and the perfect stillness of the solitude was like a spell. There was not a sound of life but the low, drowsy humming of the bees in the stone-rooted tufts of fragrant thyme. On our return we had to run down the steep, slippery slopes, striking our feet hard to the earth to avoid falling; firm walking footing there was none. When we joined Dall we found, to our utter dismay, that it was five o'clock; we bundled ourselves *pêle-mêle* into the boat and bade the boatman row, row, for dear life; but while we were indulging in the picturesque he had been indulging in fourpenny, which made him very talkative, and his tongue went faster than his arms. I longed for John

to make our boat fly over the smooth, burnished sea; the oars came out of the water like long bars of diamond dropping gold. We touched shore just at six, swallowed three mouthfuls of dinner, and off to the theater. The play was "Venice Preserved." I dressed as quick as lightning, and was ready in time. The house was not very good, and I am sure I should have wondered if it had been, when the moon is just rising over the fresh tide that is filling the basin, and a delicious salt breeze blows along the beach, and the stars are lighting their lamps in heaven; and surely nobody but those who cannot help it would be breathing the gas and smoke and vile atmosphere of the playhouse. I played well, and when we came home ran down and stood a few minutes by the sea; but the moon had set, and the dark palpitating water only reflected the long line of lights from the houses all along the curving shore.

Friday, August 12th, Portsmouth.— ... The hotel where we are staying is quite a fine house, and the Assembly balls used to be held here, and so there is a fine large "dancing-hall deserted" of which I avail myself as a music-room, having entire and solitary possession of it and a piano.... At the theater the house was good, and I played well....

Monday, August 15th, Southampton.—After breakfast practised till eleven, and then went to rehearsal; after which Emily Fitzhugh came for me, and we drove out to Bannisters.

Poor Mrs. Fitzhugh was quite overcome at seeing my father, whom she has not seen since Mrs. Siddons's death; we left her with him to talk over Campbell's application to her for my aunt's letters. He has behaved badly about the whole business, and I hope Mrs. Fitzhugh will not let him have them.... When we came in I went and looked at Lawrence's picture of my aunt in the dining-room (now in the National Gallery; it was painted for Mrs. Fitzhugh). It is a fine rich piece of coloring, but there is a want of ease and grace in the figure, and of life in the countenance, and altogether I thought it looked like a handsome dark cow in a coral necklace. O ox-eyed Juno! forgive the thought.... At the theater the house was good; the play was "Romeo and Juliet," and I played well. While I was changing my dress for the tomb scene—putting on my grave-clothes, in fact—I had desired my door to be shut, for I hate that lugubrious funeral-dirge. How I do hate, and have always hated, that stage funeral business, which I never see without a cold shudder at its awful unfitness. I can't conceive how that death's pageant was ever tolerated in a theater. [I think Mrs. Bellamy, in her "Memoirs," mentions that it was first introduced as a piece of new sensation when she and Garrick were dividing the town with the efforts of their rival managership.] At present the pretext for it is to give the necessary time for setting the churchyard scene and for Juliet to change her dress, which she has no business to do according to the text, for it expressly says

that she shall be buried in all her finest attire, according to her country's custom. In spite of which I was always arrayed in long white muslin draperies and veils, with my head bound up, corpse fashion, and lying, as my aunt had stretched me, on the black bier in the vault, with all my white folds drawn like carved stone robes along my figure and round my feet, with my hands folded and my eyes shut. I have had some bad nervous minutes, sometimes fancying, "Suppose I should really die while I am lying here, making believe to be dead!" and imagining the surprise and dismay of my Romeo when I didn't get up; and at others fighting hard against heavy drowsiness of over-fatigue, lest I should be fast asleep, if not dead, when it came to my turn to speak—though I might have depended upon the furious bursting open of the doors of the vault for my timely waking. Talking over this with Mrs. Fitzhugh one day she told me a comical incident of the stage life of her friend, the fascinating Miss Farren. The devotion of the Earl of Derby to her, which preceded for a long time the death of Lady Derby, from whom he was separated, and his marriage to Miss Farren, made him a frequent visitor behind the scenes on the nights of her performance. One evening, in the famous scene in Joseph Surface's library in "The School for Scandal," when Lady Teazle is imprisoned behind the screen, Miss Farren, fatigued with standing, and chilled with the dreadful draughts of the stage, had sent for an armchair and her furs, and when this critical moment arrived, and

the screen was overturned, she was revealed, in her sable muff and tippet, entirely absorbed in an eager conversation with Lord Derby, who was leaning over the back of her chair.

Tuesday, 16th, Southampton.—After breakfast walked down to the city wall, which has remnants of great antiquity they say, as old as the Danes, one bit being still heroically called "Canute's Castle."

Wednesday, August 17th.—Went to the theater, and rehearsed "The Stranger." On my return found Emily waiting for me, and drove with her to Bannisters.... In the evening, at the theater, the house was very good, but I played only so-so, and not at all excellent well....

Thursday, August 18th.—While I was practising I came across that pretty piece of ballad pathos, "The Banks of Allan Water," and sang myself into sobbing. Luckily I was interrupted by Dall and my father, who came in with a little girl, poor unfortunate! whose father had brought her to show how well she deserved an engagement at Covent Garden. She sat down to the piano at his desire, and panted through the great cavatina in the "Gazza Ladra." Poor little thing! I never heard or saw anything that so thoroughly impressed me with the brutal ignorance of our people; for there is scarcely an Englishman of that man's condition, situated as he is, who would not have done the same thing. A child of barely ten years old made to

sing her lungs away for four hours every day, when it is not possible yet to know what the character and qualities of her voice will be, or even if she will have any voice at all. Wasting her health and strength in attempting "The Soldier Tired" and "Di piacer," it really was pitiful. We gave her plenty of kind words and compliments, and sundry pieces of advice to him, which he will not take, and in a few months no doubt we shall hear of little Miss H—— singing away as a prodigy, and in a few years the voice, health, and strength will all be gone, and probably the poor little life itself have been worn out of its fragile case. Stupid barbarian! After rehearsal drove to Bannisters.... In the evening, at the theater, the play was "The Provoked Husband." The house was very full; I played fairly well. I was rather tired, and Lady Townley's bones ached, for I had been taking a rowing lesson from Emily, and supplied my want of skill, tyro fashion, with a deal of unnecessary effort.

Friday, August 19th.— ... It sometimes occurs to me that our spirits, when dwelling with the utmost intensity of longing upon those who are distant from us, must create in them some perception, some consciousness of our spiritual presence, so that not by the absent whom I love thinking of me, but by my thinking of them, they must receive some intimation of the vividness with which my soul sees and feels them. It seems to me as if my earnest desire and thought must not bring those they dwell on to me, but render me in some way perceptible, if not absolutely

visible, to them.

> "Though thou see me not pass by,
> Thou shalt feel me with thine eye."

I fancy I must create my own image to their senses by the clinging passion with which my thoughts dwell on them. And yet it would be rather fearful if one were thus subject, not only to the disordered action of one's own imagination, but to the ungoverned imaginations of others; and so, upon the whole, I don't believe people would be allowed to pester other people with their presence only by dint of thinking hard enough and long enough about them. It would be intolerable, and yet I have sometimes fancied I was thinking myself visible to some one.... In the evening, at the theater, the house was very good; the play was "The Gamester," and I played very ill. I felt fagged to death; my work tires me, and I am growing old.

Saturday, 20th.—At Bannisters all the morning. Emily gave me two charming Italian songlets, and then they drove us down to Southampton. At the theater this evening the house was all but empty, owing to some stupid blunder in the advertisement. The play was "The School for Scandal," and I played well.... To-morrow I shall be at home once more in smoky London.

SOUTHAMPTON, August 19, 1831.

MY DEAREST H——,

I do not like to defer answering you any longer, though I am not very fit to write, for I am half blind with crying, and have a torturing side-ache, the results of bodily fatigue and nervous anxiety; but if I do not write to you to-night I know not when I shall be able to do so, for I shall have to rehearse every morning and to act every night, and I expect the intermediate hours will be spent on the road to and from Bannisters, the Fitzhughs' place near here. I have been traveling ever since half-past eight to-day, and, have hardly been three hours out of the coach which brought us from Weymouth, where we have been acting for the last week. Your letter followed me from Plymouth, and right glad I was to get it.... I do not know what I can write you of if not myself, and I dare say, after all, my thoughts are more amusing to you, or rather, perhaps, more useful, in your processes of observing and studying human nature in general, through my individual case, than if I wrote you word what plays we had been acting, etc., etc.... To meet pain, no matter how severe, the mind girds up its loins, and finds a sort of strength of resistance in its endurance, which is a species of activity. To endure helplessly prolonged suspense is another matter quite, and a far heavier demand upon all patient power than is in one....

So you have seen the railroad; I am so glad you have seen that magnificent invention. I wish I had been on it with you. I wish you had seen Stephenson; you would have delighted in him, I am sure. The hope of

meeting him again is one of the greatest pleasures Liverpool holds out to me.... With regard to what are called "fine people," and liking their society better than that of "not fine people," I suppose a good many tolerable reasons might be adduced by persons who have that preference. They do not often say very wise or very witty things, I dare say; but neither do they tread on one's feet or poke their elbows into one's side (figuratively speaking) in their conversation, or commit the numerous solecisms of manner of less well-bred people. For myself, my social position does not entitle me to mix with the superior class of human beings generally designated as "fine people." My father's indolence renders their society an irksome exertion to him, and my mother's pride always induces her to hang back rather than to make advances to anybody. We are none of us, therefore, inclined to be very keen tuft-hunters. But for these very reasons, if "fine people" seek me, it is a decided compliment, by which my vanity is flattered. A person with less of that quality might be quite indifferent to their notice, but I think their society, as far as I have had any opportunity of observing it, has certain positive merits, which attract me irrespectively of the gratification of my vanity. Genius and pre-eminent power of intellect, of course, belong to no class, and one would naturally prefer the society of any individual who possessed these to that of the King of England (who, by the by, is not, I believe, particularly brilliant). I would rather pass a day with

Stephenson than with Lord Alvanley, though the one is a coal-digger by birth, who occasionally murders the king's English, and the other is the keenest wit and one of the finest gentlemen about town. But Stephenson's attributes of genius, industry, mental power, and perseverance are his individually, while Lord Alvanley's gifts and graces (his wit, indeed, excepted) are, in good measure, those of his whole social set. Moreover, in the common superficial intercourse of society, the minds and morals of those you meet are really not what you come in contact with half the time, while from their manners there is, of course, no escape; and therefore those persons may well be preferred as temporary associates whose manners are most refined, easy, and unconstrained, as I think those of so-called "fine people" are. Originality and power of intellect belong to no class, but with information, cultivation, and the mental advantages derived from education, "fine people" are perhaps rather better endowed, as a class, than others. Their lavish means for obtaining instruction, and their facilities for traveling, if they are but moderately endowed by nature and moderately inclined to profit by them, certainly enable them to see, hear, and know more of the surface of things than others. This is, no doubt, a merely superficial superiority; but I suppose that there are not many people, and certainly no class of people, high, low, or of any degree, who go much below surfaces.... If you knew how, long after I have passed it,

the color of a tuft of heather, or the smell of a branch of honeysuckle by the roadside, haunts my imagination, and how many suggestions of beauty and sensations of pleasure flow from this small spring of memory, even after the lapse of weeks and months, you would understand what I am going to say, which perhaps may appear rather absurd without such a knowledge of my impressions. I think I like fine places better than "fine people;" but then one accepts, as it were, the latter for the former, and the effect of the one, to a certain degree, affects one's impressions of the other. A great ball at Devonshire House, for instance, with its splendor, its brilliancy, its beauty, and magnificence of all sorts, remains in one's mind with the enchantment of a live chapter of the "Arabian Nights;" and I think one's imagination is still more impressed with the fine residences of "fine people" in the country, where historical and poetical associations combine with all the refinements of luxurious civilization and all the most exquisitely cultivated beauties of nature to produce an effect which, to a certain degree, frames their possessors to great advantage, and invests them with a charm which is really not theirs; and if they are only tolerably in harmony with the places where they live, they appear charming too. I believe the pleasure and delight I take in the music, the lights, the wreaths, and mirrors of a splendid ball-room, and the love I have for the smooth lawns, bright waters, and lordly oaks of a fine domain, would

disgracefully influence my impressions of the people I met amongst them. Still, I humbly trust I do not like any of my friends, fine or coarse, only for their belongings, though my intercourse with the first gratifies my love of luxury and excites what my Edinburgh friends call my ideality. I don't think, however. I ever could like anybody, of any kind whatever, that I could not heartily respect, let their intellectual gifts, elegance, or refinement of manners be what they might. Good-by, dearest H——.

Ever your affectionate

F. A. K.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, October 3, 1831.

MY DEAREST H——,

I received your last letter on Thursday morning, and as I read it exclaimed, "We shall be able to go to her!" and passed it to Dall, who seemed to think there was no reason why we should not, when my father said he was afraid it could not be managed, as the theater, upon second arrangements, would require me before this month was over. It seems to me that, instead of one disappointment, I have had twenty about coming to you, dear H——, and the last has fairly broken the poor camel's back. My father promised to see what could be done for me, and to get me spared as long as possible; but the final arrangement is, that on the 24th I shall have to act Queen

Katharine, for which, certainly, a week of daily rehearsals will be barely sufficient preparation. This, you see, will leave me hardly time enough to stay at Ardgillan to warrant the fatigue and expense of the journey. I am afraid it would be neither reasonable nor right to spend nearly a week in traveling and the money it must cost, to pass a fortnight with you.... Give my love to your sister, and tell her how willingly I would have accepted her hospitality had circumstances permitted it; but "circumstances," of which we are so apt to complain, may, perhaps, at some future time, allow me to be once more her guest. The course of events is, after all, far more impartial than, in moments of disappointment, we are apt to admit, and quite as often procures us unexpected and unthought-of pleasures as defeats those we had proposed for ourselves. Pazienza! Dear Dall, who, I see, has produced her invariable impression upon your mind, bids me thank you for the kind things you say of her, at the same time that she says, "though they are undeserved, she is thankful for the affection that dictates them." She is excellent. You bid me tell you of my father, and how his health and spirits continue to struggle against his exertions and anxieties: tolerably well, thank God! I sometimes think they have the properties of that palm tree which is said to grow under the pressure of immense weights. He looks very well, and, except the annoyances of his position in the theater, has rather less cause for depression than for

> some time past. Though we have not yet obtained our "decree," we understand that the Lord Chancellor says openly that we shall get it, so that uncertainty of the issue no longer aggravates the wearisome delays of this unlucky appeal.... I need not tell you what my feeling about acting Queen Katharine is; you, who know how conscious I am of my own deficiencies for such an undertaking, will easily conceive my distress at having such a task assigned me. Dall, who entirely agrees with me about it, wishes me to remonstrate upon the subject, but that I will not do. I am in that theater to earn my living by serving its interests, and if I was desired to act Harlequin, for those two purposes, should feel bound to do so. But I cannot help thinking the management short-sighted. I think their real interest, as far as I am concerned, which they overlook for some immediate tangible advantage, is not to destroy my popularity by putting me into parts which I must play ill, and not to take from my future career characters which require physical as well as mental maturity, and which would be my natural resources when I no longer become Juliet and her youthful sisters of the drama. But of course they know their own affairs, and I am not the manager of the theater. Those who have its direction, I suppose, make the best use they can of their instruments.

[My performance of Queen Katharine was not condemned as an absolute failure only because the public in general didn't care about it, and the friends

and well-wishers of the theater were determined not to consider it one. But as I myself remember it, it deserved to be called nothing else; it was a school-girl's performance, tame, feeble, and ineffective, entirely wanting in the weight and dignity indispensable for the part, and must sorely have tried the patience and forbearance of such of my spectators as were fortunate and unfortunate enough to remember my aunt; one of whom, her enthusiastic admirer, and my excellent friend, Mr. Harness, said that seeing me in that dress was like looking at Mrs. Siddons through the diminishing end of an opera-glass: I should think my acting of the part must have borne much the same proportion to hers. I was dressed for the trial scene in imitation of the famous picture by Harlow, and of course must have recalled, in the most provoking and absurd manner, the great actress whom I resembled so little and so much. In truth, I could hardly sustain the weight of velvet and ermine in which I was robed, and to which my small girlish figure was as little adapted as my dramatic powers were to the matronly dignity of the character. I cannot but think that if I might have dressed the part as Queen Katharine really dressed herself, and been allowed to look as like as I could to the little dark, hard-favored woman Holbein painted, it would have been better than to challenge such a physical as well as dramatic comparison by the imitation of my aunt's costume in the part. Englishmen of her day will never believe that Katharine of Arragon could have looked otherwise than Mrs. Siddons did in Shakespeare's play of "Henry VIII.;" but nothing could in truth be more unlike the historical woman than the tall, large, bare-armed, white-necked, Juno-eyed, ermine-robed ideal of queenship of the English stage. That quintessence

of religious, conscientious bigotry and royal Spanish pride is given, both in the portraits of contemporary painters and in Shakespeare's delineation of her; the splendid magnificence of my aunt's person and dress, as delineated in Harlow's picture, has no affinity whatever to the real woman's figure, or costume, or character.]

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, October 12, 1831.

DEAREST H——,

I received my book and your letter very safely about a week ago, and would have written to say so sooner, but have been much occupied with one thing and another that has prevented me. So you are beaten, *vieilles perukes* that you are! not by one or two, but by forty-one; and your bones are all the likelier to ache, and I am not at all sorry. Think of Brougham going down on his marrow-bones (there can be none in them, though), and adjuring the Lords, con quella voce! e quel viso! to pass the Bill, like good boys, and remember the schoolmaster, who surely, when he is at home, cannot be said to be abroad. A good *coup de théâtre* is not an easy thing, and requires a good deal of tact and skill. I cannot help thinking there must have been something grotesque in this performance of Brougham's, as when Liston turned tragedian and recited Collins's "Ode to the Passions" in a green coat and top boots. The excitement, however, was tremendous; the House thronged to suffocation; as many people crammed into impossible space as the angels in the famous Needle-point

controversy. Lady Glengall declares that she sat for four hours on an iron bar. I think this universal political effervescence has got into my head. And what will you do now? You cannot create forty-one Peers; the whole Book of Genesis affords no precedent. I suppose Parliament will be prorogued, ministers will go out, a "cloth of gold" and "cloth of frieze" Government, with Brougham and Wellington brought together into it, will be cobbled, and a new Bill, which will set the teeth of the Lords so badly on edge, will be concocted, which the people will accept rather than nothing, if they are taken in the right way. That, I suppose, is what you Whigs will do; for an adverse majority of forty-one must be turned somehow or other, as it can hardly be gone straight at by folks who mean to keep on the box, or hold the reins, or carry the coach to the end of the journey....

I do not know at all how I should like to live in a palace; I am furiously fond of magnificence and splendor, and not unreasonably, seeing that I was born in a palace, with a sapphire ceiling hung with golden lamps, and velvet floors all embroidered with sweet-smelling, lovely-colored flowers, and walls of veined marble and precious, sparkling stones. I almost doubt if any mere royal palace would be good enough for me, or answer my turn. I should like all the people in the world to be as beautiful as angels, and go about crowned with glory and clothed with light (dear me, how very different they are!); but failing all

that I should like in the way of enormously beautiful things, I pick up and treasure like a baby all the little broken bits of splendor and sumptuousness, and thank Heaven that their number and gradations are infinite, from the rainbow that the sun spans the heavens with, to the fine, small jewel drawn from the bowels of the earth to glitter on a lady's neck....

My dearest H——, I wish I were with you with all my heart, but, as if to diminish my regret by putting the thing still further beyond the region of possibility, I act next Monday the 17th, instead of the 24th. (They say "a miss is as good as a mile;" why does it always seem so much worse, then?) I begin with Belvidera, and have already begun my cares and woes and tribulations about lilac satins and silver tissues, etc., etc. Young is engaged with us, and plays Pierre, and my father Giaffir, which will be very dreadful for me; I do not know how I shall be able to bear all his wretchedness as well as my own. To be a good politician one ought to have, as it were, only one eye for truth; I do not at all mean to be single-eyed in the good sense of the word, but to be incapable of seeing more than one side of every question: one sees a part so much more strongly when one does not see the whole of a matter, and though a statesman may need a hundred eyes, I maintain that a party politician is the better for having only one. Restricted vision is good for work, too; people who see far and wide can seldom be very hopeful, I should think, and hope is the very essence of working

courage. The matter in hand should always, if possible, be the great matter to those who have to carry it through, and though broad brains may be the best for conceiving, narrow ones are, perhaps, the best for working with.

Thank you for your quotation from Sir Humphry Davy; it did me good, and even made me better for five minutes; and your Irish letter, which interested me extremely. "Walking the world." What a sad and touching expression; and how well it describes a broken and desponding spirit! And yet what else are we all doing, in soul if not in body? Is not that solitary, wandering feeling the very essence of our existence here?

You ask if the interests of the theater and mine are not identical? No, I think not. The management seems to me like our Governments for some time past, to be actuated by mere considerations of temporary expediency; that which serves a momentary purpose is all they consider. But it stands to reason that if they make me play parts in which I must fail, my London popularity must decrease, and with it my provincial profits; and that, of course, is a serious thing. In short, dear H——, where success means bread and butter, failure means dry bread, or none; and I hate the last, I believe, less than the first, though, as I never tried starvation, perhaps dry bread is nicer....

The excitement about the Bill is rising instead of subsiding. The shops are all shut, and the people meeting in every direction; the windows of Apsley House have been smashed, and Wellington's statue (the Achilles in the Park) pelted and threatened to be pulled down. They say that Nottingham and Belvoir Castles are burnt down. All this is bad, and bodes, I fear, worse. Good-by, dear.

Your affectionate

F. A. K.

Thursday, August 22d.—I read some of "Cibber's Lives." I should like to read a well-written French life of Alin Chartier, Louis XI.'s ugly secretary, whose mouth Queen Margaret kissed while he was sleeping, "parce qu'elle avait dit de si belles choses." In the life, or rather the death, of Sackville, he notes his sitting up till eleven at night as a manifest waste of human existence. It is near two in the morning as I am now writing, but people's notions change as to time as well as other things. We don't dine at twelve any more. Macdonald, the sculptor, dined with us; I like him for dear Scotland's sake, and the blessed time I passed there. After the gentlemen came up into the drawing-room, Nourrit, the great French tenor, sang delightfully for us; Adelaide sang and played, and Nourrit made her try a charming duet from the "Dame Blanche," which I

accompanied, and was frightened to death for self and sister. Macdonald wants to make a statue of me in "The Grecian Daughter," at the moment of veiling the face: he is right. An interval of some time elapsed, in which I did not keep my journal regularly. I had a long visit from my friend Miss S——. The lawsuit about the theater continued, the affairs of the concern becoming more and more involved in difficulties every day; and my father, worried almost to death with anxiety, vexation, and hard work, had a serious illness.

Saturday, November 25th.—My father was not quite so well this morning. I took Dr. Wilson home in the carriage; he talked a great deal about this horrible burking business (a series of atrocious murders committed by two wretches of the names of Burk and Bishop, for the purpose of obtaining, for the corpses of their victims, the price paid by the Edinburgh surgeons for subjects for dissection; the mode of death inflicted by these men came to be designated by the name of the more hardened murderer as burking).

I called at Fozzard's for the boys, and set them down at Angelo's (a famous school for fencing, boxing, and single-stick, where my brothers took lessons in those polite exercises). In the evening, at the theater, dear Charles Young played "The Stranger" for the last time; the house was very full, and I played very ill. After the play Young was enthusiastically called for. I have finished

"Tennant's Tour in Greece," which I rather liked. I have been reading "Bonaparte's Letters to Joséphine;" the vague and doubting spirit which once or twice throws its wavering shadow across his thoughts, startles one in contrast with the habitual tone of the mind, which assuredly *ne doubtait de rien*, especially of what his own power of will could accomplish. The affection he expresses for his wife is sometimes almost poetical from its intensity, in spite of the grossness of his language. He seems to have believed in nothing but volition, and that volition is in itself, perhaps, a mere form of faith. It's a dangerous worship, for the devil in that shape does obey so long and so well before he claims his due; so much is achieved precisely by that belief in what can be achieved; the last round of the ladder, somehow or other, however, always seems to break down at last, and then I doubt if the people who fall from it can all declare, as Holcroft did when he fell from his horse, and, as his surgeon assured him, broke his ribs, that he was positive he had not, because in falling he had exerted the energy of will, and could not therefore have broken his bones.

Sunday, 29th.—The great good fortune of a good sermon at church. After church Mrs. Jameson, John Mason, and Mr. Loudham called; the latter said he had good news about that fatal theater of ours, for that Mr. Harris seemed to be inclined to come into some accommodation, and so perhaps this cancer of a Chancery suit may stop eating

our lives away. Oh dear! I am afraid this is too good news to be true. I went to my father's room and sat by him for a long time, and talked about the horse I had bought for him; and there he lies in his bed, and God knows when he will even be able to walk again.

Monday, 30th.—I went to rehearsal. It seems that the managers and proprietors (of course not my poor father) had summoned a meeting of all the actors to try and induce them to accept for the present a reduced rate of salary till the theater can be in some measure relieved of its most pressing difficulties. I knew nothing of this, and, finding them all very solemnly assembled in the greenroom, asked them cheerfully why they were all there, which must have struck them strangely enough. I dare say they do not know how little I know, or wish to know, about this disastrous concern. On my return home, I heard that Dr. Watson had seen my father, and requested that Dr. Wilson might be sent for. They fear inflammation of the lungs; he has gone to the very limit of his tether, for had he continued fagging a night or two longer the effects might have been fatal. Poor, poor father!...

Lady Francis and Mrs. Sullivan called in the afternoon; I was feeling miserable, and exhausted with my rehearsal. In the evening I helped my mother to move all the furniture, which I think is nothing in the world but a restless indication of her anxiety about my father; it is the fourth time since

she same back from the country.

Tuesday, December 1st.— ... It seems that in the arrangement, whatever it may be, which has taken place between the actors and the management, Mr. Harley and Mr. Egerton are the only ones who have declined the proposed accommodation. Young has behaved like an angel, offering to play for nothing till Christmas; how kind and liberal he is! Mr. Abbott, Mr. Duraset, Mr. Ward, and all the others, have been as considerate and generous as possible. But the thing is doomed, and will go to the ground, in spite of every effort that can be made to stave the ruin off.

I was greeted this morning, when I came down to breakfast, with a question that surprised and amused we very much. "Pray, Fanny," said John, "did you ever thank Mr. Bacon (one of the editors of the *Times*) for his book (the "Life of Francis I." which Mr. Bacon had been kind enough to send me); for here is a very abusive critique in to-day's *Times* of the play last night." "Well," thought I, "that's a comical *sequitur*, and a fine estimate of criticism;" but the conclusion was droller still. I had not forgotten to thank the friendly author for his book, nor had he written the article in question; but it seems a young gentleman, much in love with Miss Phillips (a promising and very handsome young actress at Drury Lane), had found pulling me to pieces the easiest way of showing his admiration for her. That is not a very exalted style of criticism either, but it is

just as well that one should occasionally know what the praise and blame one receives may be worth. It seems that when it was determined that Miss Sheriff should come out, Mr. Welsh, whose pupil she was, made a great feast, and invited two-and-twenty gentlemen connected with the press to a private hearing of her.... In the evening, we all went to hear her, being every way much interested in her success. John and Henry went into the front of the house; my mother, Dr. Moore (the Rev. Dr. Moore, a great friend of my father and mother's), and myself, went up to our own box. The house was crammed, the pit one black, crowded mass. Poor child! I turned as cold as ice as the symphony of "Fair Aurora" (the opera was "Artaxerxes") began, and she came forward with Mr. Wilson. The bravos, the clapping, the noise, the great sound of popular excitement overpowering in all its manifestations; and the contrast between the sense of power conveyed by the acclamations of a great concourse of people, and the weakness of the individual object of that demonstration, gave me the strangest sensation when I remembered my own experience, which I had not seen. When I saw the thousands of eyes of that crowded pitful of men, and heard their stormy acclamations, and then looked at the fragile, helpless, pretty young creature standing before them trembling with terror, and all woman's fear and shame in such an unnatural position, I more than ever marveled how I, or any woman, could ever

have ventured on so terrible a trial, or survived the venture. It seemed to me as if the mere gaze of all that multitude must melt the slight figure away like a wreath of vapor in the sun, or shrivel it up like a scrap of silver paper before a blazing fire. It made poor Dr. Moore and myself both cry, but there was a deal more sympathy in my tears than in his; for I had known the dizzy terror of that moment, had felt the ground slide from under my feet and the whole air become a sea of fiery rings before my swimming eyes. Besides my fellow-feeling for her actual agony, I had one for what her after trials may be, and I hoped for her that she might be able to see the truth of all things in the midst of all things false; and then, if she takes pleasure in her gilded toys, she will not have too bitter a heartache when they are broken. She sang well, and soon recovered from her fright, which, even from the first, did not affect her voice. She is rather pretty, but does not walk or move gracefully; she was well dressed, all but her hair, which was dressed in the present frizzy French fashion, and looked ridiculous for Mandane. Her singing was good, of a good style; I do not mean only that she sang "Fly, soft ideas, fly," and "Monster away!" and "The Soldier Tired," brilliantly, because they do not test the best singing, but the *soave sostenuto* of her "If e'er the cruel tyrant love," and "Let not rage thy bosom firing," were specimens of the best and most difficult school of singing. They were flowing, smooth, soft, and sweet, without trick or

device of mere florid ornamentation, and were as intrinsically good in her execution as they are admirable in that peculiar style of composition. Her shake is not genuine, and some of her rapid descending scales want finish and accuracy; her use of her arms and her gestures were very pretty and graceful, and we were all greatly pleased with her. Braham was magnificently great, in spite of his inches. What a noble artist he is! and with what wonderful vigor he acts through his singing! being no actor at all the moment he stops singing. Wilson sang out of tune; the music is not in his voice, and he was frightened. Miss Cawse was rather a dumpy Artaxerxes, which is an impertinent remark for me to make; she has a beautiful contralto voice. The opera went off brilliantly, and after it the audience called for "God Save the King," which was performed. Paganini was in the box opposite to us; what a cadaverous-looking creature he is! Came home and saw my father, and gave him the report of Miss Sheriff's success....

Friday, December 2d.— ... I went to see Cecilia Siddons; I thought her looking aged and thin, and Mrs. Wilkinson (Mrs. Siddons's companion for many years previous to her death) looking sad and ill too. They have both lost the one idea of their whole lives.

Saturday, 3d.— ... It seems the doctors recommend my father's going to Brighton. I was urging him to do so this morning.... After tea I looked on the map for Rhodez, the scene of that horrible Fualdes tragedy (a

murder the commission of which involved some singular and terribly dramatic incidents). I read Daru's "History of Venice" till bedtime.

Sunday, December 4th.— ... My father, for the first time this fortnight, was able to dine with us. After dinner I read the whole trial of Bishop and Williams, and their confession. My mother is reading aloud to us Lord Edward Fitzgerald's Life.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, December 4, 1831.

DEAR H——,

It is at the sensible hour of a quarter-past twelve at night that I begin this immense sheet of paper, and with the sensible purpose of filling it before I go to bed.... What an unsatisfactory invention letter-writing is, to be sure; and yet there is none better for the purpose. When you asked me so affectionately in your letter whether I was going to bed, I concluded naturally that you were writing to me instead of doing so yourself; but I received the letter at half-past nine in the morning, when I was getting ready to ride. This sort of epistolary cross-questions and crooked answers is sometimes droll, but oftener sad: we weep with those who did weep, when they have dried their eyes; and rejoice with those who did rejoice, but the corners of whose mouths are already drawn down for crying, while we fancy we are smiling sympathetically with them.... You ask me how the world goes with me, and I

can only say round, as I suppose it does with everybody. All goes on precisely as usual with me; my life is exceedingly uniform, and it is seldom that anything occurs to disturb its monotonous routine. My dear father, thank Heaven, is better, but still very weak, and I fear it will be yet some time before he recovers his strength. He came down to dinner to-day for the first time in this fortnight; indeed, it is only since the day before yesterday that he has left his bed; but I trust that this attack will serve him for a long time, and that with rest and quiet he will regain his strength.

I am really glad my aunt Kemble is better, though I remember having some not unpleasant ideas as to how, if she were not, you would go to Leamington to nurse her, and so come on and stay with us in London; but I cannot wish it at the price of her prolonged indisposition, poor woman!... I am sorry to say my father is pronounced worse to-day; he has a bad side-ache, and they are applying mustard poultices to overcome it. There is some apprehension of a return of fever. This is a real and terrible anxiety, dear H——. The theater, too, is going on very ill, and he is unable to give it any assistance; and for the same reason I can do nothing for it, for all my plays require him, except Isabella and Fazio, and these are worn threadbare. It is all very gloomy; but, however, time doth not stand still, and will some day come to the end of the journey with us.... You say Undine reminds you of me.... The feeling of an existence more

closely allied to the elements of the material universe than even we acknowledge our dust-formed bodies to be, possesses me sometimes almost like a little bit of magnus; bright colors, fleeting lights and shadows, flowers, and above all water, the pure, sparkling, harmonious, powerful element, excite in me a feeling of intimate fellowship, of love, almost greater than any human companionship does. Perhaps, after all, I am only an animated morsel of my palace, this wonderful, beautiful world. Do you not believe in numberless, invisible existences, filling up the vast intermediate distance between God and ourselves, in the lonely and lovely haunts of nature and her more awful and gloomy recesses? It seems as if one must be surrounded by them; I do not mean to the point of merely suggesting the vague "suppose?" *that*, I should think, must visit every mind; but rather like a consciousness, a conviction, amounting almost to certainty, only short of seeing and hearing. How well I remember in that cedar hall at Oatlands, the sort of invisible presence I used to feel pervading the place. It was a large circle of huge cedar trees in a remote part of the grounds; the paths that led to it were wild and tangled; the fairest flower, the foxglove, grew in tall clumps among the foliage of the thickets and shrubberies that divided the lawn into undulating glades of turf all round it; a sheet of water in which there was a rapid current—I am not sure that it was not the river—ran close by, and the whole place used to affect my imagination in the weirdest

way, as the habitation of invisible presences of some strange supernatural order. As the evening came on, I used frequently to go there by myself, leaving our gentlemen at table, and my mother and Lady Francis in the drawing-room. How I flew along by the syringa bushes, brushing their white fragrant blossoms down in showers as I ran, till I came to that dark cedar hall, with its circle of giant trees, whose wide-sweeping branches spread, at it were, a halo of darkness all round it! Through the space at the top, like the open dome of some great circular temple, such as the Pantheon of Rome, the violet-colored sky and its starry worlds looked down. Sometimes the pure radiant moon and one fair attendant star would seem to pause above me in the dark framework of the great tree-tops. That place seemed peopled with spirits to me; and while I was there I had the intensest delight in the sort of all but conscious certainty that it was so. Curiously enough, I never remember feeling the slightest nervousness while I was there, but rather an immense excitement in the idea of such invisible companionship; but as soon as I had emerged from the magic circle of the huge black cedar trees, all my fair visions vanished, and, as though under a spell, I felt perfectly possessed with terror, and rushed home again like the wind, fancying I heard following footsteps all the way I went. The moon seemed to swing to and fro in the sky, and every twisted tree and fantastic shadow that lay in my path made me start aside like a shying horse. I could

have fancied they made grimaces and gestures at me, like the rocks and roots in Retsch's etchings of the Brocken; and I used to reach the house with cheeks flaming with nervous excitement, and my heart thumping a great deal more with fear than with my wild run home; and then I walked with the utmost external composure of demure propriety into the drawing-room, as who should say, "Thy servant went no whither," to any inquiry that might be made as to my absence....

It seems to me that you would be a poet but for your analyzing, dissecting, inquiring, and doubting mental tendency. Your truth is not a matter of intuition, but of demonstration; and when you get beyond demonstrability, then nothing remains to you but doubt.... God bless you, dear!

I am yours ever affectionately,

F. A. K.

Monday, December 5th.— ... My father is worse again to-day. Ohimé! His state is most precarious, and this relapse very alarming. It is dreadful to see him drag himself about, and hear his feeble voice. Oh, my dear, dear Father! Heaven preserve you to us!

Tuesday, 6th.—My father is much worse. How terrible this is!... Dall met me on the stairs this morning, and gave me a miserable account of him; he had just been bled, and

that had somewhat relieved him. I went and sat with him while my mother drove out in the carriage. I stayed a long while with him, and he seemed a little better.... My father's two doctors have returned again, and paid him two visits daily. I read Daru all the evening.

Wednesday, 7th.— ... So I am to play Belvidera on Monday, and Bianca on Wednesday. That will be hard work; Bianca is terrible.

Thursday, 8th.— ... My dear father is beginning to gain strength once more, thank Heaven! I received a letter from Lady Francis about the play (a translation of the French piece of "Henri Trois," by Lord Francis, the production of which at Covent Garden is being postponed in consequence of my father's illness). Poor people! I am sorry for their disappointment.... I devised and tried on a new dress for Bianca; it will be very splendid, but I am afraid I shall look like a metal woman, a golden image. [The dress in question was entirely made of gold tissue; and one evening a man in the pit exclaimed to a friend of mine sitting by him, "Oh! doesn't she look like a splendid gold pheasant?" the possibility of which comparison had not occurred to me, not being a sportsman.]

Friday, 9th.— ... I went with my mother to the theater to hear "Fra Diavolo," with which, and Miss Sheriff's singing in it, we were delighted.

Saturday, 10th.— ... We had a talk about the fashion of southern countries of serenading, which I am very glad is not an English fashion. Music, as long as I am awake, is a pure and perfect delight to me, but to be wakened out of my sleep by music is to wake in a spasm of nervous terror, shaking from head to foot, and sick at my stomach, with indescribable fear and dismay; certainly no less agreeable effect could possibly be contemplated by the gallantry of a serenading admirer, so I am glad our admirers do not serenade us English girls. This picturesque practice prevails all through the United States, where the dry brilliancy of the climate and skies is favorable to the paying and receiving this melodious homage, and where musical bands, sometimes numbering fifty, are marshaled by personal or political admirers, under the balconies of reigning beauties or would-be-reigning public men. My total ignorance of this prevailing practice in the United States led to a very prosaic demonstration of gratitude on my part toward my first serenaders; for I opened my window and rewarded them with a dollar, which one of the recipients informed me he should always keep, to my no small confusion, not knowing the nature of my gratuitous indulgence, and that, like my Lady Greensleeves in the old English ballad, "My music still to play and sing" would be, while I remained in America, a disinterested demonstration of the devotion of my friends.... My poor mother is in the deepest distress about my father.

Inflammation of the lungs is dreaded, and he is spitting blood. I felt as if I were turning to stone as I heard it. I came up to my own room and cried most bitterly for a long time. In the afternoon I was allowed to go in and see my father; but I was so overcome that, as I stooped to kiss his hand, I was almost suffocated with suppressed sobs. I did control myself, however, sufficiently to be able to sit by him for a while with tolerable composure. Cecilia and Mrs. Wilkinson called, and were very kind and affectionate to me. They brought news that Harry Siddons had arrived in India and been sent off to Delhi. My brother Henry, poor child, came and lay on the sofa in my room, and we cried together almost through the whole afternoon, in spite of our efforts to comfort each other. My heart dies away when I think of my dear father.... I got a very kind and affectionate letter from Lady Francis; she wants us very much to go again to Oatlands. After all, perhaps it would not be so sad there as I think, though it must appear changed enough in some respects, if not in all. Everything is winter now, within and without me; and when I was last there it was summer, in my heart and over all the earth. My cedar palace is there still, and to that I should bring more change than I should find. Poor Undine! how often I think of that true story. When I went to the theater my heart really sickened at my work; my eyes smarted, and my voice was broken, with my whole day's crying. The house seemed good; I played ill, and felt very ill. Lord M—— was

in the stage-box, which annoyed me. I hate to have my society acquaintance close to me while I am acting. The play was "Venice Preserved." After I came home I saw my father, who is a little better; but now Henry is quite unwell, and I am in a high fever—I suppose with all this wretchedness and exertion.

Thursday, 13th.—My father has passed a quieter night, thank God. I went to Fozzard's riding-school with John, and tried a hot little hunter that they want to persuade Lady Chesterfield to ride—a very pretty creature, but quite too eager for the school. While I was riding Lady Grey came in, very much frightened, upon her horse, which was rather fresh. She took Gazelle, which I was riding, and I rode her horse tame for her. It is very odd that, riding as well as she does, she should be so miserably nervous on horseback.... I drove to Mrs. Mayo's, who impressed and affected me very much. Those magnificent eyes of hers are becoming dim; she is growing blind, with eyes like dark suns. I could not help expressing the deep concern I felt for such a calamity. She replied that doubtless it was a trial, but that she saw many others afflicted with dispensations so much heavier than her own, that she was content. To grow blind contentedly is to be very brave and good, and I admired and loved her even more than I did before. When I came home, I went and sat with my father. He has decided that we shall not go to Oatlands, and I am hardly sorry for it.

Friday, 14th.—Went over my part for to-night.... Victoire came with me to the theater instead of Dall, whose whole time is taken up attending on my father. The house was bad, and I thought I acted very ill, though Victoire and John, who was in the front, said I did not. Henry Greville was in the boxes, and to my surprise went from them to the pit, though I ought not to have been surprised, for, for such a fine gentleman, he is a very sensible man. Colonel and Lady C. Cavendish were in the orchestra, and how I did wish them further. I do so wonder, in the middle of my stage despair, what business my drawing-room acquaintances have sitting staring at it. My dress was beautiful. As for the audience, I do not know what ailed them, but they seemed to have agreed together only to applaud at the end of the scenes, so that I got no resting interruptions, and was half dead with fatigue at the end of the play. I read Daru's "Venice" between the scenes, and saw my father for a few minutes after I came home.

Thursday, 15th.—Had a delightful long letter from H——, who is a poet without the jingle.... Another physician is to be called in for my father. Oh, my dear father! Mr. Bartley was with him about this horrible theater business.... My mother went in the evening with John to hear Miss Sheriff in Polly. It is her first night in "The Beggar's Opera," and my father wished to know how it went. I stayed at home with poor Henry, and after tea sat with my father till bedtime.

Friday, 16th.—Went to the theater at eleven, and rehearsed Isabella in the saloon, the stage being occupied with a rehearsal of the pantomime. When my rehearsal was over, the carriage not being come, I went down to see what they were doing. There was poor Farleigh, nose and all (a worthy, amiable man, and excellent comic character, with a huge excrescence of a nose), *qui se déménait* like one frantic; huge Mr. Stansbury, with a fiddle in his hand, dancing, singing, prompting, and swearing; the whole *corps de ballet* attitudinizing in muddy shoes and poke-bonnets, and the columbine, in dirty stockings and a mob-cap, ogling the harlequin in a striped shirt and dusty trousers. What a wrong side to the show the audience will see!

My father is better, thank God! After dinner sat with poor Henry till time to go to the theater. Played Isabella. House bad. I played well; I always do to an empty house (this was my invariable experience both in my acting and reading performances, and I came to the conclusion that as my spirits were not affected by a small audience, they, on the contrary, were exhilarated by the effect upon my lungs and voice of a comparatively cool and free atmosphere). I read Daru between my scenes; I find it immensely interesting.... I read Niccolini's "Giovanni di Procida," but did not like it very much; I thought it dull and heavy, and not up to the mark of such a very fine subject.

Saturday, 17th.— ... My father, thank God,

appears much better.... I have christened the pretty mare I have bought "Donna Sol," in honor of my part in "Hernani." In the evening I read Daru, and wrote a few lines of "The Star of Seville;" but I hate it, and the whole thing is as dead as ditch-water.

Sunday, 18th.—To church.... After I came home I went and sat with my father. Poor fellow! he is really better; I thank God inexpressibly!

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, December 18.

DEAR H——,

I have had time to write neither long nor short letters for the last week; Mr. Young's engagement being at an end, I have been called back to my work, and have had to rehearse, and to act, and to be much too busy to write to you until to-day, when I have caught up all my arrears.

My father, thank God, is once more recovering, but we have twice been alarmed at such sudden relapses that we hardly dare venture to hope he is really convalescent. Inflammation on the lungs has, it seems, been going on for a considerable time, and though they think now that it has entirely subsided, yet, as the least exertion or exposure may bring it on again, we are watching him like the apples of our eyes. He has not yet left his bed, to which he has now been confined more than a month....

The exertion I have been obliged to make

when leaving him to go and act, was so full of misery and dread lest I should find him worse, perhaps dead, on my return, that no words can describe what I have suffered at that dreadful theater. Thank God, however, he is now certainly better, out of present danger, and I trust and pray will soon be beyond any danger of a relapse. Anything like Dall's incessant and unwearied care and tenderness you cannot imagine. Night and day she has watched and waited on him, and I think she must have sunk under all the fatigue she has undergone but for the untiring goodness and kindness of heart that has supported her under it all. She is invaluable to us all, and every day adds to her claims upon our love and gratitude....

In the passage you quote from Godwin, he seems to think a friend of more use in reproving what is evil in us than I believe is really the case. Do you think our faults and follies can ever be more effectually sifted, analyzed, and condemned by another than by our own conscience? I do not think if one could put one's heart into one's friends' hand that they could detect one defect or evil quality that had not been marked and acknowledged in the depths of one's own consciousness. Do you suppose people shrink more from the censure of others than from self-condemnation? I find it difficult to think so.... You appear to me always to wish to submit your faith to a process which invariably breaks your apparatus and leaves you very much dissatisfied, with your faith still a simple element in you, in spite of your

endeavors to analyze or decompose it. Are not, after all, our convictions our only steadfastly grounded faith? I do not mean conviction wrought out in the loom of logical argument, where one's understanding must have shuttled backward and forward through every thread a thousand times before the woof is completed, but the spiritual convictions, the intuitions of our souls, that lie upon their surface like direct reflections from heaven, distinct and beautiful enough for reverent contemplation, but a curious search into whose nature would, at any rate temporarily, blur and dissipate and destroy....

The sense of power which man cannot control is one thing that makes the sea such a delightful object of contemplation; the huge white main, and deep, tremendous voice of the vast creature over which man's daring and his knowledge give him but such imperfect mastery, suggest images of strength which are full of sublime fascination as one stands on the shore, looking at the vasty deep, and remembers how precarious and uncertain is man's dominion over it, and how God alone rules and governs it. It is impossible not to rejoice in the great sense of its huge power and freedom, even though their manifestations toward men are so often terrible and destructive.... Oh yes, indeed, I, like Wallenstein, have faith in the "strong hours," and hold their influence the more efficacious that we seldom think of resisting it; or, if we do, are seldom successful in the attempt....

The theater is going on very ill, but negotiations are pending between the partners, which it is hoped may eventually terminate in some arrangement with the creditors about the property. I have been acting Bianca again; I certainly am not jealous, and cannot imagine being so, any more of my husband than of my friend. I doubt if I have the power of loving which produces jealousy, in spite of which that part tries me dreadfully. I can conceive no torment comparable to that passion, which, however, I think is foreign to my own nature. I am reading Daru's "History of Venice," and am rather disappointed in the entertainment I expected to derive from it. It is a pretty long undertaking, too.... Remember me to all your people; and since you will have it that I am twin-sister to a fountain, remember me to my cousin, the dear little spring in the dell, which I love the more that it sometimes reflects your face and figure, as well as the fairies who dance round it by night. Do you hear that poor Lord Grey is said to be haunted by a vision of Lord Castlereagh's head? It sounds like a temptation of the devil to scare him into cutting his throat. Lord Brougham and the Duke of Wellington seem to me the only two men likely to keep their heads in these times of infinite political perturbation; but the one is made of steel, and the other of india-rubber.

Yours, dearest, always,

F. A. K.

Monday, 19th.—Went to Fozzard's, and had a pleasant, gossiping ride with Lady Grey and Miss Cavendish. While I was still riding, the Duchess of Kent and our little queen that is to be came down into the school; I was presented to them at their desire, and thought Princess Victoria a very unaffected, bright-looking girl. Fozzard made me gallop round; I think he is rather proud of showing me off.... My father is not so well again to-day. How dreadful these alternations are! I read Daru all the afternoon, and then sang in my own room to amuse Henry, till dinner-time. Colonel Bailey sent me the mare's saddle and bridle, and after dinner the boys put them on a chair for me, and gave me an absurd make-believe ride.

Wednesday, 21st—Dear Mr. Harness called, and I received him. He tells me that at the theater they want to do his tragedy ("The Wife of Antwerp," was, I think, the name of the piece) without my father; but this seems to me really sheer madness. The play is a pretty, interesting, well-written piece, and, well propped and sustained, may perhaps succeed for a few nights, but as to throwing the whole weight, or rather weakness of it, upon my shoulders, or any one pair of shoulders, it is folly to think of it. It is not a powerful sort of monologue like "Fazio," where the interest centres in one person and one passion, and therefore if that character is well sustained the rest can shift for itself. It is no such matter; it is a play of incident and not of character, and must be played by people and not one person. What terrible bad

management! But, poor people! what can they do, with my father lying disabled there? If it was not for their complete disregard for their own interest, I should be inclined to quarrel with them for the way in which they are ruining mine; and I sincerely hope, for the sake of everybody concerned, that Mr. Harness will resist this senseless proposition.

I went with John in the afternoon to Angerstein's Gallery (M. Angerstein's fine collection of pictures was not then incorporated in the National Gallery, of which it subsequently became so important a portion); there are some new pictures there. Unluckily, we had only an hour to stay, but I brought away a great deal with me for so short a time. Among the additions was a very singular old painting, "The Holy Family," by one of the earliest masters, whose name I forget, not being familiar with it. I looked long at the glorious Titian, the "Bacchus and Ariadne," which always reminds me of—

> "Whence come ye, jolly Satyrs,
> whence come ye?
> Like to a moving vintage down they
> came."

One of the most famous pictures here is "Our Saviour disputing with the Doctors," by Leonardo da Vinci. I hardly ever receive pleasure from his pictures; there is a mannerism in all that I have seen that is positively disagreeable to me. How the later artists lost the simple secret of earnest vigor of their predecessors, while gaining in

everything that was not that! Grace, finish, refinement, accuracy of drawing, richness of coloring, all that merely tended towards perfection and execution, while the simplicity and single-heartedness of conception died away more and more. All art seems by degrees to outgrow its strength, and certainly in painting the archaic cradle touches one's imagination as neither the graceful youth nor mature manhood do. "Le mieux c'est l'ennemi du bien" in nothing more than the progress of art after a certain period of its development, and when its mere mechanism is best understood, and applied in the most masterly manner. The spirit has tarried behind, and we have to return to seek it among the earlier days, when the genius of man was like a giant, rude, naked, and savage, but vigorous and free—unadorned indeed, but also untrammeled. Only a certain proportion of excellence is allowed to our race, but that is granted; and let us stretch it, expand it, roll and beat it out as we will, it is still but the same square inch made thin to cover a greater surface. For one good we still must yield another; we have no gain that is not loss, no acquisition but surrender, "exchange" which may perhaps be "no robbery," though quantity does seem a poor substitute for quality in matters of beauty. I wish I had lived in the times when the ore lay in the ingot (and had been one of the few who owned a nugget), instead of in these times of universal gold-leaf, glitter without weight, and shining shallowness of mere surface. Vigor is better than refinement, and

to create better than to improve, and to conceive better than to combine. I wonder if the world, or rather the human mind, will ever really grow decrepit, and the fountain of beauty in men's souls run dry to the dregs; or will the manifestations only change, and the eternal spirit reveal itself in other ways?...

On our way home I had a long and interesting talk with John about the different forms of religious faith into which the gradual development of the human mind has successively expanded; each, of course, being the result of that very development, acting on the original necessity to believe in and worship and obey something higher and better than itself, implanted in our nature. It seems strange that he has a leaning to Roman Catholicism, which I have not. Our Protestant profession appears to me the purest creed—form—that Christianity has yet arrived at; but, I suppose, a less spiritual one, or perhaps I should say external accompaniments, affecting more palpably the senses and imagination, are wholesome and necessary to the cultivation and preservation of the religious sentiment in some minds. Catholicism was the faith of the chivalrous times, of the poetical times, of times when the creative faculty of man poured forth in since unknown abundance masterpieces of every kind of beauty, as manifestations of the pious and devout enthusiasm. Protestantism is undoubtedly the faith of these times; a denying faith, a rejecting creed, a questioning belief, its evil

seems essentially to coincide with the worst tendency of the present age, but its good seems to me positive and unconditional, independent of time or circumstance; the best, in that kind, that the believing necessity in our nature has yet attained. Rightly understood and lived up to, the only service of God which is intellectual freedom, as all His service, lived up to, under what creed soever, is moral freedom. And it is in some sort in spite of myself that I say this, for my fancy delights in all the devout and poetical legendary conceptions which the stern hand of reason has stripped from our altars.

I found a letter at home from Emily Fitzhugh; she writes me word she has been revising my aunt Siddons's letters; thence an endless discussion as to the nature of genius, what it is. I suppose really nothing but the creative power, and so it remains a question if the greatest actor can properly be said to possess it. Again, how far does the masterly filling out of an inferior conception by a superior execution of it, such as really great actors frequently present, fall short of creative power, properly so called? Is it a thing positive, of individual inherent quality, or comparative, and composed of mere respective quantity? Can its manifestation be partial, and restricted to one faculty, or must it be a pervading influence, permeating the whole mind? Certainly Mrs. Siddons was what we call a great dramatic genius, and off the stage gave not the slightest indication of unusual intellectual capacity of any sort. Kean, the only actor whose performances

have ever realized to me my idea of the effect tragic acting ought to produce, acted part of his parts rather than ever a whole character, and a work of genius should at least show unity of conception. My father, whose fulfilling of a particular range of characters is as nearly as possible perfect, wants depth and power, and power seems to me the core, the very marrow, so to speak, of genius; and if it is not genius that gave incomparable majesty and terror to my aunt's Lady Macbeth, and to Kean's Othello incomparable pathos and passion, and to my father's Benedict incomparable spirit and grace, what is it? Mere talent carried beyond a certain point? If so, where does the one begin and the other end? Or is genius a precious, inconvertible, intellectual metal, of which some people have a grain and a half, and some only half a grain?... There is dreadful news from Spain, and I fear it is too true. Torrijos has made another attempt. Oh, how thankful we must be that John is returned to us!

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, Monday, December 23.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I owe you many excuses for not having sooner acknowledged your letter, but you may have seen by the papers that we have been bringing out a new piece, and that is always, while it goes on, an engrossing of time and attention paramount to all other claims. It is a play of Lord Francis Leveson's,

and I know you will be glad to hear that it has been successful and is likely to prove serviceable to the theater. Another reason, too, for my silence is, that I have been working very hard at "The Star of Seville," which, I am thankful to say, has at length reached its completion. I have sent it to the theater upon approbation, in the usual routine of business; and am waiting very patiently the decision of the management on its fitness or unfitness for their purposes.

I know not whether your party at Teddesley are good thermometers, by which to judge of the state of political feeling here in London, but at this moment the rumor is rife that the Ministry dare not make the new batch of Peers, cannot carry the Bill, and must resign. To whom? is the next question, and it seems a difficult one to answer. One hardly sees, looking round the political ranks, who are to be the men to come forward and take up this tangled skein effectually. I write with rather a sympathetic leaning toward the Tory side of this Reform question, and do not know whether in so doing I am affronting you or not. In any case, I imagine, there can be but one opinion as to the difficulty, and even danger, of the present position of public affairs and public temper with regard to them.

Do you not soon think of returning to Town? or are you so well pleased with your present abode as to prolong your visit? London is particularly full, I think, for the time of year, and people are meeting in smaller numbers

and a more sociable and agreeable way than they do later in the season. I was at two parties last week, each time, I am ashamed to say, after acting. I can't say that I find society pleasant; it reminds me a good deal of a "Conversation Cards," the insipid flippancy, of whose questions and answers seems to me to survive in these meetings, miscalled occasionally *conversaziones*. Dancing appears to me rational, and indeed highly intellectual, in comparison with such talk; and that I am as fond of as ever, but that has not begun yet, and I find these *soirées causantes* drearily unedifying.

Talking of stupid parties, your beautiful little picture of me and my various costumes helped away two hours of such intolerably dull people here the other night; I assure you we all voted you devout thanks on the occasion.... We are all tolerably well; my father is gradually recovering his strength, and though after such an attack as his has been the progress must of necessity be slow, we are inclined to hope, from that very circumstance, that it will be the more sure.... If you do not return soon, perhaps I shall hear from you again; pray recollect that it will give me great pleasure to do so, and that I am very sincerely yours,

F. A. K.

I dressed my Juliet the last time I acted it, exactly after your little sketch of her....

Thursday.—Worked at "The Star of Seville." In the evening the play was "Isabella;" the house very bad. I played very well. The Rajah Ramahun Roy was in the Duke of Devonshire's box, and went into fits of crying, poor man!

Friday, 23d.—It is all too true; John has had a letter from Spain; they have all been taken and shot. I felt frozen when I heard the terrible news. Poor Torrijos! And yet I suppose it is better so: he would only have lived to bitter disappointment, and the despairing conviction that the spirit he appealed to did not animate one human being in his deplorable and degenerate land. A young Englishman, of the name of Boyd, John's sometime friend and companion, was taken and shot with the rest: it choked me to think of his parents, his brothers and sisters. Surely God has been most merciful to us in sparing us such an anguish, and bringing our wanderer home before this day of doom. How I thought of Richard Trench and his people! John did not seem to me to be violently affected, though his first exclamation was one of sharp and bitter pain: I suppose he must, long ere this, have felt that there could be no other end to this utterly hopeless attempt.... In the afternoon I called on Mrs. Norton, who is always to me astonishingly beautiful. The baby was asleep, and so I could not see it, but Spencer has grown into a very fine child.

Monday, 26th.—Went to see how the pantomime did. I did not think it very

amusing, but there was an enchanting little girl (Miss Poole) who did Tom Thumb, and whose attitudes in her armor were most of them copied from the antique, and really beautiful. Poor dear, bright little thing!

My father was in bed when we returned; I went and saw him for a minute, to tell him how the pantomime had succeeded; it ended with some wonderful tight-rope dancing by an exceedingly steady, graceful man; but it turned me perfectly sick, and I hate all those sort of things.

Thursday, 29th.—After dinner worked at "The Star of Seville." I really wonder I have the patience to go on with it, it is such heavy trash. After tea my father begged me to sing to him. I am always horribly frightened at singing before my mother; I cannot bear to distress her accurate ear with my unsteady intonation, and the more I think of it, the colder my hands grow and the hotter my face, the huskier my voice and the flatter my notes; I bungle over accompaniments that I have at my fingers' ends, and forget words I know as well as my alphabet; in short, I feel like a wretch, and I sing like a wretch, and I make wretched all my hearers. My mother's own nervous terror when she had to sing on the stage, as a young woman, was excessive, as she has often told me; and her mother repeatedly but vainly endeavored to bribe her with the promise of a guinea if she would sing as well in public any of the songs that she sang perfectly well at home. I sang for some time, and by degrees got more

courage, till at last I managed to sing tolerably in tune. My mother says I have more voice than A——. I am sorry to hear her voice has grown thin—that sweet, melodious voice I did so love to listen to; but perhaps it will recover its tone.

Wednesday, 28th.—My dear, dear father came down to breakfast, looking horribly thin and pale, poor fellow! but, thank God, he was able to come once more among us. I am to act Euphrasia on Monday; how I do hate it! Monday week my father talks of resuming his work again with Mercutio. Dear me! how happy I shall be! once more speaking the love poetry of Juliet after all these "meaner beauties of the night" that I have been executing ever since he has been ill. Juliet did very right to die; she would have become Bianca when once she was Mrs. Romeo Montague.... I wrote to Lady Francis about "Katharine of Cleves," (Lord Francis's translation of "Henri Trois"), who is once more beginning to lift up her head. My father thinks it may be done on Wednesday week.... It is now determined that Henry should go into the army, and my mother wants me to besiege Sir John through Lady Macdonald (the general's general) about a commission for him. In the evening, not having to be anybody tragical or heroical, I indulged in my own character, and had a regular game of romps with the boys; my pensive public would not have believed its eyes if it could have seen me with my hair all disheveled, not because of my woes, but because of riotous fun, jumping over chairs and sofas,

and dodging behind curtains and under tables to escape from my pursuers. "Is that Miss Kemble?" as poor Mr. Bacon involuntarily exclaimed the first time he saw me.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, December 29, 1831.
MY DEAREST H——,

You shall not entreat in vain, neither shall you have a short answer because you have an immediate one.... I should not have answered you so instantaneously, but that my last account of my dear father was so bad that I cannot delay telling you how much better he is, and how grateful we all are for his restoration to health. He is released from his bed, of which he must be heartily sick, and comes down to breakfast at the usual time: of course he is still weak and low, and wretchedly thin, but we trust a little time will bring back good spirits and good looks, though after such a terrible attack I fear it will be long before his constitution recovers its former strength, if indeed it ever does. He talks of resuming his labors at the theater next Monday week. Oh! my dear H——, what a dreadful season of anxiety this has been! but, thank God, it is past.

I had intended that this letter should go to you to-day, but you will forgive the delay of a day in my finishing it when I tell you that I have some hope of its producing a commission for Henry. Sir John Macdonald, at whose house you dined in the summer

> with my mother, is now adjutant-general, and I know not what besides; and after my mother and myself had expended all our eloquence in winding up my father's mind to resolve upon the army as Henry's profession, she thought the next best thing I could do would be to attack Lady Macdonald and secure the general's interest. They happened to call this afternoon, and your letter, my dear H——, has been left unfinished till past post-time, while I was soliciting this favor, which I have every hope we shall obtain. Lady Macdonald is extremely kind and good-natured, and I am sure will exert herself to serve us, and if this can be accomplished I shall be haunted by one anxiety the less.
>
> Henry is too young and too handsome to be doing nothing but lounging about the streets of London, and even if he should be ordered to the Indies, it is something to feel that he is no longer aimless and objectless in life—a mere squanderer of time, without interest, stake, or duty, in this existence. I am sure this news will pacify you, and atone for the day's delay in this letter reaching you.

[My youngest brother Henry had a passionate desire to be a sailor, and never exhibited the slightest inclination for any other career. Admiral Lake, who was a very kind friend of my father's and mother's, knowing this to be the lad's bent, offered, on one occasion, to take charge of him, and have him trained for his profession under his own supervision. Such, however, was my mother's horror of the sea, and dread of losing her darling, if she surrendered him to be carried from her to Nova Scotia, whither I

think Admiral Lake was bound when he offered to take my brother with him, that she induced my father to decline this most friendly and advantageous offer. Henry never after that exhibited the slightest preference for any other profession, and always said, "They may put me at a plow-tail if they like." He went through Westminster School, after a previous training at Bury St. Edmunds, not otherwise than creditably; but a very modest estimate of his own capacity made him beg not to be sent to Cambridge, where he said he was sure he should only waste money, and do himself and us no credit. (The bitter disappointment of my brother John's failure there had made a deep impression upon him.) Finally it was decided that he should go into the army, and the friendly interest of Sir John Macdonald and the liberal price Mr. Murray gave me for my play of "Francis I." enabled me to get him a commission; it was the time when they were still purchasable. My poor mother, unable to refuse her consent to this second favorable opportunity of starting him in life, acquiesced in his military, though she had thwarted his naval, career, and was well content to see her boy-ensign sent over with his troops to Ireland. But from Ireland his regiment was ordered to the West Indies, and after his departure thither she never again saw him in her life.]

I think it would be a wise thing if I were to go to America and work till I have made 10,000*l.*, then return to England and go the round of the provinces, and act for a few nights' leave-taking in London. Prudence would then, perhaps, find less difficulty in adjusting my plans for the future. That is what I think would be well for me to do, supposing all things remain as they are and God preserves my health and strength. It will not do to verify all Poitier's lugubrious congratulation to his children in the Vaudeville on their marriage:

> "Ji! Ji! mariez-vous,
> Mettez-vous dans la misère!
> Ji! Ji! mariez-vous,
> Mettez-vous la corde au cou."

... Jealousy, surely, is a disposition to suspect and take umbrage where there is no cause for suspicion or offense, which, to say the least of it, is very unreasonable; but that a woman should break her heart because her husband does love another woman better than her, seems to me natural enough, and with regard to Bianca, her provocations certainly warranted a very rational amount of misery; and though, had she not been a woman of violent passions and a jealous temperament, she probably would not have taken the means she did of resenting Fazio's treatment of her, it appears to me that nothing but divine assistance and the strongest religious principle could preserve one under such circumstances from despair,

> madness, suicide, perhaps; hardly, however, the murder of one's husband. But assassinating other people seems a much more common mode of relieving their feelings among Italians than destroying themselves, which is rather a northern way of meeting, I should say of avoiding, difficulties.
>
> I have had a holiday this week, and every now and then have written a word or two of "La Estrella;" it will never be done, and when it is it will be the horridest trash that ever was done; but I will let you have the pleasure of reading it, I promise you. On Monday I play that favorite detestation of mine, Euphrasia; the Monday after that my father hopes to be able for Mercutio, and I return to Juliet. By the by, you say Bianca is my best part, and I think my Juliet is better; I am not sure that there is not some kindred in the characters. We are going to bring out a play of Lord Francis', translated from the French, a sort of melodrama in blank verse, in which I have to act a part that I cannot do the least in the world, but of course that doesn't signify.

["Katharine of Cleves," translated from the French play of "Henri Trois et sa Cour," and made the subject of one of Mr. Barham's inimitably comical poems in the "Ingoldsby Legends." Mdlle. Mars acted the part of the heroine in Paris, and it was one of several semi-tragical characters, in which, at the end of her great theatrical career, she reaped fresh laurels in an entirely new field, and showed the world that she might have been one of the best serious, not to

say tragic, actresses of the French stage, as well as its one unrivaled female comedian.]

> We have spent a wretched Christmas, as you may suppose; a house with its head sick all but to death, and all its members smitten with the direst anxiety, is not the place for a merry one. God bless you, my dear, and send you years of peace of mind and health of body! this is, I suppose, what we mean when we wish for happiness here, either for ourselves or others. Give my love and kindest good wishes to your people.
>
> Have you seen in the papers that poor Torrijos and his little band, consisting of sixty men, several of whom John knew well, have been lured into the interior of Spain, and there taken prisoners and shot? This news has shocked us all dreadfully, especially poor John. You may imagine how grateful we are that he is now among us, instead of having fallen a victim to his chimerical enthusiasm. I hardly know how to deplore the event for Torrijos himself: death has spared him the bitter disappointment of at last being convinced that the people he would have made free are willing slaves, and that the time when Spain is to lift herself up from the dust has not yet come.
>
> I went the other day with John to the Angerstein Gallery.... The delight I find in a fine painting is one of the greatest and most enduring pleasures I have; my mind retains the impression so long and so very vividly.... Good-by, my dearest H——.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. K.

Saturday, 31st.—After breakfast went to the theater to rehearse "The Grecian Daughter," and Mr. Ward, for whom the rehearsal was principally given, never came till it was over. Pleasant creature!...

The day seemed beautifully fine, and my father and mother took, a drive, while Henry and I rode, that my father might see the horse I had bought for him; but it was bitterly cold, and I could not make my mare trot, so she cantered and I froze. Mr. Power was there, on that lovely horse of his. I think the Park will become bad company, it is so full of the player folk. Frederick Byng called, and I like him, so I went and sat with him and my father and mother in the library till time to dress for dinner. After dinner wrote "The Star of Seville." I have got into conceit with it again, and so poor, dear, unfortunate Dall coming in while I was working at it, I seized hold of her, like the Ancient Mariner of the miserable "Wedding Guest," and compelled her, in spite of her outcries, to sit down, and then, though she very wisely went fast asleep, I read it to her till tea-time.

My mother wished to sit up and see the New Year in, and so we played quadrille till they sat down to supper, which had been ordered for the vigil, and I went fast asleep. At

twelve o'clock kisses and good wishes went round, and we were all very merry, in spite of which I once or twice felt a sudden rush of hot tears into my eyes. All the hours of last year are gone, standing at the bar of Heaven, our witnesses or accusers: the evil done, the good left undone, the opportunities vouchsafed and neglected, the warnings given and unheeded, the talents lent and unworthily or not employed, they are gone from us for ever! forever! and we make merry over the flight of Time! O Time! our dearest friend! how is it that we part so carelessly from you, who never can return to us?... A New Year....

A NEW YEAR, 1832.

January 1st, Sunday.—When I came down my father wished me a happy New Year, and I am sure we were both thinking of the same thing, and neither of us felt happy.

Thursday 5th.— ... Wrote all the afternoon. Mr. Byng dined with us and stayed till one o'clock, having reduced my mother to silence, and my father to sleep, John to snuff, and Henry and I to playing (*sotto voce*) "What's my thought like?" to keep ourselves from tumbling off the perch.

Monday, 9th.—Rehearsed "Romeo and Juliet" with all my heart. Oh, light, life, truth, and lovely poetry! I sat on the cold stage, that I might hear them even mumble over their parts as they do. My father seemed to me very weak, and not by any means fit for his

work to-night. After dinner went over my part again, and went to the theater at half past five. My new dress was very handsome, though rather burly, in spite of which Dall said it made me look taller, so its rather burliness didn't matter. John Mason played Romeo for the first time; he was beautifully dressed, and looked very well; he acted tolerably well, too. He has a good deal of energy and spirit, but wants feeling and refinement; his voice, unfortunately, is very unpleasant, wiry, harsh, and monotonous; of the last defect he may cure by practice. I came to the side scene just as my father was going on, to hear his reception; it was very great, a perfect thunder of applause; it made the tears start into my eyes. Poor father! They received me with infinite demonstrations of kindness too. I thought I acted very well; I am sure I played the balcony scene well. When the blood keeps rushing up into one's cheeks and neck while one is speaking, I wonder if that ought to be called acting. To be sure, Hamlet's player's face turned pale for Hecuba; so Shakespeare thought acting might make one change color.

I cannot get over the *sensibleness* of Henry Greville, who was in the pit again to-night. Upon my word! he deserves to see good acting. After the play dear William and Mary Harness came home to supper with us, and we all got into a long discussion about Shakespeare's character, John maintaining that his views of life were gloomy and that he must himself have been an unhappy man. I don't believe a bit of it; no one, I suppose,

ever thinks this world, and the life we live in it, absolutely pleasant or good, but the poet's ken, which is as an angel's compared with that of other men, must see more good and beauty, as well as more evil and ugliness, than his short-sighted fellows, and the better elements predominating over the worse (as they do, else the world would fall asunder). The man who takes so wide a view as Shakespeare, whatever his judgment of parts, must, upon the whole, pronounce the whole good rather than bad, and rejoice accordingly. I was too tired and sleepy to talk, or even to listen, much.

Wednesday, 11th.— ... Lady Charlotte Greville and General Alaba called. I am always grateful to him for the beautiful copy of Schlegel's "Dramatic Lectures" which he gave me. Lady Charlotte was all curiosity and anxiety about Lord Francis' play. I am afraid the newspapers may not be much inclined to be good-natured about it. I hope he does not care for what may be said of it. In the evening, the boys went to the theater, and I stayed at home, industriously copying "The Star of Seville" till bedtime.

Thursday, 12th.—To the theater to rehearsal, after which I drove to Hayter's (the painter), taking him my bracelets to copy, and permission to apply to the theater wardrobe for any drapery that may suit his purpose. I saw a likeness of Mrs. Norton he is just finishing; very like her indeed, but not her handsomest look. I think it had a slight, curious resemblance to some of the things

that have been done of me. I saw a very clever picture of all the Fitzclarences, either by himself or his brother, George Hayter. The women are very prettily grouped, and look picturesque enough; the modern man's dress is an abominable object, of art or nature, and Lord Munster's costume, holding, as he does, the very middle of the canvas, is monstrous (which I don't mean for a rudeness, but a pun). The Right Reverend Father in God (A.F.) is laughably like. They have insisted on having a portrait of their mother introduced in the room in which they are sitting, which seems to me better feeling than taste. Their royal father is absent. I worked at "The Star of Seville" till I went to the theater; as I get nearer the end, I get as eager as a race-horse when in sight of the goal.... The piece was "The School for Scandal;" the house was very full. I did not play well; I spoke too fast, and perceived it, and could not make myself speak slower—an unpleasant sort of nightmare sensation; besides, I was flat, and dull, and pointless—in short, bad was the sum total. How well Ward plays Joseph Surface! The audience were delightful; I never heard such pleasant shouts of laughter.... My father says perhaps they will bring out "The Star of Seville," which notion sometimes brings back my old girlish desire for "fame." Every now and then I feel quite proud at the idea of acting in a play of my own at two and twenty, and then I look again at my "good works," this precious play, and it seems to be no better than "filthy rags." But perhaps I may do

better hereafter. Hereafter! Oh dear! how many things are better than doing even the best in this kind! how many things must be better than real fame! but if one has none of those, fame might, perhaps, be pleasant. No actor's fame, or rather celebrity, or rather notoriety, would satisfy me; that is the shadow of a cloud, the echo of a sound, the memory of a dream, nothing come of nothing. The finest actor is but a good translator of another man's work; he does somebody else's thought into action, but he creates nothing, and that seems to me the test of genius, after all.

Friday.—At eleven to the theater to rehearse "Katharine of Cleves." ... We all went to the theater to see "Rob Roy," and I was sorry that I did, for it gave me such a home-sick longing for Edinburgh, and the lovely sea-shore out by Cramond, and the sunny coast of Fife. How all my delightful, girlish, solitary rambles came back to me! Why do such pleasant times ever pass? or why do they ever come? The Scotch airs set me crying with all the recollections they awakened. In spite, moreover, of my knowing every plank and pulley, and scene-shifter and carpenter behind those scenes, here was I crying at this Scotch melodrama, feeling my heart puff out my chest for "Rob Roy," though Mr Ward is, alas! my acquaintance, and I know when he leaves the stage he goes and laughs and takes snuff in the green room. How I did cry at the Coronach and Helen Macgregor, though I know Mrs. Lovell is thinking of her baby, and

the chorus-singers of their suppers. How I did long to see Loch Lomond and its broad, deep, calm waters once more, and those lovely green hills, and the fir forests so fragrant in the sun, and that dark mountain well, Loch Long, with its rocky cliffs along whose dizzy edge I used to dream I was running in a whirlwind; the little bays where the sun touched the water as it soaked into cushions of thick, starry moss, and the great tufts of purple heather all vibrating with tawny bees! Beautiful wilderness! how glad I am I have once seen it, and can never forget it; nor the broad, crisping Clyde, with its blossoming bean-fields, its jagged rocks and precipices, its gray cliffs and waving woods, and the mountain streams of clear, bright, fairy water, rushing and rejoicing down between the hills to fling themselves into its bosom; and Dumbarton Castle, with its snowy roses of Stuart memory! How glad I am that I have seen it all, if I should never see it again! And "Rob Roy" brought all this and ever so much more to my mind. If I had been a mountaineer, how I should have loved my land! I wish I had some blood-right to love Scotland as I do. Unfortunately, all these associations did not reconcile me to the cockney-Scotch of our Covent Garden actors, and Mackay's Bailie Nicol Jarvie was not the least tender of my reminiscences. [It was at a public dinner in Edinburgh, at which Walter Scott and Mackay were guests, that, in referring to the admirable impersonation of the Bailie, Scott's habitual caution with regard to the authorship of the Waverley

Novels for a moment lost its balance, and in his warm commendation of the great comedian's performances a sentence escaped him which appeared conclusive to many of those present, if they were still in doubt upon the subject, that he was their writer.] Miss Inveraretie was a cruel Diana, but who would not be?...

Saturday, 14th.—I rode at two with my father. Passed Tyrone Power; what a clever, pleasant man he is; Count d'Orsay joined us; he was riding a most beautiful mare; and then James Macdonald, *cum multus aliis*, and I was quite dead, and almost cross, with cold.... After dinner I came up to my room, and set to work like a little galley slave, and by tea-time I had finished my play. "Oh, joy forever! my task is done!" I came down rather tipsy, and proclaimed my achievement. After tea I began copying the last act, but my father desired me to read it to them; so, at about half-past nine, I began. My mother cried much; what a nice woman she is! My father, Dall, and John agreed that it was beautiful, though I believe the two first excellent judges were fast asleep during the latter part of the reading, which was perhaps why they liked it so much. At the end my mother said to me, "I am proud of you, my dear;" and so I have my reward. After a little congratulatory conversation, I came to bed at two o'clock, and slept before my head touched the pillow. So now that is finished, and I am glad it is finished. Is it as good as a second piece of work ought to be? I cannot tell. I think so differently of it at

different times that I cannot trust my own judgment. I will begin something else as soon as possible. I wonder why nowadays we make all our tragedies foreign? Romantic, historical, knightly England had people and manners once picturesque and poetical enough to serve her play-writers' turn, though Shakespeare always took his stories, though not his histories, from abroad; but people live tragedies and comedies everywhere and all time. I think by and by I will write an English tragedy. [I little thought then that I should write a play whose miserable story was of my own day, and call it "An English Tragedy."]

Sunday, 15th.— ... In the afternoon hosts of people called; among others Lady Dacre, who stayed a long time, and wants us to go to her on Thursday. Copied "The Star of Seville" all the evening. At ten dear Mr. Harness came in, and stayed till twelve.

Monday, 16th.—Rehearsed "Katharine of Cleves" at eleven, but as Lord Francis did not come till twelve we had to begin it again, and kept at it until two. The actors seem frightened about it. Mr. Warde quakes about the pinching (an incident in the play taken, I suppose, from Ruthven's proceeding toward Mary Stewart at Lochleven). I am only afraid I cannot do anything with my part; it is a sort of melodramatic, pantomimic part that I have no capacity for. The fact is, that neither in the first nor last scenes are my legs long enough to do justice to this lady. The Douglas woman who barred the door with

her arm to save King James's life must have been a strapping lass, as well a heroine in spirit. I am not tall enough for such feats of arms. Copied my play till time to go to the theater. My aunt Victoire came to my dressing-room just as I was going on, and persuaded dear Dall, who has never once seen me act, to go into the front of the house. She came back very soon in a state of great excitement and distress, saying she could not bear it. How odd that seems! Dear old Dall! she cannot bear seeing me make-believe miserable. The house was very good, and I played fairly well.

Tuesday, 17th.—Went to my mother's room before she was down, with Henry. It is her birthday, and I carried her the black velvet dress I have got for her, with which she seemed much pleased. Went to rehearsal at twelve. Lord and Lady Francis were there, and we acted the whole play, of course, to please them, so that I was half dead at the end of the rehearsal. They want us to go to Lady Charlotte's (Greville) to-morrow. My father said we would if we were all well and *in spirits* (*i.e.*, if the play was not damped).... I wonder how my dear old Newhaven fish-wife does. "Eh! gude gracious, ma'am, it's yer ain sel come back again!" Poor body! I believe I love the very east wind that blows over the streets of Edinburgh.... After dinner Mrs. Jameson's beautiful toy-likeness of me helped off the time delightfully till the gentlemen came up, and then helped it off delightfully till everybody went away. What a misfortune it is to have a broken nose, like

poor dear Thackeray! He would have been positively handsome, and is positively ugly in consequence of it. John and his friend Venables broke the bridge of Thackeray's nose when they were schoolboys playing together. What a mishap to befall a young lad just beginning life! [I suppose my friend Thackeray's injury was one that did not admit a surgical remedy, but my father, late in life, fell down while skating, and broke the bridge of his nose, and Liston, the eminent surgeon, urged him extremely to let him raise it—"build it again," as he used to say. My father, however, declined the operation, and not only remained with his handsome nose disfigured, but suffered a much greater inconvenience, which Liston had predicted—very aggravated deafness in old age, from the stopping of the passages in the nose, which helped to transmit sound to the brain.] After all, I suppose, it does not much signify to a man whether he is ugly or not. Wilkes, who was pre-eminently so, but brilliantly agreeable, used always to say that he was only half an hour behindhand with the handsomest man in England.

Wednesday, 18th.—Went to the theater to rehearse "Katharine of Cleves;" we were kept at it till half-past two. Drove home through the park. The day was beautiful, but my poor father could not get released from that hateful theater, and went without his ride.... I had not felt at all nervous about to-night till the carriage came to the door, and then I turned quite faint and sick with fright. At the theater found Madame le Beau (the

forewoman of the great fashionable French milliner, Madame Dévy, by whom all my dresses were made) waiting for me. All was in darkness in my dressing-room; neither Mrs. Mitchell nor Jane were come (my two servants, or dressers, as they are called at the theater). Presently in scuttled the former, puffing, and whimpering apologies, and presently the room was filled with the pleasant incense of eight candles that she lighted, and blew out and relighted, and wondered that we didn't enjoy the operation. Then Jane bounced breathless in, and made our discomfort perfect. I sat speechless, terrified, and disconsolate. My fright was increasing every instant, and by the time I was dressed I shook like an aspen leaf from head to foot, and was as sick as no heart could desire. My dresses were most beautiful, and fitted me to perfection. The house was very fine. My poor dear father, who was as perfect in his part as possible this morning, did not speak three words without prompting; he was so nervous and anxious about the success of the piece that his own part was driven literally out of his head. I never saw anything so curious. To be sure, his illness has shattered him very much, and all the worry he has had this week has not mended matters. However, the play went admirably, and was entirely successful, to assist which result I thought I should have broken a blood-vessel in the last scene, the exertion was so tremendous. My voice was weak with nervousness and excitement, and at last I could hardly utter a word audibly. I

almost broke my arm, too, in good earnest, with those horrible iron stanchions. However, it did be over at last, and "all's well that ends well." I was so tired that I could scarcely stand; my mother came down from her box and seemed much pleased with me. She went to my father's room to see if I might not go home instead of to Lady Charlotte's, but he seemed to think it would please them if we made the effort of going for a few minutes; and so I dressed and set off, and there we found a regular "swarry," instead of something to eat and drink, and a chair to sit upon in peace and quiet. There was a room full of all the fine folks in London; very few chairs, no peace and quiet, and heaps of acquaintance to talk to.... All the London world that is in London. Lord and Lady Francis took their success very composedly. I don't think they would have cared much if the play had failed. Henry Greville seemed to be much more interested for them than they for themselves, and discussed it all for a long time with me. I liked him very much.... At long last I got home, and had some supper, but what with fatigue and nervousness, and *it—i.e.*, the supper—so late, I had a most wretched night, and kept dreaming I was out in my part and jumping up in bed, and all sorts of agonies. What a life! I don't steal my money, I'm sure.

Thursday, 19th.— ... Henry and I rode in the park, and though the day was detestable, it did me good. As we were walking the horses round by Kensington Gardens, Lord John Russell, peering out of voluminous wrappers,

joined us. Certainly that small, sharp-visaged gentleman does not give much outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual power he possesses and wields over this realm of England just now. His bodily presence might almost be described as St. Paul's. This turner inside out and upside down of our body, social and political, this hero of reform, one of the ablest men in England—I suppose in Europe—he rode with us for a long time, and I thought how H—— would have envied me this conversation with her idol.... In the evening, at the theater, though I had gone over my part before going there, for the first time in my play-house experience I was *out* on the stage. I stopped short in the middle of one of my speeches, thinking I had finished it, whereas I had not given Mr. Warde the cue he was to reply to. How disgraceful!... After the play, my mother called for us in the carriage, and we went to Lady Dacre's, and had a pleasant party enough.... C—— G—— was there, with her mother (the clever and accomplished authoress of several so-called fashionable novels, which had great popularity in their day). Miss G——, now Lady E—— T——, used to be called by us "la Dame Blanche," on account of the dazzling fairness of her complexion. She was very brilliant and amusing, and I remember her saying to one of her admirers one evening, when her snowy neck and shoulders were shining in all the unveiled beauty of full dress, "Oh, go away, P——, you *tan* me." (The gentleman had a shock head of fiery-red hair.)

Friday.— ... I am horribly fagged, and after dinner fell fast asleep in my chair. At the theater, in the evening, the house was remarkably good for a "second night," and the play went off very well.... My voice was much better to-night, though it cracked once most awfully in the last scene, from fatigue.... I think Lord Francis, or the management, or somebody ought to pay me for the bruises and thumps I get in this new play. One arm is black and blue (besides being broken every night) with bolting the door, and the other grazed to the bone with falling in fits upon the floor on my elbows. This sort of tragic acting is a service of some danger, and I object to it much more than to the stabbing and poisoning of the "Legitimate Drama;" in fact, "I do not mind death, but I cannot bear pinching."

Saturday.— ... Rode in the park with my father. Lord John Russell rode with us for some time, and was very pleasant. He made us laugh by telling us that Sir Robert Inglis (most bigoted of Tory anti-reformers) having fallen asleep on the ministerial benches at the time of the division the other night, they counted him on their side. What good fun! I never saw a man look so wretchedly worn and harassed as Lord John does. They say the ministry must go out, that they dare not make these new peers, and that the Bill will stick fast by the way instead of passing. What frightful trouble there will be!...

Sunday, 22d.— ... After church looked over the critiques in the Sunday papers on

"Katharine of Cleves." Some of them were too good-natured, some too ill-natured. The *Spectator* was exceedingly amusing.

By far the best account and criticism of this piece is Mr. Barham's metrical report of it in the "Ingoldsby Legends." Lord Francis himself used to quote with delight, "She didn't mind death, but she couldn't bear pinching." ...

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, January 22, 1832.

Thank you, my dearest H——, for your last delightful letter, which I should have answered before, but for the production of a new piece at Covent Garden, which has taken up all my time for the last week in rehearsals, and trying on dresses and the innumerable and invariable etceteras of a new play and part. It has been highly successful, and I think is likely to bring money to our treasury, which is *the* consummation most devoutly to be wished. It is nothing more than an interesting melodrama, with the advantage of being written in gentlemanly (noblemanly?) blank verse instead of turgid prose, and being acted by the principal instead of the secondary members of the company. This will suffice to make you appreciate my satisfaction, when I am complimented upon my acting in it, and you will sympathize with the shout of laughter my father and myself indulged in in the park the other day, when Lord John Russell, who was riding with us, told us that a young lady of his acquaintance had assured

him that "Katharine of Cleves" (the name of the piece) was vastly more interesting than any thing Shakespeare had ever written.

The report is that there is to be no new creation of peers, and that the Bill will not pass. Certainly poor Lord John looks worried to death. He and Lord Grey have almost the whole weight and responsibility of this most momentous question upon their shoulders, and it must be no trifle to carry. As for the judicious young lady's judgment about "Katharine of Cleves," it is just this sort of thing that makes me *rub the hands of my mind* with satisfaction that I have never cared for my profession as my family has done. I think if I had, such folly, or rather stupidity, would have exasperated me too much. Besides, I should have been much less useful to the theater, for I should have lived in an everlasting wrangle with authors, actors, and managers on behalf of the mythological bodies supposed to preside over tragedy and comedy, and I should have killed myself (or perhaps been killed), and that quickly, with ineffectual protests against half the performances before the lamps, which are enough to make the angels weep and laugh—in short, go into hysterics, if they ever come to the play....

Do you know you have almost increased my very sufficient tendency to superstition by your presentiment when you last left us that you should never return to this house. There is some talk now of our leaving it. My mother yearns for her favorite suburban

haunts, the scene of her courtship, and the spot where most of her happy youthful associations abide, and has half persuaded my father to let this house and take one in a particular row of "cottages of gentility" called Craven Hill. It only consists of twelve houses, in *five* of which my mother has, at different periods of her life, resided. This is all vague at present; I will let you know if it assumes a more definite shape. Some time will elapse before it is decided on, and more before it is done; and in any case, somehow or other, you must be once more under this roof with us before we leave it....

I quite agree with you that such books as Mr. Hope's (on the nature and immortality of the soul, the precise title of which I have forgotten) "may be useless," and sometimes, indeed, worse. If a person has nothing better to do than count the sea sands or fill the old bottomless tub of the Danaides, they may be excused for devoting their time and wits to such riddles, perhaps. But when the mind has positive, practical work to perform, and time keeps bringing *all the time* specific duties, or when, as in your case, a predisposition to vague speculation is the intellectual besetting sin, I think *addition* to such subjects to be avoided. I suppose all human beings have, in some shape or degree, the desire for that knowledge which is still the growth of the forbidden tree of Paradise, and the lust for which inevitably thrusts us against the bars of the material life in which we are consigned; but to give up one's time to writing and reading elaborate theories of a

past and future which we may conceive to exist, but of the existence of which it is impossible we should achieve *any* proof, much less any detailed knowledge, appears to me an unprofitable and unsatisfactory misuse of time and talent....

You are mistaken in supposing me familiar with the early history of Poland. I am ashamed to say I know nothing about it, and my zeal for the cause of its people is an ignorant sentiment*alism*—partly, perhaps, mere innate combativeness that longs to strike on the weaker side, and partly, too, resentful indignation at the cold-blooded neutrality observed by all the powers of Europe while that handful of men were making so brave a stand against the Russian giant.

That reminds me that Prince Zartoryski, who is in this country just now, came to the play the other night, and was so struck with my father that he sent round to him to say that he desired the honor of his acquaintance, and begged he would do him the favor of dining with him on some appointed day, which seemed to me a very pretty piece of impulsive enthusiasm. I believe Prince Zartoryski is a royal personage, and so above conventionalities....

My father is pretty well, though very far from having entirely regained his strength, but he is making gradual progress in that direction....

Always affectionately yours,

FANNY.

Tuesday, 24th.— ... Read over "The Star of Seville," as Mr. Bartley (our worthy stage manager) has cut it, with a view to its possible performance. He has cut it with a vengeance—what one may call to the quick. However, I suppose they know their own business (though, by the by, I am not always so sure of that). At any rate, I shall make no resistance, but be silent while I am sheared....

I rode in the park with John. My mare was ill, and Mew (the stable-keeper) had sent me one of his horses, a great awkward brute, who, after jolting me well up Oxford Street, no sooner entered the park than he bolted down the drive as fast as legs could carry him, John following afar off. In Rotten Row we were joined by young T——.... When I thought the devil was a little worked out of my horse, I raised him to a canter again, whereupon scamper the second—I like a flash of lightning, they after me as well as they could. John would not force my father's horse, but Mr. T——, whose horse was a thoroughbred hunter, managed to keep up with me, but lamed his horse in so doing. We then walked soberly round the park and saw our friends and acquaintances, and, turning down the drive, I determined once more to try my horse's disposition, whereupon off he went again, like a shot, leaving John far

behind. I flitted down Rotten Row like Faust on the demon horse, and as I drew up and turned about I heard, "Well, that woman does ride well," which was all, whoever said it, knew of the matter; whereas, in my mad career, I had passed Fozzard, who shook his head lamentably at John, exclaiming, "Oh, Miss Fanny! Miss Fanny!" After this last satisfactory experiment I made no more, and we cut short our ride on account of my unmanageable steed....

We had a dinner party at home, and in the evening additional guests, among them Thackeray, who is very clever and delightful. We had music and singing and pleasant, bright talk, and they departed and left us in great good humor.

Wednesday, 25th.—Read the "Prometheus Unbound." How gorgeous it is! I do not think Shelley is read or appreciated now as enthusiastically as he was, even in my recollection, some few years ago. I went over my part, and at half-past five to the theater. The play was "Katharine of Cleves," the house very good; and, to please Henry Greville, I resumed the gold wreath I had discarded and restored the lines I had omitted. After the play came home and supped, and at eleven went to Lady F ——'s.... A very fine party; "everybody"—that is in town—was there, and Mrs. Norton looking more magnificent than "everybody." Old Lady S—— like nothing in the world but the mummy carried round at the Egyptian feasts, with her parchment neck and

shoulders bare, and her throat all drawn into strings and cords, hung with a dozen rows of perfect precious stones glittering in the glare of the lights with the constant shaking of her palsied head. [This lady continued to frequent the gayest assemblies in London when she had become so old and infirm that, though still persisting daily in her favorite exercise on horseback, she used to be tied into her saddle in such a manner as to prevent her falling out of it. She had been one of the finest riders in England, but used often, at the time when I knew her, to go to sleep while walking the horse round the park, her groom who rode near her being obliged to call to her "My lady! My lady!" to make the poor old woman open her eyes and see where she was going. At upward of eighty she died an unnatural death. Writing by candle-light on a winter's evening, it is supposed that her cap must have taken fire, for she was burnt to death, and had for her funeral pile part of the noble historical house of Hatfield, which was destroyed by the same accident.]

Lord Lansdowne desired to be introduced to me, and talked to me a long time. I thought him very good-natured and a charming talker. Mrs. Bradshaw (Maria Tree) was there, looking beautiful. Our hostess's daughter, Miss F——, is very pretty, but just misses being a beauty; in that case a miss is a great deal worse than a mile. Just as the rooms were beginning to thin, and we were going away, Lord O—— sat down to the piano. I had heard a great deal about his

singing, and was rather disappointed; he has a sweet voice and a sweet face, but Henry Greville's bright, sparkling countenance and expressive singing are worth a hundred such mere musical sentimentalities. [Mr. Henry Greville was one of the best amateur singers of the London society of his day. He was the intimate personal friend of Mario, whom I remember he brought to our house, when first he arrived in London, as M. de Candia, before the beginning of his public career, and when, in the very first bloom of youth, his exquisite voice and beautiful face produced in society an effect which only briefly forestalled the admiration of all Europe when he determined to adopt the profession which made him famous as the incomparable tenor of the Italian stage for so many years.] Then, too, those lads sing songs, the words of which give one the throat-ache with strangled crying, and when they have done you hear the women all round mincing, "Charming!—how nice!—sweet!—what a dear!—darling creature!"

Thursday, 26th.—Murray was most kind and good-natured and liberal about all the arrangements for publishing "Francis I." and "The Star of Seville." He will take them both, and defer the publication of the first as long as the managers of Covent Garden wish him to do so. [As there was some talk just then of bringing out "The Star of Seville" at the theater, it was thought better not to forestall its effect by the publication of "Francis I."]

At the theater the play was "The School for

Scandal." A—— F—— was there, with young Sheridan; I hope the latter approved of my method of speaking the speeches of his witty great-grandfather. I played well, though the audience was dull and didn't help me. Mary and William Harness supped with us....

Friday, 27th.—A long discussion after breakfast about the necessity of one's husband being clever. Ma foi je n'en vois pas la nécessité. People don't want to be entertaining each other all day long; *very* clever men don't grow on every bush, and *middling* clever men don't amount to anything. I think I should like to have married Sir Humphry Davy. A well-assorted marriage, as the French say, seems to me like a well-arranged duet for four hands; the treble, the woman, has all the brilliant and melodious part, but the whole government of the piece, the harmony, is with the base, which really leads and sustains the whole composition and keeps it steady, and without which the treble for the most part *runs to tune* merely, and wants depth, dignity, and real musical importance.

In the afternoon went to Lady Dacre's.... She read me the first act of a little piece she has been writing; while listening to her I was struck as I never had been before with the great beauty of her countenance, and its very varied and striking expression.... At home spent my time in reading Shelley. How wonderful and beautiful the "Prometheus" is! The unguessed heavens and earth and sea are so many storehouses from which Shelley

brings gorgeous heaps of treasure and piles them up in words like jewels. I read "The Sensitive Plant" and "Rosalind and Helen." As for the latter—powerful enough, certainly—it gives me bodily aches to read such poetry.

What extraordinary proceedings have been going on in the House of Commons! Mr. Percival getting up and quoting the Bible, and Mr. Hunt getting up and answering him by quoting the Bible too. It seems we are to have a general fast—on account of the general national misconduct, I suppose; serve us right.

Sunday, 29th.—Went into my mother's room before going to church. Henry Greville has sent her Victor Hugo's new book, "Notre Dame de Paris," but she appears half undetermined whether she will go on reading it or not, it is so painfully exciting. I took Mrs. Montague up in the carriage on my way to church, and after service drove her home, and went up to see Mrs. Procter, and found baby (Adelaide Procter) at dinner. That child looks like a poet's child, and a poet. It has something "doomed" (what the Germans call "fatal") in its appearance—such a preternaturally thoughtful, mournful expression for a little child, such a marked brow over the heavy blue eyes, such a transparent skin, such pale-golden hair. John says the little creature is an elf-child. I think it is the prophecy of a poet. [And so, indeed, it was, as all who know Adelaide Procter's writings will agree—a poet who died too early for the world, though not before she

had achieved a poet's fame, and proved herself her father's worthy daughter.] ... In the afternoon, I found my mother deep in her French novel, from which she read me two very striking passages—the description of Esmeralda, which was like a fine painting, and extremely beautiful, and the sketch of Quasimodo's life, ending with his riding on the great bell of the cathedral. Very powerful and very insane—a sort of mental nightmare, giving one as much the idea of disorder of intellect as such an image occurring to one in a dream would of a disordered stomach. Harmony, order, the beauty of goodness and the justice of God, are alike ignored in such works. How sad it is for the future as well as for the present!

Monday, 30th.—King Charles' martyrdom gives me a holiday to-night. Excellent martyr! Victor Hugo has set my mother raving. She didn't sleep all night, and says the book is bad in its tendency and shocking in its details; nevertheless, she goes on reading it....

Tuesday, January 31st.— ... Went to Turnerelli's. He is making a bust of me, that will perhaps be like—the man in the moon. Dall was kind enough to read to me Mrs. Jameson's "Christina" while I sat. I like it extremely. After I came home, read Shirley's play of "The Two Sisters." I didn't like it much. It is neither very interesting, very witty, nor very poetical, and might almost be a modern work for its general want of power and character. The women appear to me a

little exaggerated—the one is mad and the other silly. At the theater in the evening the house was very good indeed—the play, "Katharine of Cleves;" but poor Mr. Warde was so ill he could hardly stand.

Wednesday, February 1st.— ... Drove out with Henry in the new carriage. It is very handsome, but by no means as convenient or capacious as our old rumble. Oh, these vanities! How we sacrifice everything to them!

Thursday, 2d. ... Rode out with my father. The whole world was abroad in the sunshine, like so many flies. My mother was walking with John and Henry, and Henry Greville. I should like to tell him two words of my mind on the subject of lending "Notre Dame de Paris" about to women. At any rate, we vulgar females are not as much accustomed to mental dram-drinking as his fine-lady friends, and don't stand that sort of thing so well.... In the evening we went to the theater to see "The Haunted Tower." Youth and first impressions are wonderful magicians. (I forget whether the music of this piece was by Storace or Michael Kelly.) This was an opera which I had heard my father and mother talk of forever. I went full of expectation accordingly, and was entirely disappointed. The meagerness and triteness of the music and piece astonished me. After the full orchestral accompaniments, the richly harmonized concerted pieces and exquisite melodies lavished on us in our modern operas, these simple airs and their choruses

and mean finales produce an effect from their poverty of absolute musical starvation.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, January 31, 1832.

MY DEAREST H—— G——,

You are coming to England, and you will certainly not do so again without coming to us. My father and mother, you know, speak by me when I assure you that a visit from you would give us all the greatest pleasure.... Do not come late in the season to us, because at present we do not know whether June or July may take us out of town.... With my scheme of going to America, I think I can look the future courageously in the face. It is something to hold one's fortune in one's own hands; if the worst comes to the worst it is but another year's drudgery, and the whereabouts really matters little.... We hear that the cholera is in Edinburgh. I cannot help thinking with the deepest anxiety of those I love there, and I imagine with sorrow that beautiful, noble city, those breezy hills, those fresh, sea-weedy shores and coasts breathed upon by that dire pestilence. The city of the winds, where the purifying currents of keen air sweep through every thoroughfare and eddy round every corner—perched up so high upon her rocky throne, she seems to sit in a freer, finer atmosphere than all the world beside! (I appear, in my enthusiastic love for Edinburgh, to have forgotten those Immonderraze, the wynds and closes of the old town.) I hope the report

may not prove true, though from a letter I have received from my cousin Sally (Siddons) the plague is certainly within six miles of them. She writes very rationally about it, and I can scarce forbear superstitiously believing that God's mercy will especially protect those who are among His most devoted and dutiful children....

You speak of my love of nature almost as if it were a quality for which I deserve commendation. It is a blessing for which I am most grateful. You who live uninclosed by paved streets and brick walls, who have earth, sea, and sky *à discrétion* spread round you in all their majestic beauty, cannot imagine how vividly my memory recalls and my mind dwells upon mere strips of greensward, with the shadows of trees lying upon them. The colors of a patch of purple heather, broken banks by roadsides through which sunshine streamed—often mere effects of light and shade—return to me again and again like tunes, and *to shut my eyes and look at them* is a perfect delight to me. I suppose one is in some way the better as well as the happier for one's sympathy with the fair things of this fair world, which are types of things yet fairer, and emanations from the great Source of all goodness, loveliness, and sublimity. Whether in the moral or material universe, images and ideas of beauty must always be in themselves good. Beauty is one manifestation and form of truth, and the transition seems to me almost inevitable from the contemplation of things that are lovely to one's *senses* to those which are

lovable by one's spirits' higher and finer powers of apprehension. The mind is kept sunny and calm, and free from ill vapors, by the influence of beautiful things; and surely God loves beauty, for from the greatest to the smallest it pervades all His works; and poetry, painting, and sculpture are not as beautiful as the things they reproduce, because of the imperfect nature-of their creator—man; though *his* works are only good in proportion as he puts his soul—*i.e.*, the Spirit of God—inspiration into them.

Your affectionate

F. A. K.

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, February 17, 1832.
MY DEAREST H——,

"Francis I." will come out on the 1st of March, so your starting on the 25th will do quite well for that; but it is right I should tell you what may possibly deter you from coming. A report prevails that the cholera is approaching London, and though I cannot say that I feel nervous upon the subject, perhaps, under these circumstances, you had rather or better not come.

There have been many assertions and contradictions about it, of course, and I know nothing but that such a rumor is prevalent, and if this should cause you or (what is more likely) yours an instant's hesitation, you must give up your visit. I know our disappointment will be mutual and equal,

and I am sure you will not inflict it either upon yourself or me without adequate reason, so I will say no more about it.

The reason for bringing out "Francis I." now is that Milman has undertaken to review it in the next *Quarterly*, and Murray wishes the production of the play at the theater to be simultaneous with the publication of the *Review*.

My wrath and annoyance upon the subject have subsided, and I have now taken refuge with restored equanimity in my "cannot help it." Certainly I said and did all I could to hinder it.

I do not feel at all nervous about the fate of the play—no English public will damn an attempt of that description, however much it may deserve it; and paradoxical as it may sound, a London audience, composed as it for the most part is of pretty rough, coarse, and hard particles, makes up a most soft-hearted and good-natured whole, and invariably in the instance of a new actor or a new piece—whatever partial private ill will may wish to do—the majority of the spectators is inclined to patience and indulgence. I do not mean that I shall not turn exceedingly sick when I come to set my foot upon the stage that night; but it will only be with a slight increase of the alarm which I undergo with every new part. My poor mother will be the person to be pitied; I wish she would take an opiate and go to bed, instead of to the theater that night....

I was at a party last night where I met Lord Hill (then commander of the forces), who had himself presented to me, and who renewed in person the promise he had sent me through Sir John Macdonald (who was adjutant-general), to exert and interest himself to the utmost of his power about Henry's commission.

John has finished his Anglo-Saxon book, and Murray has undertaken to publish it for him, offering at the same time to share with him whatever profits may accrue from it. The work is of a nature which cannot give either a quick or considerable return; but the offer, like all Mr. Murray's dealings with me, is very kind and liberal, for a publisher is not easily found any more than readers for such matter. (The book was the Anglo-Saxon Poem of Beowulf.) He asked me to let him publish "Francis I.," as it is to be acted, without the fifth act, but this I would not consent to. I have rather an affection for my last scene in the Certoso at Pavia, with the monks singing the "De Profundis" while the battle was going on, and the king being brought in a prisoner and making the response to the psalm—which is all historically true....

I must bid you good-by, dear, as I am going to the Angerstein Gallery with the Fitzhughs....

Yours ever affectionately,

F. A. K.

Saturday, 4th.—I was obliged to send an excuse to Turnerelli. I could not sit to him this morning, as it is now determined that "Francis I." is to be brought out, and received official notice that it was to be read in the greenroom to-day. We went to the theater at eleven, and all the actors were there. I felt very uncomfortable and awkward; but, after all, writing a play is not a sin, so I plucked up my courage and sat down with the rest. My father read it beautifully, but even cut as it is, it is of an *unendurable* length. They were all very kind and civil, and applauded it very much; but I do not love the sound of clapping of hands, and did not feel on this occasion as if I had done the sort of thing that deserves it....

At half-past five went to the theater; it was the first night of the opera, and rained besides, both which circumstances thinned our house; but I suspect "Katharine of Cleves" has nearly lived her life. Driving to the theater, my father told me that they had entirely altered the cast of "Francis I." from what I had appointed, and determined to finish the play with the fourth act. I felt myself get very red, but I didn't speak, though I cannot but think an author has a right to say whether he or she will have certain alterations made in their work. My position is a difficult one, for did I not feel bound to comply with my father's wishes I would have no hand in this experiment. I would forfeit fifty—nay, a hundred—pounds willingly rather than act in this play, which I am convinced ought not to be acted at all.

Any other person might do this, but with me it is a question of home duty, instead of a mere matter of business between author, actress, and manager. They couldn't act the play without me, and but for my father I should from the first have refused to act in it at all. I do not think that they manage wisely; it is a mere snatch at a bit of profit by a way of catchpenny venture, to secure which they are running the risk of injuring me more ways than one, and through me their own interests. It seems to me shortsighted policy, but I cannot help myself. After the play came home to supper, and at eleven went to Lady Dacre's. Sidney Smith, Rogers. Conversation sharp. Lots of people that I knew, in spite of which, in consequence, I suppose, of my own state of spirits, I did not enjoy myself. Mrs. Norton was there; she sang "My Arab Steed," and "Yes, Aunt," and "Joe Hardy;" the latter I do not think very good. They made me sing; I was horribly frightened. Julian Young was there; his manner and appearance are not very good, but his voice is beautiful and he sang very well.

Sunday, 5th.— ... When I came back from church I found Campbell with my mother, scraping up information about Mrs. Siddons for his and her "life." I left him with her, and when I came back he was gone, and in his place, as if he had turned into her, sat Mrs. Fitzgerald in a green velvet gown trimmed with sables, which excited my admiration and envy. I should like to have been living in the days and countries where persons, as a

mark of favor, took off their dress and threw it on your shoulders. How pleasant it would have been!...

Just before going to bed I spoke of writing a preface to "Francis I.," which brought on a discussion with my mother on the subject of that ill-fated piece, in the middle of which my father came in, and I summoned up courage to say something of what I felt about it, and how disagreeable it was to me to act in it, feeling as I did. I do not think I can make them understand that I do not care a straw whether the piece dies and is damned the first night, or is cut up alive the next morning, but that I do care that, in spite of my protestations, it should be acted at all, and should be cut and cast in a manner that I totally disapprove of.

Monday, 6th.— ... On our way to the theater my father told me that the whole cast of "Francis I." is again turned topsy-turvy. Patience of me! I felt very cross, so I held my tongue. Mr. and Miss Harness came home to supper with us, and had a long talk about "Francis I.," my annoyance about which culminated, I am ashamed to say, in a fit of crying.

Tuesday, 7th.—So "Francis I." is in the bills, I see....

Wednesday, 8th.— ... At eleven "The Provoked Husband" was rehearsed in the saloon, and Mr. Meadows brought Carlo to see me. [Carlo was a splendid Newfoundland dog, which my friend, Mr. Drinkwater

Meadows, used to bring to the theater to see me. His solemnity, when he was desired to keep still while the rehearsal was going on, was magnificent, considering the stuff he must have thought it.] ... After dinner went to the theater. The house was bad; the play, "The Provoked Husband." I played ill in spite of my pink gauze gown, which is inestimable and as fresh as ever. After supper dressed and off to Mrs. G——'s, and had a very nice ball....

Friday, 10th.— ... I wrote to H—— to beg her to come to me directly; I wish her so much to be here when my play comes out. Went to the theater at a quarter to six. The house was bad; the play, "Katharine of Cleves." I acted pretty well, *though* my dresses are getting shockingly dirty, and in one of the scenes my wreath fell backward, and I was obliged to take it off in the middle of all my epistolary agony; and what was still worse, after my husband had locked me in one room and my wreath in another, it somehow found its way back upon my head for the last scene. At the end of the play, which has now been acted ten nights, some people began hissing the pinching incident. It was always considered the dangerous passage of the piece, but a reasonable public should know that a play must be damned on its first night, or not at all.

Saturday, 11th.— ... A long walk with my mother, and a long talk about Shakespeare, especially about the beauty of his songs....

Tuesday, 14th.— ... Read the family my prologue. My mother did not like it at all; my father said it would do very well. John asked why there need be any prologue to the play, which is precisely what I do not understand. However, I was told to write one and I did, and they may use it or not just as they please. I am determined to say not another word about the whole vexatious business, and so peace be with them.... In the evening a charming little dinner-party at Mr. Harness's. The G——s, Arthur K——, Procter (Barry Cornwall), who is delightful, Sir William Millman, and ourselves.... Dear Mr. Harness has spoken to Murray about John's book, and has settled it all for him. On my return home, I told John of the book being accepted, at which he was greatly pleased. [The book in question was my brother's history of the Anglo-Saxons, of which Lord Macaulay once spoke to me in terms of the highest enthusiasm, deploring that John had not followed up that line of literature to a much greater extent.]

Wednesday, 15th.— ... My father went to the opening dinner of the Garrick Club.... After tea I read Daru, and copied fair a speech I had been writing for an imaginary member of the House of Peers, on the Reform Bill. John Mason called, and they sat down to a rubber, and I came to my own room and read "King Lear." ...

Thursday, 16th.— ... While I was at the Fitzhughs' Miss Sturges Bourne came in, and she and Emily had a very interesting

conversation about books for the poor. Among other things Emily said that Lady Macdonald had written up to her from the country, to say that she wanted some more books of sentiment, for that by the way in which these were thumbed it was evident that they alone would "go down." Upon inquiry, I found that these "sentimental" books were religious tracts, highly flavored with terror or pathos, and in one way or another calculated to convey the strongest excitement upon the last subject with which excitement ought to have anything to do. Pious stimulants, devout drams, this is trying to do good, but I think mistaking the way....

In the evening we went to Lady Farquhar's; this was a finer party, as it is called, than the last, but not so pleasant. All the world was there. Mrs. Norton the magnificent, and that lovely sister of hers, Mrs. Blackwood (afterwards Lady Dufferin), crowned like Bacchantes with grapes, and looking as beautiful as dreams. Heaps of acquaintance and some friends....

Sunday, 10th.— ... In the evening I read Daru. What fun that riotous old Pope Julius is! Poor Gaston de Foix! It was young to leave life and such well-begun fame. The extracts from Bayard's life enchant me. I am glad to get among my old acquaintance again. Mr. Harness came in rather late and said all manner of kind things about "The Star of Seville," but I was thinking about his play all the while; it does not seem to me that the management is treating him well. If

it does not suit the interests of the theater to bring it out now, he surely should be told so, and not kept in a state of suspense, which cannot be delightful to any author, however little of an egotist he may be.

Monday, 20th.—Went to Kensington Gravel Pits to see Lady Calcott, and sat with her a long time. That dying woman, sitting in the warm spring sunlight, surrounded with early-blowing hyacinths, the youngest born of the year, was a touching object. She is a charming person, so full of talent and of goodness. She talked with her usual cheerfulness and vivacity. Presently Sir Augustus came down from the painting-room to see me.... I could hardly prevent myself from crying, and I am afraid I looked very sad. As I was going away and stooped to kiss her, she sweetly and solemnly bade "God bless me," and I thought her prayer was nearer to heaven than that of most people....

Tuesday, 21st.— ... After tea dropped John at Mr. Murray's in Albemarle Street, and went on to the theater to see the new opera; our version of "Robert the Devil." The house was very full. Henry Greville was there, with the Mitfords and Mrs. Bradshaw. What an extraordinary piece, to be sure! I could not help looking at the full house and wondering how so many decent Englishmen and women could sit through such a spectacle.... The impression made upon me by the subject of Meyerbeer's celebrated opera appears to have entirely superseded that of the undoubtedly fine music; but I never was able

to enjoy the latter because of the former, and the only shape in which I ever enjoyed "Robert the Devil" was in M. Levassor's irresistibly ludicrous account of it in the character of a young Paris *badaud*, who had just come from seeing it at the theater. His version of its horrors was laughable in the extreme, especially when, coming to the episode of the resurrection of the nuns, he contrived to give the most comical effect of a whole crowd—gibbering, glissading women greeting one another with the rapid music of the original scene, to which he adapted the words—

> "Quoi c'est moi c'est toi,
> Oui c'est toi c'est moi;
> Comme nous voila bien dégommés."

Mendelssohn's opinion of the subjects chosen for operas in his day (even such a story as that of the Sonnambula) was scornful in the extreme.

Friday, 24th.— ... Dined with the Fitzhughs, and after dinner proceeded to the Adelphi, where we went to see "Victorine," which I liked very much. Mrs. Yates acted admirably the whole of it, but more particularly that part where she is old and in distress and degradation. There was a dreary look of uncomplaining misery about her, an appearance as of habitual want and sorrow and suffering, a heavy, slow, subdued, broken deportment, and a way of speaking that was excellent and was what struck me most in her performance, for the end is sure

to be so effective that she shares half her merit there with the situation. Reeve is funny beyond anything; his face is the most humorous mask I ever saw in my life. I think him much more comical than Liston. The carriage was not come at the end of the first piece, so we had to wait through part of "Robert the Devil" (given at last, such was its popularity, at every theater in London). Of course, after our own grand *diablerie*, it did not strike me except as being wonderfully well done, considering the size and means of their little stage. [Yates made a most capital fiend: I should not like a bit to be Mrs Yates after seeing him look that part so perfectly.]

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, February 24, 1832.
DEAREST H——,

I have this moment received your letter, and though rather disappointed myself, I am glad you are to see Dorothy as well as we, so that your visit southward is to be two pleasures instead of one. The representation of "Francis I." is delayed until next Wednesday, 7th March; not on account of cholera, but of scenery and other like theatrical causes of postponement....

I am greatly worried and annoyed about my play. The more I see and hear of it the stronger my perception grows of its defects, which, I think, are rendered even more glaring by the curtailments and alterations necessary for its representation; and the whole thing distresses me as much as such a

thing can. I send you the cast of the principal characters for the instruction of my Ardgillan friends, by whose interest about it I am much gratified. My father is to be De Bourbon; John Mason, the king; Mr. Warde, the monk; Mr. Bennett, Laval. These are the principal men's parts. I act the queen-mother; Miss Taylor, Margaret de Valois; and Miss Tree, Françoise de Foix.

I am reading Cooper's novel of "The Borderers." It is striking and powerful, and some of it I think very beautiful, especially all that regards poor Ruth, which, I remember, is what struck you so much. I like the book extremely. There is a soft sobriety of color over it all that pleases me, and reminds me of your constant association of religion and the simple labors of an agricultural life. It is wonderful how striking the description of this neutral-tinted existence is, in which life, love, death, and even this wild warfare with the savage tribes, by which these people were surrounded, appear divested of all their natural and usual excitements. Religion alone (and this, of course, was inevitable) is the one imaginative and enthusiastic element in their existence, and that alone becomes the source of vehement feeling and passionate excitement which ought least to admit of fanciful interpretations and exaggerated and morbid sentiment. But the picture is admirably well drawn, and I cannot help sometimes wishing I had lived in those days, and been one of that little colony of sternly simple and fervently devout Christian souls.

But I should have been a furious fanatic; I should have "seen visions and dreamed dreams," and fancied myself a prophetess to a certainty.

That luckless concern, in which you are a luckless shareholder (Covent Garden), is going to the dogs faster and faster every day; and, in spite of the Garrick Club and all its noble regenerators of the drama, I think the end of it, and that no distant one, will be utter ruin. They have been bringing out a new grand opera, called "Robert the Devil," which they hope to derive much profit from, as it is beyond all precedent absurd and horrible (and, as I think, disgusting); but I am almost afraid that it has none of these good qualities in a sufficient degree to make it pay its own enormous cost. I have seen it once, and came home with such a pain in my side and confused chaos in my head that I do not think I shall ever wish to see it again. Write me a line to say when I may look for you.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. K.

Saturday, 25th.— ... Finished Fenimore Cooper's interesting and pathetic novel, "The Borderers." ... I came down into the drawing-room with a headache, a sideache, a heartache, and swollen red eyes, and my mother greeted me with the news that the

theater was finally ruined, that at Easter it must close, that we must all go different ways, and I probably to America. I was sobered from my imaginary sorrow directly; for it is astonishing what a different effect real and fictitious distress has upon one. I could not answer my mother, but I went to the window and looked up and down the streets that were getting empty and dark and silent, and my heart sank as I thought of leaving my home, my England.... After dinner Madame le Beau came to try on my Louisa of Savoy's dress; it is as ugly and unbecoming, but as correct, as possible....

Wednesday, 23d.—At eleven went to the theater to rehearse "Francis I." The actors had most of them been civil enough to learn their parts, and were tolerably perfect. Mr. Bennett will play his very well indeed, if he does not increase in energy when he comes to act. Miss Tree, too, I think, will do her part very nicely. John Mason is rather vulgar and 'prentice-like for Francis, that mirror of chivalry. After rehearsal I went to Dévy, to consult about my dress. I have got a picture of the very woman, Louisa of Savoy, queen-mother of France, and, short of absolute hideousness, I will make myself as like her as I can....

Arthur Hallam dined with us. I am not sure that I do not like him the best of all John's friends. Besides being so clever, he is so gentle, charming, and winning. At half-past ten went to Mrs. Norton's. My father, who had received a summons from the Court of

Chancery, did not come.... It was a very fine, and rather dull, party.... Mrs. Norton looks as if she were made of precious stones, diamonds, emeralds, rubies, sapphires; she is radiant with beauty. And so, in a different way, is that vision of a sister of hers (Georgiana Sheridan, Lady St. Maur, Duchess of Somerset, and Queen of Beauty), with her waxen, round, white arms, and eyes streaming with soft brilliancy, like fountains by moonlight. To look at two such creatures for an hour is enough to make the world brighter for several hours.

Thursday, 24th.—At eleven went to rehearsal. While we were rehearsing Mr. Bartley came and told me that the play, "Francis I.," would not be done for a fortnight, and afterward my father told me he did not think it was right, or fitting, or doing me justice to bring out my play without some little attention to scenery, decorations, etc. I entreated him to go to no expense for it, for I am sure it will not repay them. Moreover, they have given their scenery, and finery, and dressing, and decoration, and spectacle in such profusion to "Robert the Devil" that I am sure they cannot afford a heavy outlay upon anything else just now. However, I could not prevail, and probably the real reason for putting off "Francis I." is the expediency of running the new opera as long as it will draw before bringing out anything else, which, of course, is good policy....

Wednesday, 29th.—H—— has gone to York. What a disappointment! After all, it's only

one more added to the budget. Yet why do I say that? One scores one's losses, and takes no reckoning of one's gains, which is neither right nor fair to one's life....

I rode with Henry, and after I got home told my father that his horse was quite well, and would be fit for his use on Saturday. He replied sadly that his horse must be sold, for that from the first, though he had not liked to vex me by saying so, it was an expense he could not conscientiously afford. I had expected this, and certainly, when from day to day a man may be obliged to declare himself insolvent, keeping a horse does seem rather absurd. He then went on to speak about the ruin that is falling upon us; and dismal enough it is to stand under the crumbling fabric we have spent having and living, body, substance, and all but soul, to prop, and see that it must inevitably fall and crush us presently. Yet from my earliest childhood I remember this has been hanging over us. I have heard it foretold, I have known it expected, and there is no reason why it should now take any of us by surprise, or strike us with sudden dismay. Thank God, our means of existence lie within ourselves; while health and strength are vouchsafed to us there is no need to despond. It is very hard and sad to be come so far on in life, or rather so far into age, as my father is, without any hope of support for himself and my mother but toil, and that of the severest kind; but God is merciful. He has hitherto cared for us, as He cares for all His creatures, and He will not forsake us if we do not

forsake Him or ourselves.... My father and I need scarcely remain without engagements, either in London or the provinces.... If our salaries are smaller, so must our expenses be. The house must go, the carriage must go, the horses must go, and yet we may be sufficiently comfortable and very happy—unless, indeed, we have to go to America, and that will be dreadful.... We are yet all stout and strong, and we are yet altogether. It is pitiful to see how my father still clings to that theater. Is it because? the art he loves, once had its noblest dwelling there? Is it because his own name and the names of his brother and sister are graven, as it were, on its very stones? Does he think he could not act in a smaller theater? What can, in spite of his interest, make him so loth to leave that ponderous ruin? Even to-day, after summing up all the sorrow and care and toil, and waste of life and fortune which that concern has cost his brother, himself, and all of us, he exclaimed, "Oh, if I had but £10,000, I could set it all right again, even now!" My mother and I actually stared at this infatuation. If I had twenty, or a hundred thousand pounds, not one farthing would I give to the redeeming of that fatal millstone, which cannot be raised, but will infallibly drag everything tied to it down to the level of its own destruction. The past is past, and for the future we must think and act as speedily as we may. If our salaries are half what they are now we need not starve; and, as long as God keeps us in health of body and mind, nothing need signify, provided we

are not obliged to separate and go off to that dreadful America.

Thursday, March 1st.— ... After dinner I read over again Knowles's play, "The Hunchback," and like it better than ever. What would I not give to have written that play! He cannot agree with Drury Lane about it, and has brought it back to us, and means to act Master Walter himself. I am so very glad. It will be the most striking dramatic exhibition that has been seen since Kean's *début*. I wish "Francis I." was done, and done with, and that we were rehearsing "The Hunchback."

GREAT RUSSELL STREET, March 1, 1832.

... As for any disappointment of mine about anything, dear H——, though some things are by no means light to me, I soon make up my mind to whatever must be, and I think those who do not endure well what cannot be avoided are only less foolish than those who endure what they can avoid. "Francis I." will not, I think, interfere with your visit to us. Murray wishes it to be postponed till after the publication of the *Quarterly*, which will come out about the 11th or 12th. Lockhart, and not Milman, has reviewed it very favorably, I hear, and Murray expects to sell one edition immediately upon the publication of the article in the *Quarterly*. So that you can stay at Fulford some time yet; and should the play be given before you wish to leave it, I shall not expect you in person, but feel sure that you are with me in spirit;

and the next day I will write you word of the result.

Dearest H——, I am just now much burdened with anxiety. I will tell you more of this when we meet. Thank God, though not of a sanguine, I am not of a desponding nature; and though I never look forward with any great satisfaction to the future, I seldom find it difficult to accept the present with tolerable equanimity.... I spent the evening on Wednesday with Mrs. Jameson. She is just returned to town, and came immediately, thinking you were here, to engage us for the next evening; and as you did not come I went, and spent three hours very pleasantly with her. She knows so much, and I am so very ignorant, that her conversation is delightfully instructive as well as amusing, full of interest and information. Poor woman! she left Tedsley and a very agreeable party to come up to town upon a false alarm of "Francis I.'s" coming out. I think I have told you of the work upon Shakespeare she is engaged with; she has been teaching herself to etch, and has executed some charming designs, with which she means to illustrate it. I have not an idea what our plans for this summer are to be; whether America, or the provinces, or the King's Bench; but I suppose we shall see a little more clearly into the future by the time you come to us; and if we do not, abundantly "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof" with us just now.... I have been reading nothing but Daru's "History of Venice" lately. How could you tell me to read that sad story,

"The Borderers"! I half killed myself with crying over it, and did not recover from the effect it had upon me for several days.

Dearest H——, I am writing nonsense, and with an effort, for I am very low; and so I will leave off.

Your affectionate

F. A. K.

Friday, March 2d.—I read Shirley's "Gentleman of Venice," and did not like it much.... While I was riding in the park with John, Mr. Willett came up to us, and told me, as great good news, that they were out of Chancery, and had obtained an order to have their money out of court. I thought this indeed good news, and we cantered up the drive in hopes of meeting my mother in the carriage; but she had gone home. On reaching home, I ran to look for her, but thought she would like better to hear the news from my father.

I told Dall of it, however; and she, who had just seen my father, said that he considered what had happened a most unfortunate thing for him; and so my bright, new joy fell to the ground, and was broken all to pieces. Upon further explanation, however, it seems that it is an advantage to the other proprietors, though not to him; no part of the recovered money returning to him, because he had borrowed his share of it from Mr. Willett;

and the only difference is that he will not have to pay the interest on it any more, and so far it is a small advantage to him. But it is a great one to them, poor men! and therefore we ought to be glad, and not look only at our own share of the business, though naturally that is the most interesting to us. I sometimes doubt, after all, if we have really by any means a clear and comprehensive view of the whole state of that concern, receiving our impressions from my father, who naturally looks at it only from the side of his own personal stake in it.... After dinner John read me a letter he had just received from Richard Trench—a most beautiful letter. What a fine fellow he is, and what a noble set of young men these friends of my brother's are! After tea read Arthur Hallam's essay on the philosophical writings of Cicero. It is very excellent; I should like to have marked some of the passages, they are so admirably clear and true; but he has only lent it to me. His Latin and Greek quotations were rather a trial, but I have no doubt his English is as good as anything he quotes. Surely England twenty years hence should be in a higher state of moral and intellectual development than it is now: these young heads seem to me admirably good and strong, and some score years hence these fine spirits will be influencing the national mind and soul of England; and it pleases me much to think so. [Alas! as far as dear Arthur Hallam was concerned, my prophetic confidence was vain.] After finishing Hallam's essay, I took up "King Lear," and read the end of that, "and

my poor fool is hanged!" O Lord, what an agony! In reading "Lear," one of Mr. Harness's criticisms on my "Star of Seville" recurred to me. In the scene where Estrella deplores her brother's death, I have used frequent repetition of the same words and exclamations. I wrote upon impulse, without deliberation, and simply as my conception of sorrow prompted me, such words as grew from my heart and not my understanding. But in reading "King Lear," the iteration in the expression of deep grief confirms me in the opinion that it is natural to all men, and not peculiar to myself, for Shakespeare has done it. In the scene where Gloster tells Cornwall and Regan of Edgar's supposed wickedness, the wretched old father uses frequent repetition, as, "Oh, madam, my old heart is cracked; it's cracked!" "Oh, lady, lady, shame would have it hid!" "I know not, madam: 'tis too bad, too bad!" and in the last scene, that most piteous and terrible close that story ever had, the poor old king, in his moanings over Cordelia, repeats his words over and over again. I defend my conception, not my execution of it; and true and touching as these repetitions of Shakespeare's are, mine may be "damnable iteration," and nothing else. Heart-broken sorrow has but few words; utter bereavement is not eloquent; and David, when the darling of his soul was dead, did but cry, "O Absalom, my son, my son! would God I had died for thee, my son!" A vastly different expression of a vastly different grief from that which poured itself out in the sad and noble dirge, "The

beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen!"

Saturday, 3d.—Henry has obtained his commission; one great piece of good fortune amid all the bad, for which God be thanked. [The liberal price given me by Mr. Murray for my play of "Francis I." enabled me to purchase my brother's commission, which, however, the money would not have obtained without the extremely kind interest exerted in his favor by Lord Hill, then commander, and Sir John Macdonald, adjutant-general of the forces.]

Sunday, 4th.— ... My father is in deplorable spirits, and seems bowed down with care. I believe all that befalls us is right. I know we must bear it; all I pray for is health, strength and courage to bear it well. In the evening the Harnesses drank tea with us.

Monday, 5th.—Got ready things for the theater, and went over my part.... In the afternoon, I hoped to hear the result of the meeting that had been held by the creditors of the theater; but my father had been obliged to leave it before anything was settled, and did not know what had been the termination of the consultation. At the theater the house was not good, neither was my acting. My father acted admirably, to my amazement: for he has been in a most wretched state of depression for the last week, and to-day at dinner his face looked drawn and haggard and absolutely lead-colored.

Tuesday, 6th.—After breakfast went with Henry and my father to Cox and Greenwood's, the great army agents, to pay for his commission. Oh, what a good job, to be sure! Then to the Horse Guards, to thank dear Sir John Macdonald; then to Stable Yard, to call upon Lord Fitzroy Somerset; and then home, much happier than I had been for a long time.... Madame le Beau brought my dress for Louisa of Savoy; it is very handsome, but I look hideous, and as grim as Queen Death in it. However, it is a precise copy of the woman's own picture, and I must comfort myself with that. In the evening we went to a pleasant party at the Basil Montagues', where for an hour I recovered my love of dancing, which has rather forsaken me of late. The Rajah Ramohun Roy had himself introduced to me, and we presently began a delightful nonsense conversation, which lasted a considerable time, and amused me extremely. His appearance is very striking; his picturesque dress and color make him, of course, a remarkable object in a London ball-room; his countenance, beside being very intellectual, has an expression of great sweetness and benignity and his remarks and conversation are in the highest degree interesting, when one remembers what mental energy and moral force and determination he must have exerted to break through all the trammels which have opposed his becoming what he is. I was turning away from him for a few moments, to speak to Mr. Montague, who had begun a very interesting discourse on the

analysis of the causes of laughter, when the Rajah recalled my attention to himself by saying, "I am going to quote the Bible to you: you remember that passage, 'The poor ye have always with you, but Me ye have not always.' Now, Mr. Montague you have always with you, but me you have not always." So we resumed our conversation together, and kept up a brief interchange of persiflage which made us both laugh very much, and in which he showed a very ready use of English language for a stranger.

Mrs. Procter talked to me a great deal about her little Adelaide, who must be a most wonderful creature. The profound and unanswerable questions put to us by these "children of light" confound us with the sense of our own spiritual and mental darkness. I often think of Tieck's lovely and deep-meaning story of "The Elves." How little we know of the hidden mysterious springs from which these crystal cups are filled, or of the unseen companions that may have strayed with their fellow to the threshold of this earth, and walk with it while it yet retains its purity and innocence; but, as it journeys on, turn back and forsake it, and return to their home, leaving their sister-soul to wander through the world with sin and sorrow for companions.

Wednesday, 7th.—I sent "The Merchant of Venice" to Ramohun Roy, who, in our conversation last night, expressed a great desire to read it....

Thursday, 8th.— ... In the evening acted Beatrice. The house was very good, which I was delighted to see. The Harnesses supped with us. While we were at supper, the *Quarterly Review* came from Murray's, and I read the article on "Francis I." aloud to them. It is very "handsome," and I should think must satisfy my most unreasonable friends. It more than satisfied me, for it made me out a great deal cleverer than ever I thought I was, or ever, I am afraid, shall be.

Friday, 9th.—Rehearsed "Francis I." When I came home found a charming letter and some Indian books, from that most amiable of all the wise men of the East, Ramohun Roy. Mrs. Jameson and Mr. Harness called.

Saturday, 10th.—Rehearsed "Francis I." Tried on my dresses for "The Hunchback;" they will be beautiful. The rehearsal was over long before the carriage came for me; so I went into my father's room and read the newspaper, while he and Mr. Bartley discussed the cast of Knowles's play. It seems my father will not act in it. I am sorry for that; it is hardly fair to Knowles, for no one else can do it. My poor father seemed too bewildered to give any answer, or even heed, to anything, and Mr. Bartley went away. My father continued to walk up and down the room for nearly half an hour, without uttering a syllable; and at last flung himself into a chair, and leaned his head and arms on the table. I was horribly frightened, and turned as cold as stone, and for some minutes could not muster up courage enough

to speak to him. At last I got up and went to him, and, on my touching his arm, he started up and exclaimed, "Good God, what will become of us all!" I tried to comfort him, and spoke for a long time, but much, I fear, as a blind man speaks of colors. I do not know, and I do not believe any one knows, the real state of terrible involvement in which this miserable concern is wrapped. What I dread most of all is that my father's health will break down. To-day, while he was talking to me, I saw him suddenly put his hand to his side in a way that sent a pang through my heart. He seems utterly prostrated in spirit, and I fear he will brood himself ill. God help us all! I came home with a heavy heart, and got ready my things for the theater, and went over my part. Emily called.... She brought me my aunt Siddons's sketches of Constance and Lady Macbeth. They are simply written, and though not analytically deep or powerful, are true, clear, and good, as far as their extent reaches. She thinks Constance more motherly than queenly, and I do not altogether agree with her. I do not think the scene after Arthur is taken prisoner alone establishes my aunt's position; the mother's sorrow there sweeps every other consideration away. It is before that that I think her love for her child is in some measure mixed with the feeling of the sovereign for his heir; a love of power, in fact, embodied in the boy who was to continue the dominion of a race of princes. He was her royal child, and that I do not think she ever forgot till he was, in her

imagination, her dead child. She says she could endure his being thrust from all his rights if he had been a less gracious creature, and goes on—

> "But thou art fair, dear boy: and at thy birth
> Nature and fortune joined to make thee great;"

and then bursts forth into her furious vituperation of those whose treachery has frustrated his natural claim to greatness. The woman, too, who in the utmost bitterness of disappointment, in the utter helplessness and desolation of betrayal, and the prostration of anguish and despair, calls on the earth, not for a shelter, not for a grave, or for a resting-place, but for a throne, is surely royally ambitious, a queen more than anything else. Mrs. Siddons's conception of Lady Macbeth is very beautiful, and I was particularly struck by her imagination of her outward woman: the deep blue eyes, the fair hair and fair skin of the northern woman (though, by the by, Lady Macbeth is a Highlander—I suppose a Celt; and they are a dark race); the frail feminine form and delicate character of beauty, which, united to that undaunted mettle which her husband pays homage to in her, constituted a complex spell, at once soft and strong, sweet and powerful, and seemed to me a very original idea. My aunt makes a curious suggestion, supported only by her own conviction, for which, however, she demonstrates no grounds, that in the banquet scene Lady Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost at

> the same time Macbeth does. It is very presumptuous in me to differ from her who has made such a wonderful study of this part, but it seems to me that this would make Lady Macbeth all but superhuman; and in the scene with her husband that precedes the banquet, Macbeth's words to her give me to understand that she is entirely innocent of the knowledge even of his crime.
>
> *Monday, 12th.*—Went to the theater to rehearse "Francis I." Miss Tree and Mr. Bennett will act their parts admirably, I think.... When I got home got ready my things for the theater, and went over my part. The play was "Much Ado about Nothing," and I played as ill as usual. The house was pretty good.

[Here occurs an interruption of some weeks in my journal.]

My friend, Miss S——, came and paid me a long visit, during which my play of "Francis I." and Knowles's play of "The Hunchback" were produced, and it was finally settled that Covent Garden should be let to the French manager and entrepreneur, Laporte, and that my father and myself should leave England, and go for two years to America.

[The success of "Francis I." was one of entirely indulgent forbearance on the part of the public. An historical play, written by a girl of seventeen, and acted in it by the authoress at one and twenty, was, not unnaturally, a subject of some curiosity; and, as such, it filled the house for a few nights. Its entire want of real merit, of course, made it impossible that it should do anything more; and, after a few

representations, it made way for Knowles's delightful play, which had a success as great and genuine as it was well deserved, and will not fail to be a lasting favorite, alike with audiences and actors.]

Thursday, June 14th.—A long break in my journal, and what a dismal beginning to it again! At five o'clock H—— started for Ireland.... Poor dear Dall cried bitterly at parting from her (my aunt was to accompany me to America, and it was uncertain whether we should see Miss S—— again before we sailed).... When I returned, after seeing her off, I went disconsolately to my own room. As I could not sleep, I took up the first book at hand, but it was "Tristram Shandy," and too horribly discordant with my frame of mind; besides, I don't like it at any time; it seems to me much more coarse even than witty and humorous.

Friday, 15th.— ... Almost at our very door met old Lady Cork, who was coming to see us: We stopped our carriages, and had a bawling conversation through the windows respecting my plans, past, present, and to come, highly edifying, doubtless, to the whole neighborhood, and which ended by her ladyship shrieking out to me that I was "a supernatural creature" in a tone which must have made the mummies and other strange sojourners in the adjacent British Museum jump again.... In the evening, at the theater, the play was "The Hunchback," for Knowles's benefit, and the house was not good, which I do think is a shame. I played well, though Miss Taylor disconcerted me by coming so

near me in her second scene that I gave her a real slap in the face, which I was very sorry for, though she deserved it. After the play, Mr. Harness, Mrs. Clarke, and Miss James supped with us; and after supper, I dressed for a ball at the G——s', ... and much I wondered what call I had to be at a ball, except that the givers of this festival are kind and good friends of ours, and are fond of me, and I of them. But I was not very merry at their ball for all that. We came home at half past two, which is called "very early." Mr. Bacon was there (editor of the *Times*, who married my cousin, Fanny Twiss), but I had no chance to speak to him, which I was sorry for, as I like his looks, and I liked his books: the first are good, and the latter are clever. I cried all the way home, which is a cheerful way of returning from a ball.

Saturday, 16th.— ... Mrs. Clarke, Miss James, the Messrs. M——, and Alfred Tennyson dined with us. I am always a little disappointed with the exterior of our poet when I look at him, in spite of his eyes, which are very fine; but his head and face, striking and dignified as they are, are almost too ponderous and massive for beauty in so young a man; and every now and then there is a slightly sarcastic expression about his mouth that almost frightens me, in spite of his shy manner and habitual silence. But, after all, it is delightful to see and be with any one that one admires and loves for what he has done, as I do him. Mr. Harness came in the evening. He is excellent, and I am very fond of him. They all went away about

twelve.

Monday, 18th.— ... At the theater, in the evening, the house was good, and I played pretty fairly.... At supper my father read us his examination before the committee of the House of Commons about this minor theater business. Of course, though every word he says upon the subject is gospel truth, it will only pass for the partial testimony of a person deeply interested in his own monopoly.

Thursday, 21st.—Called on Mrs. Norton, ... and on Lady Dacre, to bid her good-by. At the theater, in the evening, the house was good, and I played very well. How sorry I shall be to go away! The actors, too, all seem so sorry to have us go, and it will be so hard to see none of the accustomed faces, to hear none of the familiar voices, while discharging the tasks that are often so irksome to me. John Mason came home after the play and supped with us.

Friday, 22d.— ... In the afternoon I called upon the Sotherbys, to bid them good-by; afterward to the Goldsmiths', on the same cheerless errand. Stopped at dear Miss Cottin's to thank her for the beautiful bracelet she had sent me as a farewell present; and then on to Lady Callcott's, with whom I spent a few solemn moments—solemnity not without sweetness—and I scarcely felt sorrowful when she said, "I shall never see you again." She is going to what we call heaven, nearer to God (that is, in her

own consciousness, nearer to God)....

In the evening to the theater. I only played pretty well, except the last scene, which was better than the rest. At the end of the play Mr. Bartley made the audience a speech, mentioning our departure, and bespeaking their good will for the new management. The audience called for Knowles, and then clamored for us till we were obliged to go out. They rose to receive us, and waved their hats and handkerchiefs, and shouted farewell to us. It made my heart ache to leave my kind, good, indulgent audience; my friends, as I feel them to be; my countrymen, my English folk, my "very worthy and approved good masters;" and as I thought of the strangers for whom I am now to work in that distant strange country to which we are going, the tears rushed into my eyes, and I hardly knew what I was doing. I scarcely think I even made the conventional courtesy of leave-taking to them, but I snatched my little nosegay of flowers from my sash, and threw it into the pit with handfuls of kisses, as a farewell token of my affection and gratitude. And so my father, who was very much affected, led me off, while the house rang with the cheering of the audience. When we came off my courage gave way utterly, and I cried most bitterly. As my father was taking me to my dressing-room Laporte ran after us, to be introduced to me, to whom I wished success very dolorously from the midst of my tears. He said he ought to cry at our going away more than any one; and perhaps he is right, but we should be

better worth his while when we come back, if ever that day comes. I saw numbers of people whom I knew standing behind the scenes to take leave of us.

I took an affectionate farewell of poor dear old Rye (the property-man), and Louis, his boy, gave me two beautiful nosegays. It was all wretched, and yet it was a pleasure to feel that those who surrounded and were dependent on us cared for us. I know all the servants and workpeople of the theater were fond of me, and it was sad to say good-by to all these kind, civil, cordial, humble friends; from my good, pretty little maid, who stood sobbing by my dressing-room door, to the grim, wrinkled visage of honest old Rye....

[That was the last time I ever acted in the Covent Garden my uncle John built; where he and my aunt took leave of the stage, and I made my first entrance upon it. It was soon after altered and enlarged, and turned into an opera-house; eventually it was burnt down, and so nothing remains of it.]

The Harnesses and their friend Mr. F—— supped with us. Mr. Harness talked all sorts of things to try and cheer me; he labored hard to prove to me that the world was good and happy, but only succeeded in convincing me that he was the one, and deserved to be the other.

Friday, 29th.—On board the Scotch steamer for Edinburgh.... We passed Berwick and Dunbar, and the Douglases' ancient hold Tantallon, and the lines from "Marmion"

came to my lips. Poor Walter Scott! he will never sail by this lovely coast again, every bold headland and silver creek of which lives in his song or story. He has given of his own immortality to the earth, which must ere long receive the whole of his mortality....

Saturday, 30th.—Went to rehearsal.... After dinner Mary Anne, my maid, knowing my foible, came in with her arms full of two of the most beautiful children I ever saw in my life.... [These beautiful children were the daughters of the Duc de Grammont, and were sharing with their parents the exile of the King of France, Charles X., who had found in his banishment a royal residence as ruined as his fortunes in the old Scottish palace of Holyrood. Ida de Grammont, the eldest of my angels, fulfilled the promise of her beautiful childhood as the lovely Duchesse de Guyche.] We spent a pleasant evening at Mrs. Harry Siddons's. Mr. Combe and Macdonald (the sculptor) were there.

Sunday, July 1st.— ... We dined at Mr. Combe's, and had a very pleasant dinner, but unluckily, owing to a stupid servant's mistake, my old friend Mr. McLaren, who had been invited to meet me, did not come. After dinner there was a tremendous discussion about Shakespeare, but I do not think these men knew anything about him. I talked myself into a fever, and ended, with great modesty and propriety, by disabling all their judgments, at which piece of impertinence they naturally laughed very heartily.

EDINBURGH, July 1, 1832.

DEAREST H——,

We left London on Wednesday at eight o'clock. The parting between my mother and Dall (who never met again; my dear aunt died in America, in the second year of our stay there), and myself and my dear little sister, was most bitter.... John came down to Greenwich with us, but would not come on board the steamboat. He stood on the shore and I at the ship's side, looking at what I knew was him, though my eyes could distinguish none of his features from the distance. My poor mother stood crying by my side, and bade me send him away. I gave him one signal, which he returned, and then ran up the beach, and was gone!—gone for two years, perhaps more; perhaps gone from me forever in this world!...

We shall be in Liverpool on Monday morning, the 16th of July, and go to Radley's Hotel, where I hope we shall find you on our arrival. My father is pretty well, in spite of all the late anxieties and annoyances he has had to wade through. In the course of the day preceding our departure from London two arrests were served upon him by creditors of the theater, who, I suppose, think when he is gone the whole concern must collapse and fall to pieces, and I began to think some means would be devised to prevent our leaving England after all. Our parting on Wednesday morning was, as I told you, most miserable.... My poor mother was braver than I had expected; but her parting

from us, poor thing, is yet to come.

I found a letter from Emily Fitzhugh here, inclosing one as an introduction to a lady in New York, who had once been her friend.... Edinburgh is lovely and dear, and peace and quiet and repose are always found by me near my dear Mrs. Harry Siddons; but my heart is, oh, so sad!... Pray answer this directly. The time is at hand when the quickest "directly" in our correspondence will be three months.

Ever your affectionate

F. A. K.

Monday, 2d.—My father and I went to the theater to rehearse "Romeo and Juliet." In the evening the house was very fair, considering how much the hot weather is against us; but of all the comfortless people to act to, commend me to an Edinburgh audience. Their undemonstrativeness, too, is something more than mere critical difficulty to be pleased; there is a want of kindliness in the cold, discourteous way in which they allow a stranger to appear before them without ever affording him the slightest token of their readiness to accept the efforts made to please them. I felt quite sorry this evening for poor Mr. Didear, to whom not the faintest sign of encouragement was vouchsafed on his first coming on. This is being cold to an unamiable degree, and

seems to me both a want of good feeling and good breeding. I acted as well as they would let me. As for poor John Mason, concluding, I suppose, from their frozen silence that he was flat and ineffective, he ranted and roared, and pulled me about in the last scene, till I thought I should have come to pieces in his hands, as the house-maids say of what they break. I was dreadfully exhausted at the end of the play; there is nothing so killing as an ineffectual appeal to sympathy, and, as the Italians know, "ben servire e non gradire" is one of the "tre cose da morire." ...

Tuesday, 3d.—Went to the theater to rehearse.... In the evening the house was good, and the play went off very well. I acted well, in spite of my new dresses, which stuck out all round me portentously, and almost filled the little stage. J—— L—— was like a great pink bird, hopping about hither and thither, and stopping to speak, as if it had been well tamed and taught. The audience actually laughed and applauded, and I should think must have gone home very much surprised and exhausted with the unwonted exertion.

Wednesday, 4th.—Went to the theater to rehearse "Francis I." After I got home, my mother told me she had determined to leave us on Saturday, and go back to London with Sally Siddons; and I am most thankful for this resolution.... How sad it will be in that strange land beyond the sea, among those strange people, to whom we are nothing but

strangers! But this is foolish weakness; it must be; and what a world of strength lies in those two little words!... At the theater the house was very good, and I played very well....

Thursday, 5th.—After breakfast went to rehearse "The Gamester." ... In the evening the house was not good. My father acted magnificently; I never played this part well, and am now gone off in it, and play it worse than not well; besides, I cannot bully that great, big man, Mr. Didear; it is manifestly absurd.

Friday, 6th.—To the theater to rehearse "Francis I." On my return found Mr. Liston and his little girl waiting to ride with me.... [This was the beginning of my acquaintance with the celebrated surgeon Liston, who afterward became an intimate friend of ours, and to whose great professional skill my father was repeatedly indebted for relief under a most painful malady. He was a son of Sir Robert Liston, and cousin of the celebrated comedian, between whom and himself, however, there certainly was no family likeness, Liston, the surgeon, being one of the handsomest persons I ever saw. The last time I saw him has left a melancholy impression on my mind of his fine face and noble figure. He had been attending me professionally, but I had ceased to require his care, and had not seen him for some time, when one morning walking, according to my custom in summer, before seven o'clock, as I came to the bridge over the Serpentine in

Kensington Gardens, a horseman crossing the bridge stopped by the iron railing, and, jumping off his horse, came toward me. It was Liston, who inquired kindly after my health, and, upon my not answering quite satisfactorily, he said, "Ah! well, you are better than I am." I laughed incredulously, as I looked at a magnificent figure leaning against the great black horse he rode, and looking like a model of manly vigor and beauty. But in less than a week from that day Liston died of aneurism; and I suppose that when I met him he was well aware of the death which had got him literally by the throat.]

Saturday, 7th.—Miserable day of parting! of tearing away and wrenching asunder!... At eleven we were obliged to go to rehearsal, and when we returned found my mother busy with her packing.... When she was gone, I sat down beside my father with a book in my hand, not reading, but listening to his stifled sobbing; and every now and then, in spite of my determination not to do it, looking up to see how far the ship had moved. (Our windows looked over the Forth.) But the white column of steam was rising steadily from close under Newhaven, and for upward of half an hour continued to do so. I had resolved not to raise my eyes again from my book, when a sudden exclamation from my father made me spring up, and I saw the steamer had left the shore, and was moving fast toward Inchkeith, the dark smoky wake that lingered behind it showing how far it had already gone from

us, and warning us how soon it would be beyond the ken of our aching eyes.... The carriage was announced, and with a heavy heart and aching head, I drove to the theater.... The play was "Francis I.," for the first time. The house was very fine; I acted abominably, but that was not much to be wondered at. However, I always have acted this part of my own vilely; the language is not natural—mere stilted declamation from first to last, most fatiguing to the chest, and impossible for me to do anything with, as it excites no emotion in me whatever....

EDINBURGH, July 8, 1832.

MY DEAREST H——,

I had just left my father at the window that overlooks the Forth, watching my poor mother's ship sailing away to England, when I received your letter; and it is impossible to imagine a sorer, sadder heart than that with which I greeted it.... Thank you for the pains you are taking about your picture for me; crammed with occupation as my time is here, I would have done the same for you, but that I think in Lawrence's print you have the best and likest thing you can have of me.... I cannot tell you at what hour we shall reach Liverpool, but it will be very early on Monday morning.... I am glad you have not deferred sitting for your picture till you came to Liverpool, for it would have encroached much upon our time together. I remember when I returned from abroad, a school-girl, I

thought I had forgotten my mother's face. This copy of yours will save me from that nonsensical morbid feeling, and you will surely not forget mine.... You bid me, if anything should go ill with me, summon you across the Atlantic. Alas! dear H——, you forget that before a letter from that other world can reach this, more than a month must have elapsed, and the writer may no longer be in either. You say you hope I may return a new being; and I have no doubt my health will be benefited, and my spirits revived by change of external objects; but oh, how dreary it all is now! You bid me cheer my father when my mother shall have left us, without knowing that she is already gone. I make every exertion that duty and affection can prompt; but, you know, it is my nature rather to absorb the sorrow of others than to assist them in throwing it off; and when one's own heart is all but frozen, one knows not where to find warmth to impart to those who are shivering with misery beside one.... I have left myself scarcely any room to tell you of my present life. I work very hard, rehearsing every morning and acting every night, and spending the intervening time in long farewell rides round this most beautiful and beloved Edinburgh. Mr. Combe says I am wearing myself out, body and mind; but I am already looking better, and less thin, than when I left London; and besides, I shall presently have a longer rest—holiday I cannot call it—on board ship than I have had for the last three years. We acted "Francis I." here last night, for the first time; and I am

sure that, mingled with the applause, I heard very distinct hissing; whether addressed to the acting, which was some of it execrable, or to the play itself, which I think quite deserving of such a demonstration, I know not.... You know my opinion of the piece; and as, with the exception of the two parts of De Bourbon and the Friar, and not excepting my own, it really was vilely acted, hissing did not appear to me an unnatural proceeding, though perhaps, under the circumstances, not altogether a courteous one on the part of the modern Athenians. I tell you this, because what else have I to tell you, but that I am your ever affectionate

F. A. K.

Tuesday, 10th.—At half-past twelve rode out with Liston and his daughter, Mr. Murray, and Allen (since Sir William, the celebrated artist, friend, and painter, of Walter Scott and his family).... In the evening, at the theater, the house was very full, and I acted very well, though I was so tired that I could hardly stand, and every bone in my body ached with my hard morning's ride. While I was sitting in the greenroom, Mr. Wilson came in, and it warmed my heart to see a Covent Garden face. He tells me Laporte is giving concerts in the poor old playhouse: well, good luck attend him, poor man (though I know it won't, for "there's nae luck about that house, there's nae luck at a'").

Walter Scott has reached Edinburgh, and starts for Abbotsford to-morrow: I am glad he has come back to die in his own country, in his own home, surrounded by the familiar objects his eyes have loved to look upon, and by the hearts of his countrymen, and the prayers, the blessings, the gratitude, and the love they owe him. All Europe will mourn his death; and for years to come every man born on this soil will be proud, for his sake, to call himself a Scotchman.

Wednesday, 11th.— ... At half-past twelve met Mr. Murray, Mr. Allen, and Mr. Byrne.... As we started for our ride, and were "cavalcading" leisurely along York Place, that most enchanting old sweetheart of mine, Baron Hume, came out of a house. I rode toward him, and he met me with his usual hearty, kind cordiality, and a world of old-fashioned stately courtesy, ending our conference by devoutly kissing the tip of my little finger, to the infinite edification of my party, upon whose minds I duly impressed the vast superiority of this respectful style of gallantry to the flippant, easy familiarity of the present day. These old beaux beat the young ones hollow in the theory of courtship, and it is only a pity that their time for practice is over. Commend me to this bowing and finger-kissing! it is at any rate more dignified than the nodding, bobbing, and hand-shaking of the present fashion. The be-Madaming, too, has in it something singularly pleasing to my taste; there's a hoop and six yards of brocade in each of its two syllables.... At the theater the play was

"Francis I." I acted well, and the play went off very well. Mr. Allen came and sat in the greenroom, telling me all about Constantinople and the Crimea, and the beautiful countries he has seen, and where his memory and his wishes are forever wandering; a rather sad comment upon the perfect vision of content his charming home at Laurieston had suggested to me.

Thursday, 12th.— ... At the theater the play was "The Hunchback." The house was very good, and I acted very well. Dear Mr. Allen came into the greenroom, and had a long gossip with me.

Friday, 13th.— ... Went with Mr. Combe to the Phrenological Museum, and spent two hours listening to some very interesting details on the anatomy of the brain, which certainly tended to make the science more credible to my ignorance, though the general theory has never appeared to me as impossible and extravagant as some people think it. The insuperable point where I stick fast is a doubt of the practically beneficial result which its general acceptance would produce. I think they overrate the reforming power of their system, though Mr. Combe's account of the numbers who attend his lectures, and of the improvement of their bodily and mental conditions which he has himself witnessed, must, of course, make me feel diffident of my own judgment in the matter. Their own experience can alone test the utility of their system, and whether it does or does not answer their expectations. I

thought of Hamlet as I sat on the ground, with my arms and lap full of skulls. It is curious enough to grasp the empty, worthless, unsightly case in which once dwelt the thinking faculty of a man. One of the best specimens of the human skull, it seems, is Raphael's; a cast of whose head I held lovingly in my hands, wishing it had been the very house where once abode that spirit of immortal beauty. [The phrenological authorities were mistaken, it seems, in attributing this skull to Raphael. I believe that it has been ascertained to be that of his friend, the engraver, Marc Antonio.] At the theater the play was "The Hunchback;" the house very good, and I played very well.

Saturday, 14th.—My last day in Edinburgh for two years; and who can tell for how many more? At eleven o'clock, Mr. Murray, Mr. Allen, Mr. Byrne, and myself sallied forth on horseback toward the Pentlands, having obtained half an hour's grace off dinner-time, in order to get to Habbies How. We went out by the Links, and up steep rises over a white and dusty road, with a flaring stone dyke on each side, and neither tree nor bush to shelter us from the scorching sunlight till we came to Woodhouseleigh, the haunted walk of a white specter, who, it seems, was fond of the shade, for her favorite promenade was an avenue overarched with the green arms of noble old elm trees; and we blessed the welcome shelter of the Ghost's Haunt.... A cloud fell over all our spirits as we rode away from this enchanting spot, and Mr. Murray, pointing to the sprig of heather I

had put in my habit, said they would establish an Order of Knighthood, of which the badge should be a heather spray, and they three the members, and I the patroness; that they would meet and drink my health on the 14th of July, and on my birthday, every year till I returned; and a solemn agreement was made by all parties that whenever I did return and summoned my worthies, we should again adjourn together to the glen in the Pentlands. When we reached home, Mr. Allen, who cannot endure a formal parting, shook hands with me and bade me good-by as I dismounted, as if we were to ride again to-morrow. [And I never saw him again. Peace be with him! He was a most amiable and charming companion, and during these days of friendly intimacy, his conversation interested and instructed me, and his poetical feeling of Nature, and placid, unruffled serenity, added much to the pleasure of those delightful rides.] ... At the theater the play was "The Provoked Husband," for my benefit; the house was very fine, and I played pretty well. After it was over, the audience shouted and clamored for my father, who came and said a few words of our sorrow to leave their beautiful city.... Mrs. Harry, Lizzie, and I were in my dressing-room, crying in sad silence, and vainly endeavoring to control our emotion. Presently my father came hurriedly in, and folding them both in his arms, just uttered in a broken voice, "Good-by! God bless you!" and I, embracing my dear friends for the last time, followed him out of the room. It is not

the time only that must elapse before I can see her again, it is the terrible distance, the slowness and uncertainty of communication; it is that dreadful America.

Thursday, 19th, Liverpool.— ... At eleven went to the theater for rehearsal; it was very slovenly. I wonder what the performance will be? In the evening to the theater; the play was "Francis I.," and the house was very good, which was almost to be wondered at in this plague-stricken city. [The cholera was raging in Liverpool.] I was frightened, as I always am at a new part, even in my own play, though glad enough to resign that odious dignity, the queen-mother. [The part of Louisa of Savoy had been given to me when first the piece was brought out at Covent Garden; I was now playing the younger heroine, Françoise de Foix.] I played pretty well, though there is nothing to be done with the part. She is perfectly uninteresting and ineffective; but it is better for the cast of the play that I should act her instead of Louisa. And when one can have such a specimen of a queen as we had to-night, it would be a thousand pities the audience should be put off with my inferior views of royalty. Such bouncing, frowning, growling, and snarling might have challenged a whole zoological garden full of wild beasts to surpass. It's a comfort to see that it is possible to play that part worse than I did.

Friday, 20th.—Went to rehearsal.... Received a letter from Lizzie, giving me an account of

my dear old Newhaven fish-wife, poor body! to whom I had sent a farewell present by her. I received also a long copy of anonymous verses, in which I was rather pathetically remonstrated with for seeking fame and fortune out of my own country. The author is slightly mistaken; neither the love of money nor notoriety would carry me away from England, but the love of my father constrains me.... The American Consul and Mr. Arnold called. After dinner I read Combe's "Constitution of Man," which interested me very much, though it fails to convince me that phrenology can alone bestow this insight into human nature. At the theater "The School for Scandal;" I played pretty well, though the actors were all dreadfully imperfect, and some of them so nervous and quick, and some so nervous and slow, that it was hardly possible to keep pace with them.

Saturday, 21st.—From Liverpool to Manchester. After all, this Liverpool, with all its important wealth and industry, is a dismal-looking place, a swarming world of dingy red houses and dirty streets.... How well I remember the opening of this railway!... They have placed a marble tablet in the side of the road to commemorate the spot where poor Huskisson fell; I remembered it by the pools of dark-green water that, as we passed them then, made a dismal impression on me; they looked like stony basins of verdigris. How glad I was to see Chatmoss—that villainous, treacherous, ugly, useless bog—trenched and ditched in process of draining and reclaiming, with the

fair, holy, healthy grain waving in bright green patches over the brown peaty soil! Next to moral conversion, and the reclaiming to their noble uses the perverted powers of human nature, there is nothing does one's heart so much good as the sight of waste and barren land reclaimed to the uses and wants of man; to see vegetation clothe the idle space, and the cursed and profitless soil teeming with the means of life and bringing forth abundant produce to requite the toil that fertilized it; to see the wilderness crowned with bounteous increase, and the blessing of God rising from the earth to reward the labor of His creatures. It forcibly reminds one of all that is left undone, and might be done, with that far more precious waste land, those multitudes of our ignorant poor, whose minds and spirits are as dark, as profitless, as barren, as dreary, and as dangerous, as this wild bog was formerly, and who were never ordained to live and die like so many human morasses.... In the evening to the theater, which was crammed from the floor to the ceiling; they are a pleasant audience, too, and make a delightful quantity of sympathetic noise. I did not play well, which was a pity and a shame, because they really deserved that one should do so; but my coadjutors were too much for me.

Sunday, 22d, Liverpool.—I did not think there was such another day in store for me as this. I thought all was past and over, and had forgotten the last drop in the bitter cup.... The day was bitter cold, and we were obliged to have a fire.

LIVERPOOL, July 22.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I fear you are either anxious or vexed, or perhaps both, about the arrival of your books, and my non-acknowledgment of them. They reached me in all safety, and but for the many occupations which swallow up my time would have been duly receipted ere this. Thank you very much for them, for they are very elegant outside, and the dedication page, with which I should have been most ungracious to find any fault. The little sketch on that leaf differs from the design you had described to me some time ago, and I felt the full meaning of the difference. I read through your preface all in a breath; there are many parts of it which have often been matters of discussion between us, and I believe you know how cordially I coincide with most of the views expressed in it. The only point in your preliminary chapter on which I do not agree with you is the passage in which you say that humor is, of necessity and in its very essence, vulgar. I differ entirely with you here. I think humor is very often closely allied to poetry; not only a large element in highly poetic minds, which surely refutes your position, but kindred to the highest and deepest order of imagination, and frequently eminently fanciful and graceful in its peculiar manifestations. However, I cannot now make leisure to write about this, but while I read it I scored the passage as one from which I dissented. That, however, of course does not establish its fallacy; but I think, had I time, I could convince you of it.

I acted Juliet on Wednesday, and read your analysis of it before doing so. Oh, could you but have seen and heard my Romeo!... I am sure it is just as well that an actress on the English stage at the present day should not have too distinct a vision of the beings Shakespeare intended to realize, or she might be induced, like the unfortunate heroine of the song, to "hang herself in her garters." To be sure there is always my expedient to resort to, of acting to a wooden vase; you know I had one put upon my balcony, in "Romeo and Juliet," at Covent Garden, to assist Mr. Abbott in drawing forth the expression of my sentiments. I have been reading over Portia to-day; she is still my dream of ladies, my pearl of womanhood.... I must close this letter, for I have many more to write to-night, and it is already late. Once more, thank you very much for your book, and believe me,

Ever yours very truly,

F. A. K.

August 1st.—Sailed for America.

The book referred to in this letter was Mrs. Jameson's "Analysis of Shakespeare's Female Characters," which she very kindly dedicated to me. The etching in the title-page was changed from the one she at first intended to have put in it, and represented a female figure in an attitude of despondency, sitting by the sea, and watching a ship sailing toward the setting

sun; a design which I know she meant to have reference to my departure. I believe she subsequently changed it again to the one she had first executed, and which was of a less personal significance.... I exchanged no more letters with my friend Miss S ——, who joined me at Liverpool, and remained with me till I sailed for America.... "A trip," as it is now called, to Europe or America, is one of the commonest of experiences, involving, apparently, so little danger, difficulty, or delay, that the feelings with which I made my first voyage across the Atlantic must seem almost incomprehensible to the pleasure-seeking or business-absorbed crowds who throng the great watery highway between the two continents.

But when I first went to America, steam had not shortened the passage of that formidable barrier between world and world. A month, and not a week, was the shortest and most favorable voyage that could be looked for. Few men, and hardly any women, undertook it as a mere matter of pleasure or curiosity; and though affairs of importance, of course, drew people from one shore to the other, and the stream of emigration had already set steadily westward, American and European tourists had not begun to cross each other by thousands on the high seas in search of health or amusement.

I was leaving my mother, my brothers and sister, my friends and my country, for two years, and could only hear from them at monthly intervals. I was going to work very hard, in a distasteful vocation, among strangers, from whom I had no right to expect the invariable kindness and indulgence my own people had favored me with. My spirits were depressed by my father's troubled fortunes, and I had

just received the first sharp, smarting strokes in the battle of life; those gashes from which poor "unbruised youth," in its infinite self-compassion, fancies its very life-blood must all pour away; little imagining under what gangrened, festering wounds brave life will still hold on its way, and urge to the hopeless end its warfare with unconquerable sorrow. There is nothing more pathetic than the terrified impatience of youth under its first experience of grief, and its vehement appeal of "Behold, and see if any sorrow be like unto my sorrow!" to the patient adepts in suffering such as it has not yet begun to conceive of. Orlando's adjuration to the exiled duke in "As You Like It," and the wise Prince's reply, seem to me one of the most exquisite illustrations of the comparative griefs of youth and age.

Off SANDY HOOK, Monday, September 5.

MY DEAREST H——,

We are within three hours' sail of New York, having greeted the first corner of Long Island (the first land we saw) yesterday morning; but we are becalmed, and the sun shines so bright, and the air is so warm and breathless, that we seem to have every chance of lying here for the next—Heaven knows how long! In point of time, you see, our voyage has been very prosperous, and I am surprised that we have made such good progress, for the weather has been squally, with constant head-winds. I do not think we have had, in all, six days of fair wind, so that we have no reason whatever to complain of our advance, having come thus far in thirty-two days. You bade me write to you by ships passing us,

but though we have encountered several bound eastward, we only hailed them without lying to; notwithstanding which, about a fortnight ago, on hearing that a vessel was about to pass us, I wrote you a scrawl, which none but you could have made out (so the fishes won't profit much by it), and a kind fellow-passenger undertook to throw it from our ship to the other as it passed us. She came alongside very rapidly, and though he flung with great force and good aim, the distance was too great, and my poor little missive fell into the black sea within twenty feet of its destination. I could not help crying to think that those words from my heart, that would have gladdened yours, should go down into that cold, inky water.... I pray to God that we may return to England, but I am possessed with a dread that I never shall....

I have been called away from this letter by one of those little incidents which Heaven in its mercy sends to break the monotony of a sea-voyage. Ever since daybreak this morning an English brig has been standing at a considerable distance behind us. About an hour ago we went on deck to watch the approach of a boat which they were sending off in our direction. The distance was about five miles, and the men had a hard pull in the broiling heat. When they came on board, you should have seen how we all clustered about them. The ship was a merchantman from Bristol, bound to New York; she had been out eleven weeks, her provisions were beginning to run short, and the crew was on

allowance. Our captain, who is a gentleman, furnished them with flour, tea, sugar, porter, cold tongue, ham, eggs, etc., etc. The men remained about half an hour on board, and as they were remanning their boat we saw a whole cargo of eatables carried to it from our steerage passengers. You know that these are always poor people, who are often barely supplied themselves with necessaries for their voyage. The poor are almost invariably kind and compassionate to one another, and Gaffer Gray is half right when he says—

> "The poor man alone,
> When he hears the poor moan,
> Of his morsel one morsel will give."

They (the men from the brig) gave us news from Halifax, where they had put in. The cholera had been in Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York; the latter town was almost deserted, and the people flying in numbers from the others. This was rather bad news to us, who were going thither to find audiences (if possible not few, whether fit or not), but it was awful to such as were going back to their homes and families. I looked at the anxious faces gathered round our informer, and thought how the poor hearts were flying, in terrible anticipation of the worst, to the nests where they had left their dear ones, and eagerly counting every precious head in the homes over which so black a cloud of doom had gathered in their absence.... My father, though a bad sailor, and suffering occasionally a good deal, has, upon the whole, borne the voyage well. Poor

dear Dall has been the greatest wretch on board; she has been perfectly miserable the whole time. It has made me very unhappy, for she has come away from those she loves very dearly on my account, and I cannot but feel sad to see that most excellent creature now, in what should be the quiet time of her life, leaving home and all its accustomed ways, habits, and comforts, and dear A——, who is her darling, to come wandering to the ends of the earth after me.... These distant and prolonged separations seem like foretastes of death.... We have seen an American sun, and an American moon, and American stars, and we think they "get up these things better than we do." We have had several fresh squalls, and one heavy gale; we have shipped sundry seas; we have had rat-hunting and harpooning of porpoises; we have caught several hake and dogfish.

NEW YORK, AMERICA, Wednesday, September 5, 1832.

Here we really are, and perhaps you, who are not here, will believe it more readily than I who am, and to whom it seems an impossible kind of dream from which I must surely presently wake. We made New York harbor Monday night at sunset, and cast anchor at twelve o'clock off Staten Island, where we lay till yesterday morning at half-past nine, when a steamboat came alongside to take the passengers to shore. A thick fog covered the shores, and the rain poured in torrents; but had the weather been more

favorable, I should have seen nothing of our approach to the city, for I was crying bitterly. The town, as we drove through it from the landing, struck me as foreign in its appearance—continental, I mean; trees are mixed very prettily with the houses, which are painted of various colors, and have green blinds on the outside, giving an idea of coolness and shade.

The sunshine is glorious, and the air soft and temperate; our hotel is pleasantly situated, and our rooms are gay and large. The town, as I see it from our windows, reminds me a little of Paris. Yesterday evening the trees and lighted shop-windows and brilliant moonlight were like a suggestion of the Boulevards; it is very gay, and rather like a fair.

The cholera has been very bad, but it is subsiding, and the people are returning to town. We shall begin our work in about ten days. I have not told you half I could say, but foolscap will contain no more. God bless you, dear!

Affectionately yours,

F. A. K.

The foreboding with which I left my own country was justified by the event. My dear aunt died, and I married, in America; and neither of us ever had a home again in England.

NEW YORK, September 16, 1832.

MY DEAREST H——,

What shall I say to you? First of all, pray don't forget me, don't be altered when I see you again, don't die before I come back, don't die if I never come back.... You cannot imagine how strange the comparisons people here are perpetually making between this wonderful sapling of theirs and our old oak seem to me.... My father, thank God, is wonderfully improved in health, looks, and spirits; the fine, clear, warm (hot it should be called) atmosphere agrees with him, and the release from the cares and anxieties of that troublesome estate of his in St. Giles' will, I am sure, be of the greatest service to him. He begins his work to-morrow night with Hamlet, and on Tuesday I act Bianca. It is thought expedient that we should act singly the two first nights, and then make a "constellation." Dall is in despair because I am to be discovered instead of coming on (a thing actors deprecate, because they do not receive their salvo of entrance applause), and also because I am not seen at first in what she thinks a becoming dress. For my part, I am rather glad of this decision, for besides Bianca's being one of my best parts, the play, as the faculty have mangled it, is such a complete monologue that I am less at the mercy of my coadjutors than in any other piece I play in....

Dall is very well, very hot, and very mosquito-bitten. The heat seems to me almost intolerable, though it is here considered mild autumn weather: the mornings and evenings are, it is true, generally freshened with a cool delicious air,

which is at this moment blowing all my pens and paper away, and compensating us for our midday's broiling. I do nothing but drink iced lemonade, and eat peaches and sliced melon, in spite of the cholera.

Baths are a much cheaper and commoner luxury (necessary) in the hotels here than with us; a great satisfaction to me, who hope in heaven, if I ever get there, to have plenty of water to wash in, and, of course, it will all be soft rainwater there. What a blessing! On board ship we were not stinted in that respect, but had as much water as we desired for external as well as internal purposes.

There are no water-pipes or cisterns in this city such as we have, but men go about as they do in Paris, with huge water-butts, supplying each house daily; for although a broad river (so called) runs on each side of this water-walled city, the one—the East River—is merely an arm of the sea; and the Hudson receives the salt tide-water, and is rendered brackish and unfit for washing or cooking purposes far beyond the city. There are fine springs, and a full fresh-water stream, at a distance of some miles; but the municipality is not very rich, and is economical and careful of the public money, and many improvements which might have been expected to have been effected here long ago are halting in their advance, leaving New York ill paved, ill lighted, and indifferently supplied with a good many necessaries and luxuries of modern civilization.

[This was fifty-six years ago. Times are altered since this letter was written. New York is neither ill paved nor ill lighted; the municipality is rich, but neither economical, careful, nor honest, in dealing with the public moneys. The rapid spread of superficial civilization and accumulation of easily-got wealth, together with incessant communication with Europe, have made of the great cities of the New World, centres of an imperfect but extreme luxury, vying with, and in some respects going beyond, all that London or Paris presents for the indulgence of tastes pampered by the oldest civilization of Europe.

One day, after the Croton water had been brought into New York, I was sitting with the venerable Chancellor Kent at the window of his house in Union Square, and, pointing to the fountain that sprang up in the midst of the inclosure, he said, "When I was a boy, much more than half a century ago, I used to go to the Croton water, and paddle, and fish, and bathe, and swim, and loiter my time away in the summer days. I cannot go out there any more for any of these pleasant purposes, but the Croton water has come here to me." What a ballad Schiller or Goethe would have made of that! That morning visit to Chancellor Kent has left that pretty picture in my mind, and the recollection of his last words as he shook hands with me: "Ay, madam, the secret of life is always to have excitement enough, and never too much." But he did not give me the secret of that secret.]

> There are, on an average, half a dozen fires in various parts of the town every night—I mean houses on fire. The sons of all the gentlemen here are volunteer engineers and firemen, and great is the delight they take in tearing up and down the streets,

accompanied by red lights, speaking trumpets, and a rushing, roaring escort of running amateur extinguishers, who make night hideous with their bawling and bellowing. This evening as I was observing that we had had no fire to-day, Dall said the weather was so hot, she thought they must have left off fires for the season.

Speaking of carriages and the devices on the panels of them here, which appear to be rather fancy pieces than heraldic bearings, my father said, "I wonder what they do for arms." "Use legs," said Dall immediately, not at all bethinking herself how ancient a device on the shield of the Island of Man the three legs were, or knowing how much more ancient on the coins of Crotona, I think, or some other of the Magna Grecian colonies.

The hours which prevail here are those of our shop-keeping population; they rise and go to business very early, dine at three, which indeed is considered late, take tea at five, and supper at nine, which seems to us very primitive.... The women here are, generally speaking, very pretty little creatures, with a great deal of freshness and brilliancy; they dress in the extreme of the French fashion, and, I suppose from some unfavorable influence of the climate, they lose their beauty prematurely—they become full-blown very early, and their bloom is extremely evanescent; they fade almost suddenly.... There seems to be a great deal of consumption here. The climate is as capricious as ours, with this additional

disadvantage, that the extremes of heat and cold are much more intense, and the transitions much more violent, the temperature varying occasionally as much as thirty degrees in the twenty-four hours. I have just left off writing for five minutes to watch the lightning, which is dancing in a fiery ring all round the horizon—summer lightning, no thunder, although the flashes are strong and vivid....

We have had such a tremendous storm—really gorgeous, grand, and awful; lightning that stretched from side to side of the sky, making a blaze like daylight for several seconds at a time. The mere reflection of it on the ground was more than the eye could endure; great forked ribbons of fire darting into the very bosom of the city and its crowded dwellings, or zigzagging through the air to an accompaniment of short, sharp, crackling thunder, succeeded by endless, deep, full-toned rolls that made the whole air shake and vibrate with the heavy concussion; pelting and pouring rain, a perfect tornado of wind. Heaven and earth are all, while I write, one livid, violet-colored flame, and the thunder resounds through the wild frenzy of the elements like the voice of "the Ruler of the spirits." My eyes ache with the incessant glare, and I must close my letter, for it is past eleven o'clock, and I have to rehearse to-morrow morning.... I have seen Mr. Wallack since our arrival, whom I never saw in England, either on or off the stage. I went the other night to see him in one of his favorite pieces, "The Rent-Day," which made

me cry dreadfully, but chiefly, I believe, because, when they are ruined, he asks his wife if she will go with him to America. You see I am taking to play-going in my old age. The theater is very pretty, of the best possible dimensions for me, and tolerably good for the voice. We leave this place for Philadelphia on the 10th of October, and remain there a fortnight, and then go on to Boston....

Last Thursday we crossed the Hudson in one of the steamers constantly plying between the opposite shores and New York, and took a delightful walk along the New Jersey shore to a place called Hoboken, famous once as a dueling-ground, now the favorite resort of a pacific society of *bon vivants*, who meet once a week to eat turtle, or, as it is expressed on their cards of invitation, for "spoon exercise." The distance from our landing-point to the place where these meetings are held is about five miles, a charming walk through a strip of forest-ground, which crowns the banks of the river, gradually rising to a considerable height above it. We were delighted with the vivid, various, and strange foliage of the trees, the magnificent river, broad and blue as a lake, with its high and richly wooded shore, and the sparkling, glittering town opposite. We looked down to the Narrows, the defile through which the waters of this noble estuary reach the Atlantic, and between whose rocky walls two or three ships stood out against the brilliant sky. The ebbing tide plashed on the rocks far below us, and the warm grass through which we

walked was alive with grasshoppers, whose scarlet wings, suddenly unfolded when they flew, made me take them for some strange species of butterfly. It was all indescribably bright and joyous-looking, and the air of a transparent clearness that was one of the most striking characteristics of the whole scene, and one of the most delightful.... [In discussing the relative merits of England and America, Dr. Channing once said to me, "The earth is yours, but the heavens are ours;" and I quite agree with him. I have never seen a sky comparable, for splendor of color or translucent purity, to that of the Northern States.]

I have been reading your favorite book, "Salmonia." ... I am rather surprised at your liking it so very much, because, though the descriptions are beautiful, and the natural history interesting, and the philosophical and moral reflections scattered through it delightful, yet there is so much that is purely technical about fishing and its processes, and addressed only to the hook-and-line fraternity, that I should not have thought it calculated to charm you so greatly. However, you may have some associations connected with it; liking is a very complex and many-motived thing....

We went through the fish and fruit markets the other day; unfortunately it was rather late in the morning, and of course the glory of the market was over, but yet there remained enough to enchant us, with their abundant plenteousness of good things. The

fruit-market was beautiful; fruit-baskets half as high as I am, placed in rows of a dozen, filled with peaches, and painted of a bright vermilion color, which throws a ruddy becoming tint over the downy fruit. It looked like something in the "Arabian Nights;" heaps, literally heaps of melons, apples, pears, and wild grapes, in the greatest profusion. I was enchanted with the beautiful forms, bright colors, and fragrant smell, but I saw no flowers, and I have seen hardly any since I have been here, which is rather a grief to me....

Americans are the most extravagant people in the world, and flowers are among them objects of the most lavish expenditure. The prices paid for nosegays, wreaths, baskets, and devices of every sort of hot-house plants, are incredible to any reasonable mind. At parties and balls ladies are laden with costly nosegays which will not even survive the evening's fatigue of carrying them. Dinner and luncheon parties are adorned, not only with masses of exquisite bloom as table ornaments, but by every lady's plate a magnificent nosegay of hot-house flowers is placed; and I knew a lady who, wishing to adorn her ballroom with rather more than usual floral magnificence, had it hung round with garlands of white camellias and myosotis.

At the theater enormously expensive nosegays and huge baskets of forced flowers are handed to the favorite performers from the front of the house, till the ceremony

becomes embarrassing, and almost ridiculous for the object of the demonstration. The churches at certain festivals are hung with draperies of costly hot-house flowers; the communion-tables heaped with them. Weddings, of course, are natural occasions for that species of ornament, but in America funerals are as flowery as marriage-feasts; and I have seen there in mid-winter, with the thermometer at fifteen degrees below zero, large crosses, and hearts, and wreaths, made entirely of rosebuds and lilies of the valley, as part of the solemnities of a burial service; and a young girl who died in the flowerless season was not only shrouded in blossoms, but as her coffin was carried to the bosom of the wintry earth, a white pall of the finest material was thrown over it, with a great cross of double forced violets, almost the length of the coffin, laid on it. I have had as many as a dozen huge baskets of camellias, violets, orange-flower, and tuberose, at one time, in my room; perishable tokens of anonymous public and private favor, the cost of which used to fill me with dismay: and on one occasion a table of magnificent hot-house flowers was sent to me, of such dimensions that both sides of the street door had to be opened to admit it. When I have deplored the inordinate amount of money lavished upon that which could only impart pleasure for so brief a time, I have been answered, but not converted from my feeling of disapprobation and regret, that the gardeners profited by this wild extravagance. In New York I have known a guinea paid for

a gentleman's button-hole rosebud, and three guineas for half a dozen sprays of lily of the valley.

Good-by, my dearest H——. I pray for you morning and night. Is not that thinking of you, and loving you as best I can?

Your affectionate

F. A. K.

DEAREST H——,

... We are all pretty well, but all but devoured by multitudinous and multivarious beasts of prey—birds, I suppose they are: mosquitoes, ants, and flies, by day; and flies, fleas, and worse, by night. The plagues of Egypt were a joke to it. We spend our lives in murdering hecatombs of creeping and jumping things, and vehemently slapping our own faces with intent to kill the flying ones that incessantly buzz about one. It is rather a deplorable existence, and reminds me of one of the most unpleasant circles in Dante's "Hell," which I don't think could have been much worse. My father began his work on Monday last with Hamlet. Dall and I went into a private box to see him; he acted admirably, and looked wonderfully young and handsome. The house was crammed, and the audience, we were assured, was enthusiastic beyond all precedent.

On Tuesday I came out in Bianca; I was rather glad they had appointed that part for my first, because it is one of my best; but had

not the genius of theatrical management made such a mere monologue of the play as it has, I verily believe I should have been "swamped" by my helpmate. My Fazio was an unhappy man who played Romeo once with me in London, and failed utterly: moreover, he had studied this part in a hurry, it seems, and did not know three words of it, and was, besides, too frightened to profit by my prompting. The only thing that seemed to occur to him was to go down on his knees, which he did every five minutes. Once when I was on mine, he dropped down suddenly exactly opposite to me, and there we were, looking for all the world like one of those pious conjugal *vis-à-vis* that adorn antique tombs in our cathedrals. It really was exceedingly absurd. But I looked and acted well, and the play was very successful.... I was not nervous for my first night, till my unhappy partner made me so. My dislike to the stage would really render me indifferent to my own success, but that I am working for my livelihood; my bread depends upon success, and that is a realistic, if not an artistic, view of the case, of which I acknowledge the importance....

Absolute and uncompromising vulgarity is really not very objectionable; it is rather refreshing, indeed, for it is simple, and, in that respect, rare. Vulgarity allied to pretension and the affectation of fine manners is the only real vulgarity, and is an intolerable thing. The plain rusticity, or even coarseness, of what are called the lower classes, is infinitely preferable to the

assumption of *gentility* of those a little above them in the social scale. The artisan, or day-laborer, or common workman, is apt to be a gentleman, compared with a certain well-to-do small shopkeeper....

On Thursday, when I went to rehearse "Romeo and Juliet," I found that the unfortunate Mr. Keppel was, by general desire, taken out of Romeo, which my father was therefore called upon, for the first time, to act with me. I was vexed at this every way. I was sorry for the poor player, whose part, of course, was money to him; and sorry for my father, who has the greatest objection to playing Romeo, for which his age, of course, disqualifies him, however much his excellent acting may tend to make one forget it; and I was sorry for the public, who lost his admirable Mercutio, which I do not think they were compensated for by his taking the other part....

The steward of our ship, a black—a very intelligent, obliging, respectable servant—came here the other morning to ask my father for an order, at the same time adding that it must be for the gallery, as people of color were not allowed to go into any other part of the theater. Qu'en dis-tu? The prejudice against these unfortunate people is, of course, incomprehensible to us. On board ship, after giving that same man some trouble, Dall poured him out a glass of wine, when we were having our dinner, whereupon the captain looked at her with utter amazement, and I thought some little

contempt, and said, "Ah! one can tell by that that you are not an American;" which sort of thing makes one feel rather glad that one is not.

[This was in 1832, when slavery literally governed the United States. In 1874, when the Civil War had washed out slavery with the blood of free men, the prejudice engendered by it governed them still to the following degree. Going to the theater in Philadelphia one night, I desired my servant, a perfectly respectable and decorous colored man, to go into the house and see the performance. This, however, he did not succeed in doing, being informed at all the entrance doors that persons of color were not admitted to any part of the theater. At this same time, more than half the State legislature of South Carolina were blacks. Moreover, at this same time, colored children were not received into the public schools of Philadelphia, though colored citizens were eligible, and in some cases acted as members of the board of management of these very schools. I talked of this outrageous inconsistent prejudice with some of my friends; among others, the editor of a popular paper. They were all loud in their condemnation of the state of things, but strongly of opinion that to move at all in the matter would be highly inopportune and injudicious. Time, they said, would settle all these questions; and, without doubt, it will. Charles Sumner, who thought Time could afford to have his elbow jogged about them, had just gone to his grave, leaving, unfortunately, incomplete his bill of rights in behalf of the colored citizens of the United States.

My servant was a citizen of the United States, having a vote, when he was turned from the theater door as

a person of color; and negroes had been elected as Members of Congress at that very time. Strangely enough, Philadelphia, once the seat of enthusiastic and self-devoted Quaker abolitionism, the home of that noble and admirable woman, Lucretia Mott, who stood heroically in its vanguard, is now one of the strongholds of the most illiberal prejudice against the blacks.]

On Friday we acted "The School for Scandal." Our houses have been very fine indeed, in spite of the intolerable heat of the weather.... My ill-starred Fazio of Thursday night is making a terrible stir in the papers, appealing to the public, and writing long letters about his having merely studied the part to accommodate me. "Hard case—unjust partiality—superior influence," etc., etc.—in short, an attempt at a little cabal, the effect of which is that he has obtained leave to appear again to-morrow night in Jaffier to my Belvidera. The poor man is under a strong mental delusion, he cannot act in the least; however, we shall see what he will do with "Venice Preserved." ...

Yesterday evening we dined with some English people who are staying in this hotel, and met Dr. Wainwright, rector of the most "fashionable" church in New York; a very agreeable, good, and clever man, who expressed great delight at having an opportunity of meeting us in private, as his congregation are so strait-laced that he can neither call upon us nor invite us to his house, much less set his foot in the theater. The probable consequence of any of these enormities, it seems, would be deserted pews next Sunday, and perhaps eventually the forced resignation of his cure of souls. This is rather narrow minded, I think, for this free and enlightened country. Think of my mother's dear old friend, Dr. Hughes, and Milman, and Harness, and Dyce, and all our excellent reverend friends and intimate

acquaintance....

To-morrow we act "Venice Preserved," on Tuesday "Much Ado about Nothing," Wednesday is a holiday, on Thursday, for my benefit, "The Stranger," and on Friday "The Hunchback." On the 10th of next month we act in Philadelphia, where we shall remain for a fortnight, and then return here for a fortnight, after which we go on to Boston. God bless you, dear! It is past twelve at night, and I have a ten-o'clock rehearsal to-morrow morning.

Ever your affectionate

F. A. K.

Part of Letter to Mrs. Jameson.

New York, September 30, 1832.

I am not sure that, upon the whole, our acting is not rather too quiet—tame, I suppose they would call it—for our present public. Ranting and raving in tragedy, and shrieks of unmeaning laughter in comedy, are not, you know, precisely our style, and I am afraid our audiences here may think us flat. I was informed by a friend of mine who heard the remark, that one gentleman observed to another, after seeing my father in "Venice Preserved," "Lord bless you! it's nothing to Cooper's acting—nothing! Why, I've seen the perspiration roll down his face

like water when he played Pierre! You didn't see Mr. Kemble put himself to half such pains!" Which reminds me of the Frenchwoman's commendation to her neighbor of a performance of Dupré, the great Paris tenor of his day: "Ah! ce pauvre cher M. Dupré! ce brave homme! quel mal il se donne pour chanter cela! Regardez donc, madame, il est tout en sueur!" But this order of criticism, of course, may be met with anywhere; and the stamp-and-stare-and-start-and-scream-school has had its admirers all the world over since the days of Hamlet the Dane.

I have not seen much of either places or people yet.... This city is picturesque and foreign-looking; trees are much intermixed with the houses, among them a great many fine willows, and these, together with the various colors of the houses, and the irregularity of the streets and buildings, form constantly "little bits" that would gladden the eye of a painter. The sky here is beautiful; I find in it what you have seen in Italy, and I only in Angerstein's Gallery, the orange sunsets of Claude Lorraine.

We leave New York for Philadelphia after next week, and shall remain there three weeks.

I have read and noted much of your pretty book. There are one or two points which shall "serve for sweet discourses" in our time to come. I find great satisfaction in our discussions, for though I may not often

confess to being convinced by your arguments in our differences (does any one ever do so?), I derive so much information from them, that they are as profitable as pleasant to me. Are you going to be busy with your pen soon again? Write me how the world is going on yonder, and believe me ever truly yours,

F. A. K.

NEW YORK, September 30, 1832.

DEAREST H——,

... Perhaps, as you say, it is morbid to dwell as I do upon the unreality of acting, because its tangible reality makes its appearance duly every morning with the "returns" of the preceding night; but I am not sure that it is morbid to consider wants exaggerated and necessities unreal which render insufficient earnings that would be ample for any one's real need. A livelihood, of course, we could make in England.... You speak of all the various strange things I am to see, and the amount of knowledge I shall involuntarily acquire, by this residence in America; but you know I am what Dr. Johnson would have considered disgracefully "incurious," and the lazy intellectual indifference which induced me to live in London by the very spring of the fountain of knowledge without so much as stooping my lips to it, prevails with me here.

[Our house in Great Russell Street, which was the

last at the corner of Montague Place, adjoined the British Museum, and has since been taken into, or removed for (I don't know which), the new buildings of that institution. Our friend Panizzi, the learned librarian, lived in the house that stood where ours, formerly my uncle's, did. While we were still living there, however, I was allowed a privileged entrance at all times to the library, and am ashamed to think how seldom I availed myself of so great a favor.]

Then, too, my profession occupies nearly the whole of my time; I have rehearsals every day, and act four times a week; my journalizing takes up a good deal of my leisure. Walking in the heat we still have here fatigues me and hurts my feet very much, especially when I have to stand at the theater all the evening. Although I have been here a month, I have seen but little either of places or people; the latter, you know, I nowhere affect, and my distaste for the society of strangers must, of course, interfere with my deriving information from them. Still, as you say, I must inevitably see and learn much that is new to me, and I take pleasure in the hope that when I return to you I shall be less distressingly ignorant than you must often have found me....

I am very sorry my brother Henry and his men are going to be sent upon so odious an errand as tithe-collecting must be in Ireland. I trust in God he may meet with no mischief while fulfilling his duty; I should be both to think of that comely-looking young thing bruised or broken, maimed or murdered. I hardly think your savage Irishers would have

the heart to hurt him, he looks so like, what indeed he is, a mere boy; but then, to be sure, his errand is not one to recommend him to their mercy.

I have read Bryant's poetry, and like it very much. The general spirit of it is admirable; it is all wholesome poetry, and some of it is very beautiful.

I am going to get Graham's "History of the United States," and Smith's "History of Virginia," to beguile my journey to Philadelphia with. I can't fancy a savage woman marrying a civilized man.... I suppose love might bring harmony out of the discords of natures so dissimilar, but I think if I had been a wild she-American, I should not have been tamed by one of the invading race, my hunters. Pocahontas thought differently....

Are you acquainted with any of Daniel Webster's speeches? They are very fine, eloquent, and powerful; and one that he delivered upon the commemoration of the landing of the English exiles at Plymouth, in many parts, magnificent. I was profoundly affected by it when my father read it to us on board ship....

Bad as your mice, of which you complain so bitterly, may be, they are civilized Christian creatures compared with the heathen swarms with which we wage war incessantly here. Every evening, as soon as the sun sets, clouds of mosquitoes begin their war-dance round us; their sting is most venomous, and as my patience is not even skin-deep, I tear myself

like a maniac, and then, instead of oil, pour aromatic vinegar into my wounds, and a very pretty species of torture is produced by that means, I assure you. Besides these winged devils, we have swarms of flies, which also bite and sting, with a venomous rancor of which I should have thought their frivolity incapable. Besides these, every cupboard and drawer in our rooms is full of moths. Besides these, we have an army of cantankerous fleas quartered upon us. Besides these, we have one particular closet where we keep—our bugs, and where for the most part, I am truly thankful to say, they keep themselves. Besides these, we have two or three ants' nests in our bedroom, and everything we look upon seems but a moving mass of these red, long-legged, but always exemplary insects. These fellow-creatures make one's life not worth much having, and I do nothing all day long but sing the famous entomological chorus in "Faust;" and if this goes on much longer, I feel as if I should take to buzzing. Do you know that it is hard upon three o'clock in the morning? I must leave off and go to bed, for I rehearse Constance to-morrow at eleven, and act her to-morrow night. On Friday I act Bizarre in "The Inconstant," and think I shall find it great fun.... God bless you, dearest H——.

Ever your affectionate

F. A. K.

MANSION HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA, October 10,

1832.

DEAREST H——,

Do not let the date of this make any alteration in your way of addressing your letters, which must still be "Park Theater, New York;" for before this reaches you we shall probably have returned thither; but I date particularly that you may follow us with your mind's legs, and know where to find us. My dearest H——, in spite of an often heavy heart, and my distaste for my present surroundings, I have reason to be most grateful, and I trust I am so, for the benefits which we have already derived from a visit to this far world beyond the sea. The first and greatest of these is the wonderful improvement in my dear father's health. He looks full ten years younger than when last you saw him, and besides enjoying better spirits from the absence of the many cares and anxieties and vexations that weighed upon him daily in England, he says that he is conscious since he came away of a great increase of absolute muscular strength and vigor; and when he said this, I felt that my share of the unpleasant duty of coming hither was already amply repaid.... We have finished our first engagement at New York, which was for twelve nights, and have every reason to be satisfied with our financial, as well as professional, success. Living here is not as cheap as we had been led to expect, but our earnings are very considerable, and as we labor for these, it is matter of rejoicing that we labor so satisfactorily.

Dall is very well, except the nuisance of a bad cold. I am very well, without exception. The only unpleasant effect I feel from this climate is a constant tendency to slight relaxation of the throat, but this is nothing more than a trifling inconvenience, very endurable, and which probably a little more seasoning will remove.... I tell you of our health first, for at our distance from each other that is the matter of greatest moment and anxiety....

I must tell you of our future arrangements; and, to begin like an Irishwoman, we arrived here on Monday. My father acts to-night for the first time, Hamlet; and I make my first appearance to-morrow in "Fazio." We shall act here for three weeks, and then return to New York for a month; after which we shall proceed to Boston, whence look to receive volumes from me about Webster, and Channing, and our friends and fellow-passengers, the H——s, who reside there.

I like this place better than New York; it has an air of greater age. It has altogether a rather dull, sober, mellow hue, which is more agreeable than the glaring newness of New York. There are one or two fine public buildings, and the quantity of clean, cool-looking white marble which they use both for their public edifices and for the doorsteps of the private houses has a simple and sumptuous appearance, which is pleasant. It is electioneering time, and all last night the streets resounded with cheers and shouts, and shone with bonfires. The present

President, Jackson, appears to be far from popular here, and though his own partisans are determined, of course, to re-elect him if possible, a violent struggle is likely to take place; and here already his opponent, Henry Clay, who is the leader of the aristocratic party in the United States, is said to have obtained the superiority over him.

I have got Graham's and Smith's "Histories," and though my time for reading is anything but abundant, yet every night and morning I do contrive, while brushing the outside of my head, to cram something into the inside of it.

I cannot bear to give up any advantage which I once possessed, and therefore struggle to keep up, in some degree, my music and Italian. These, together with rehearsing every morning, and acting four times a week, besides my journal, which I very seldom neglect, make up a good deal of daily occupation. Then, one must sacrifice a certain amount of time to the conventional waste of society, receiving and returning visits, etc.... I like what I have read of Graham very much; the matter is very interesting, and the spirit in which it is treated; and I am deeply in love with Captain John Smith, and wonder greatly at Pocahontas marrying anybody else. I suppose, however, the savage was not without excuse; for Mary Stuart, who knew something of these matters, says, with a rather satirical glance at her cousin of England, "En ces sortes de choses, la plus

sage de nous toutes n'est qu'un peu moins sotte que les autres."

I have been to my first rehearsal here to-day; the theater is small, but pretty enough. The public has high pretensions to considerable critical judgment and literary and dramatic taste, and scouts the idea of being led by the opinion of New York.... It is rather tiresome that fools are cut upon the same pattern all the world over. What is the profit of traveling? Oh dear! I think my Fazio has got St. Vitus's dance!...

Yesterday I tried some horses, which were rather terrible quadrupeds. They were not ill-bred cattle to look at, and I should think of a race that, with care and attention, might be brought to considerable perfection; but they are never properly broken for the saddle. The Americans who have spoken to me about riding say that they do not like a horse to have what we consider proper paces, but prefer a shambling sort of half-trot, half-canter, which they judiciously call a rack, and which is the ugliest pace to behold, and the most difficult to endure, possible. They never use a curb, but ride their horses upon the snaffle entirely, dragging it as tight as they can, and having the appearance of holding on for dear life by it; so that the horse, in addition to the awkward gait I have described, throws his head up, and pokes his nose out, and with open jaws "devours the road" before him....

I acted here last night for the first time. Dall

and my father say that I received my reception very ungraciously. I am sure I am very sorry, I did not mean to do so, but I really had not the heart or the face to smile and look as pleased and pleasant as I can at a parcel of strangers.... I was not well, or in spirits, and laboring under a severe cold, which I acquired on board the steamboat that brought down the Delaware.... Neither the Raritan nor the Delaware struck me in any way except by their great width. These vast streams naturally suggest the mighty resources which a country so watered presents to the commercial enterprise of its inhabitants. The breadth of these great rivers dwarfs their shores and makes their banks appear flat and uninteresting, though the large lake-like basins into which they occasionally expand are grand from the mere extent and volume of the sweeping mass of waters.

The colors of the autumnal foliage are rich and beautiful beyond imagination—crimson and gold, like a regal mantle, instead of the sad russet cloak of our fading woods. I think, beautiful as this is, that its gorgeousness takes away from the sweet solemnity that makes the fall of the year pre-eminently the season of thoughtful contemplation. Our autumn at home is mellow and harmonious, though sometimes melancholy; but the brilliancy of this decay strikes one sometimes with a sudden sadness, as if the whole world were dying of consumption, with these glittering gleams and hectic flushes, a mere deception of disease and death.... Good-by,

my dearest H——

PHILADELPHIA, October 14, 1832.

DEAREST H——,

"Boston is a Yankee town, and so is Philadelphy;" considering which, I assure you I find the latter quite a civilized place. The above quotation is from "Yankee-doodle," the National Anthem of the Americans, which I will sing to you some day when I am within hearing.

We have just returned from church. Dall and I being too late this morning for the service, which begins at half-past ten, sallied forth in search of salvation this afternoon, and after wandering about a little, entered a fine-looking church, which we found was a Presbyterian place of worship.... The preaching to-day was extemporaneous, and extremely feeble and commonplace, occasionally reminding me of your eloquent friend at Skerries.... I shall try, on my return to New York, to settle to some work in earnest, as I hope there that we shall repeat the plays we have already acted, and so need no rehearsals.... To-morrow I act Juliet to my father's Romeo; he does it still most beautifully.... In spite of his acting it with his own child (which puts a manifest absurdity on the very face of it), the perfection of his art makes it more youthful, graceful, ardent, and lover-like—a better Romeo, in short, than the youngest pretender to it nowadays. It is certainly simple truth when he says, "I

am the youngest of that name, for lack of a better," when the nurse asks for young Romeo.

Wednesday we act "The School for Scandal," and Friday "Venice Preserved." So there's your play-bill....

At this moment a great political excitement pervades the country; it is the time of the Presidential Election, and the most vehement efforts are being made by the Democratic party to maintain the present President, General Jackson, in his post. The majority, I believe, is in his favor, though we are told that the "better classes" (whatever that may mean where no distinctions of class exist) embrace the cause of his opponent, Henry Clay.

It seems curious, if it is true, as we have been assured, that in this one State of Pennsylvania, eight thousand persons out of fifty who have the right of voting were all who in this last election exercised it; so that the much-vaunted privilege of universal suffrage does not seem to be highly prized where it is possessed.

From all the opinions that I hear expressed upon the subject, it does not seem as though the system of election prevalent here works much better, or is much freer from abuses, than the well-vilified one which England has just been reforming. Bribery and corruption are familiar here as elsewhere, to those who have, and those who wish to have, power; and I have not yet heard a single American

speak of our Radical reformers without uplifted hands at what they consider their folly in not "letting well alone," or, as they say, in substituting one set of abuses for another, as they declare we shall do if we adopt their vote by ballot system.

I have now written you a philosophical, moral, and political letter, and beg you will score up my attempt to write rationally against the loads of gibberish I have from time to time discoursed to you. Good bless you, dearest H——! Three thousand miles away, I am still

Always your affectionate

F. A. K.

PHILADELPHIA, October 22, 1832.

DEAR H——,

My first news is deplorable, and I beg you will lament over it accordingly. I eat little, drink less, rehearse six mornings and act five nights a week; in spite of all which, and riding a heavy-going, jolting, shambling, hard-pulling horse, I have grown so fat that I really cannot perceive that there is any shape in particular about me. Grotesque things sometimes are melancholy too, and it is so with me, for I am both....

My father and Dall are very well; at this moment he is busy saying, and she hearing him say, the part of Fazio, which he is to act with me to-morrow night. I dread it

dreadfully; acting anything painful with him always tries my nerves extremely.

Bianca is a part of terrible excitement in itself, without the addition of having to act it to his Fazio. I cannot get rid of his being he, and it agonizes me really to see his sham agony; however, "'tis my vocation, Hal." It is very well that our audiences should look at us as mere puppets, for could they sometimes see the real feelings of those for whose false miseries their sympathies are excited, I believe sufficiently in their humanity to think they would kindly give us leave to leave off and go home. Ours is a very strange trade, and I am sorry to say that every day increases my distaste for it.... I do not think that during my father's life I shall ever leave the stage; it is very selfish to feel regret at this, I know, but it sometimes seems to me rather dreary to look along my future years, and think that they will be devoted to labor that I dislike and despise.... For many years —ever since I entered upon my first girlhood, indeed—a quiet, lonely life upon a small independence has been the aim of my desires and my notion of happiness. Italy and the south of France formerly constantly solicited my imagination, as offering pleasant places wherein to build a solitary nest.... And now a cottage near Edinburgh, with an income of two hundred a year, seems to me the most desirable of earthly possessions; but, though this is certainly not a very wild vision of wealth or magnificence, I fear it is quite as little within my reach as southern palaces, or villas on the Mediterranean.

My father has hitherto been able to lay by nothing, and my assistance is absolutely necessary to him, ... and as long as I can in any way serve my father's interests by remaining in my profession I shall do so, and must naturally look forward to a prolonged period of my present exertions. It is useless pondering upon this, but I have been led to do so lately from a letter which my father received from Mr. Bartley, the stage manager of Covent Garden, the other day, which contained the plan of a new theatrical speculation, in which he is most anxious to engage us. I know not how my father feels upon this subject.... I, however, am well determined that neither Mr. L——'s opinion, nor that of the whole world besides, should induce me to own the value of a truss of straw in any theater. My father's whole life has been given over to trouble and anxiety in consequence of his proprietorship and involvement in that ruinous concern, Covent Garden; and now, when his remaining health and strength will no more than serve to lay up the means of subsistence when health and strength are gone, the idea of his loading himself with such a burden of bitterness as the proprietorship of a new theater makes me perfectly miserable. For my own part, I am determined to own neither part nor lot in any such venture: I will lend or give anything that I may earn to it, and I will act, at half the price I might get elsewhere, for it, if my father wishes me to do so; but not a demonstrable cent per cent profit should induce me to run such a risk of cursing the

day that I was born, as to become owner of a theater. I write you all this (and I have written more than enough about it) because it has been lately a subject of much anxious meditation to me. The matter is at present without settled form or plan, but the proposal of such a scheme has caused me deep regret and anxiety.... I am going to act to-morrow in "The Hunchback;" Thursday, Mrs. Beverley; Friday, Lady Townley; Saturday, Juliet; Monday, Julia again; and Tuesday, Bizarre in "The Inconstant;" which ends our engagement here. This is pretty hard work, is it not? besides always one, and sometimes two rehearsals of a morning.

We begin our second engagement in New York on the 7th of November. Don't forget that the 27th of that month is my birthday, and that if you neglect to drink my health, I shall probably die, for want of your good wishes to keep me alive.

We act in Boston on the 3d of December; "further than that the deponent sayeth not."

I told you in my last letter that Philadelphia was the cleanest place in the world. The country along the banks of the Schuylkill (one of the rivers on which it stands; the other is the Delaware) is wild and beautiful, and the glory of the autumn woods what an eye that hath not seen can by no manner of means conceive. I have for the last week had my room full of the most delicious flowers that could only be seen with us at midsummer, and here, in these last days of

autumn, they are as abundant and fragrant, and the sun is as intensely hot and brilliant, as it should be, but never is, with us, in the month of July....

Dall went into a Quaker's shop here the other day, when, after waiting upon her with the utmost attention and kindness, the master of the shop said, "And how doth Fanny? I was in hopes she might have wanted something; we should have great pleasure in attending upon her." Was not that nice? So to-day I went thither, and bought myself a lovely sober-colored gown. This place, as you know, is the headquarters of Quakerdom, and all the enchanting nosegays come from "a Philadelphia friend," the latter word dashed under, as if to indicate a member of the religious fraternity always called by that kindly title here....

I think my father has some idea of bringing out "The Star of Seville" here, and if he does I shall break my heart that it was not brought out first in England. Emily always reproaches me with want of patriotism. I have more than helps to make me cheerful here, and leaving England—not home, and not you, but England, England—for two years, seems to me now ridiculous, and fabulous, and preposterous, and disastrous.

I have finished my first volume of Graham, and I have finished this letter. God bless you!

Ever your affectionate

F. A. K.

PHILADELPHIA, November 2, 1832.

DEAREST H——,

I received your fifth letter to-day, and one from Dorothy, and one from Emily Fitzhugh.... My last letter to you was a sad one, and sad in a fashion that does not often occur to me. I was troubled and anxious about my professional labor and its results, and that may be called a small sadness compared with some other with which I have lately become familiar. Of course none of these anxieties have been removed, for some time must elapse before I can know on what plan my father determines with regard to Mr. Bartley's proposal about this new theater. It does not affect me personally, because I am thoroughly determined to take no part in any speculation of the kind; but the possibility of my father entering into any such scheme is care enough to "kill a cat," and make a kitten miserable besides.... In all matters, but especially in matters of business, I hold frankness, straightforwardness, and decision as conducive to success, as consonant with right feeling; but I think men are much more cowardly than women, and believe a great deal more in policy, temporizing, and expediency than we do. "Managing" is supposed to be a feminine tendency; it has no place in my composition; perhaps I might be the better for a little of it—but only perhaps, and only a little.... This letter, as you will perceive by its date, was begun on the banks of the Delaware; here we are, however, once more in New York. It is Monday evening, the 5th of November, and

you are firing squibs and burning manikins *en action de grâces* that the Houses of Parliament were not blown up by the Roman Catholics, instead of living to be reformed by the Whigs, and (peradventure) blowing up the nation.

The Presidential Election is going on here, and creates immense excitement. General Jackson, they say, will certainly be re-elected.

Our last fortnight in Philadelphia has been one of incessant and very hard work, rehearsing every morning and acting every night. I rejoiced heartily when our engagement drew to a close, for I was fairly worn out, and money bought with health is bought too dear, I think.... I have taken some very pleasant rides during our stay in Philadelphia; the horses are none of them properly broken for riding, which makes it a pleasure of no small fatigue to ride them for three or four hours. Luckily, I do not object to severe exercise, and the weather and the country were both charming....

I am glad you have been re-reading the "Tempest." ... What exquisite pleasure that fine creation has given me! I like it better than any of the other plays; it is less "of the earth, earthy" than any of the others; for though the "Midsummer Night's Dream" is in some sort, as it were, its companion, the mortal element in the latter poem is far less noble and lovely than in the "Tempest." Prospero and Miranda, the dwellers on the

enchanted island, are statelier and fairer than any of the human wanderers in the mazes of the Athenian wood. There is a deep and indescribable melancholy to me in the "Tempest" that mingles throughout with its beauty, and lends a special charm to it. I so often contemplate in fancy that island, lost in the unknown seas, just in the hour of its renewed solitude, after the departure of its "human mortal" dwellers and visitors, when Prospero and his companions had bade farewell to it, when Caliban was grunting and grubbing and groveling in his favorite cave again, when Ariel was hovering like a humming-bird over the flower draperies of the woods, where the footprints of men were still stamped on the wet sand of the shining shore, but their voices silent and their forms vanished, and utter solitude, and a strange dream of the past, filling the haunts where human life, its sin and sorrow, and joy and hope, and love and hate, had breathed and palpitated, and were now forever gone. The notion of that desert once, but now deserted, paradise, whose flowers had looked up at Miranda, whose skies had shed wisdom on Prospero, always seems to me full of melancholy. The girl's sweet voice singing no more in the sunny, still noon, the grave, tender converse of the father and child charming no more the solemn eventide, the forsaken island dwells in my imagination as at once desecrated and hallowed by its mortal sojourners; no longer savage quite, and never to be civilized; the supernatural element disturbed, the human element

withdrawn; a sad, beautiful place, stranger than any other in the world. Perhaps the sea went over it; it has never been found since Shakespeare landed on it. I love that poem beyond words....

I shall ruin you in postage; if there is any chance of that, keep Mrs. Norton's five guineas to pay for my American epistles.

Ever your affectionate

F. A. K.

DEAREST H——,

I have received your letter, acknowledging my first to you.... As for letters, they are like everything else we experience here, sources of to the full as much suffering as satisfaction. Who has not felt their whole blood run backward at sight of one of these folded fate-bearers? I declare, breaking an envelope always has something of the character of pulling a shower-bath string over one's own head; I wonder anybody ever has the courage to do it....

Your dread of our finding New York quite a desert would have been literally fulfilled had we reached it a fortnight sooner; but the dreadful malady, the cholera, had taken its departure, and though private bereavements and general stagnation of business rendered the season a very unfavorable one for our experiment, yet, upon the whole, we have every reason to be well satisfied with the result of it, and think we did well not to

postpone the beginning of our campaign.... The first serious experiences of our youth seem to me like the breaking asunder of some curious, beautiful, and mystical pattern or device.... All our lives long we are more or less intent on replacing the bright scattered fragments in their original shape: most of us die with the bits still scattered round us—that is to say, such of the bits as have not been ground into powder, or soiled and defaced beyond recognition, in the life-process. The few very wise find and place them in a coherent form at last, but it is quite another curious, beautiful, and mystical device or pattern from the original one.

The deaths of the young Napoleon, the Duke of Reichstadt, and Walter Scott have excited universal interest here, naturally of a very dissimilar kind. One's heart burns to think of that young eagle falling like a weakly winter flower, or a faded, sickly girl, into his untimely grave.... There was nothing for him but death. If he had been anything, it could only have been a wild spark of the mad meteor from which he sprang; and as Heaven in its wisdom forbade that, I think it much of its mercy that it extinguished him early and utterly, and did not leave him to flare and flicker and burn himself out with foul gunpowder smoke, and smell of dead men slain in battle, in the middle of the smoldering ashes of his father's European empire.

My admiration and respect for Walter Scott

are unbounded, and were I the noblest, richest, and charmingest man in the world, I would lay myself at Anne Scott's feet out of sheer love and veneration for her father....

You ask me if I wrote anything on board ship? Nothing but odds and ends of doggerel. Since I have been here I have written some verses on the beautiful American autumn, which have been published with commendation. I am thinking of writing a prose story, if ever again I can get two minutes and a half of leisure.... Your entreaties for minute details of our life make me sad, for how little of what we do, be, or suffer can be conveyed to you in this miserable scrap of paper!... Our dinner-hour is three when we are actors, five when we are ladies and gentlemen. The food we get here in New York is very indifferent. It was excellent in quality in Philadelphia, but wherever we have been there is a want of niceness and refinement in the cooking and serving everything that is very disagreeable....

Thursday, Nov. 27th. This is my birthday—in England always one of the gloomiest days of this gloomy month; here my windows are all open, and the warm sun streaming in as it might on the finest of early September days with us. I am to-day three-and-twenty. Where is my life gone to? As the child said, "Where does the light go when the candle is out?" ... Since last I wrote to you I have been forty miles up the Hudson, and seen such noble waters and beautiful hills, such glory

of color and magnificent breadth in the grand river and its autumn woods, as I cannot describe.

This is our last night but one of acting here. We play "The Hunchback" on Saturday, and on Monday go back to Philadelphia for three weeks; thence to Baltimore and Washington, and then return here. I must go now and rehearse Katharine and Petruchio.

I have just finished Graham's "History," and am beginning John Smith. By the by, a gentleman here is writing a play, in which I am to act Pocahontas and my father Captain Smith. Come out and see it, won't you? Good-by, dear. Think always of your affectionate

F. A. K.

December 9, 1832.

MY DEAREST H——,

I received yours of October 16th yesterday.... You are not healthily natured enough to be inconstant. Yours is one of those morbid organizations for whom the present never does its wholesome, proper office of superseding the past, and your thoughts and feelings, your whole inner life, in short, is always out of perspective, because your background is forever your foreground, and with you, half the time, nothing is but what is not; not in consequence of looking forward, like Macbeth, but the reverse.... I am delighted that you are going to Scotland

to know my dear Mrs. Harry Siddons.

Before this letter reaches you, however, you will have returned to your castle, and your visit to Edinburgh will be over.... Mercy on me! what disputations you and Mr. Combe will have had—on matters physiological, psychological, phrenological, and philosophical! My brains ache to imagine them.... Spurzheim, you know, is dead lately in Boston. It is a matter of regret to me not to have seen him, and his death will be a grief to the Combes, who venerate him highly.... Making trial of people is running a foolish risk, and they who get disappointment by it reap the most probable result from such experiments. I am quite willing to trust my friends; God forbid I should ever try them!...

We have not yet been to Boston, and therefore I myself know nothing of Channing, and cannot answer your questions about him. All that I hear inclines me to like as well as respect him. His gentleness and kindness, his weak health, brought on by over-study, his perfect simplicity and unaffectedness—these are the usual details that follow any mention of him, and accord with the impression his writings produced upon me; but of his theological treatises I know nothing.

I am glad anything so universal as the blessed sunshine reminds you of me, because my remembrance must be present with you almost daily. The lights of heaven shine more

glowingly here than through the misty veils that curtain our islands. The moon and stars are wonderfully bright, and there is an intensity, an earnestness, and a translucent purity in the sky here that delights me.... Four months are already gone out of the two years we are to pass out of England. Dear England! My heart dwells with affectionate pride upon the beauty and greatness and goodness of my own country—that wonderful little land, that mere morsel of earth as it seems on the map—so full of power, of wealth, of intellectual vigor and moral worth!...

I found Graham a little too much of a Republican for me, though his "History" seemed to me upon the whole good and very impartial. I am now half way through Smith's "Virginia," which pleases me by its quaint old-world style. I am myself much inclined to be in love with Captain Smith. A man who fights three Turks and carries their heads on his shield is to me an admirable man....

I answer the propositions in your letters in regular rotation as they come; and so, with regard to the peaches, those that I have tasted on this side of the Atlantic I should say were not comparable to fine hothouse peaches in England and fine French espalier peaches; but then the peach trees here are standard trees, and there are whole orchards of them. Their chief merit, therefore, is their abundance, and some of that abundance is certainly fit for nothing but to feed pigs withal. [It is by no means a luxury to be

despised, however, to have, in the American fashion, on a hot summer's day, a deep plate presented to you full of peaches, cut up like apples for a pie, that have been standing in ice, and are then snowed over with sugar and frozen cream.]

We are now in Philadelphia, whence we go to Baltimore, Washington, and Charleston. The Southern States are at this moment in a state of violent excitement, which seems almost to threaten a dissolution of the Union. The tariff question is the point of disagreement; and as the interests of the North and South are in direct opposition on this subject, there is no foretelling the end.

Our success is very great, and we have every reason to be satisfied with and grateful for it. Our houses are full, and eke our pockets, and we have hitherto managed to live in tolerable privacy and very tolerable discomfort. But I believe the western part of the country has yet to teach us the extent of inconvenience to which travelers in America are sometimes liable. God bless you, dearest H——.

I am, ever yours affectionately,

F. A. K.

My father and I took a moonlight walk the other night, from ten o'clock till half-past twelve, during which we neither of us uttered six words.

BALTIMORE, January 2, 1833.

MY DEAREST H——,

You are the first to whom I date this new year.... I told you in one of my letters to keep the five guineas Mrs. Norton has paid you for my scribblements to pay the postage of my letters—do so....

We arrived in this place on Monday, at half-past four, having left Philadelphia at six in the morning. We have just terminated a second engagement there very successfully. If the roads and carriages are bad, and the land-traveling altogether detestable, the speed, facility, and convenience of the steamboats, by which one may really be conveyed from one end to another of this world of vast waters, are very admirable. Vast waters indeed they are! We came down the Delaware on Monday, and (open your Irish eyes!) sometimes it was six, sometimes thirteen miles wide, and never narrower than three or four miles at any part of it that we saw. So wide an expanse of fresh running water is in itself a fine object. We crossed the narrow neck of land between the Delaware and the Chesapeake on a railroad with one of Stephenson's engines....

The railroad was full of knots and dots, and jolting and jumping and bumping and thumping places. The carriages we were in held twelve people very uncomfortably. Baltimore itself, as far as I have seen it, strikes me as a large, rambling, red-brick village on the outskirts of one of our

manufacturing towns, Birmingham or Manchester. It covers an immense extent of ground, but there are great gaps and vacancies in the middle of the streets, patches of gravely ground, parcels of meadow land, and large vacant spaces—which will all, no doubt, be covered with buildings in good time, for it is growing daily and hourly—but which at present give it an untidy, unfinished, straggling appearance.

While my father and I were exploring about together yesterday, we came to a print-shop, whose window exhibited an engraving of Reynolds's Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse, and Lawrence's picture of my uncle John in Hamlet. We stopped before them, and my father looked with a good deal of emotion at these beautiful representations of his beautiful kindred, and it was a sort of sad surprise to meet them in this other world where we are wandering, aliens and strangers.

This is the newest-looking place we have yet visited, the youngest in appearance in this young world; and I have experienced to-day a disagreeable instance of its immature civilization, or at any rate its small proficiency in the elegancies of life. I wanted to ride, but although a horse was to be found, no such thing as a side-saddle could be procured at any livery-stable or saddler's in the town, so I have been obliged to give up my projected exercise.

I have been to my first rehearsal here this

morning, and wretched enough all things were. I act for the first time to-morrow night Bianca, which they have everywhere chosen for my opening part; and it is a good one for that purpose, as I generally act and look well in it, and it is the sort of play that all sorts of people can comprehend. There is a foreign—I mean continental—custom here, which is pleasant. They have a *table d'hôte* dinner at two o'clock, and while it is going on a very tolerable band plays all manner of Italian airs and German waltzes, and as there is a fine long corridor into which my room-door opens, with a window at each end, I have a very agreeable promenade, and take my exercise to this musical accompaniment....

I have at this moment on my table a lovely nosegay—roses, geraniums, rare heaths, and perfect white camellias. Our windows are all wide open; the heat is intense, and the air that comes in at them like a sirocco. It is unusual weather for the season even here, and very unwholesome.

In a week's time we are going on to Washington, where we shall find dear Washington Irving, whom I think I shall embrace, for England's sake as well as his own. We have letters to the President, to whom we are to be presented, and to his rival, Henry Clay, and to Daniel Webster, whom I care more to know than either of the others.

After a short stay in Washington we return here, and then back to Philadelphia and New

York, till the 20th of February, after which we sail for Charleston. There has been, and still exists at present, a very considerable degree of political alarm and excitement in this country, owing to the threat of the South Carolinians to secede from the Union if the tariff is not annulled, and the country is in hourly expectation of being involved in a civil war. However, the prevailing opinion among the wise seems to be that the Northern States will be obliged to give up the tariff, as the only means of preserving the Union; and if matters come to a peaceable settlement, we shall proceed in February to Charleston; if not, South Carolina will have other things to think of besides plays and play-actors. The summer we shall probably spend in Canada; the winter perhaps in Jamaica, to which place we have received a most pressing invitation from Lord Mulgrave. The end of the ensuing spring will, I trust in God, see us embarked once more for England....

We are earning money very fast, and though I think we work too incessantly and too hard, yet, as every night we do not act is a certain loss of so much out of my father's pocket, I do not like to make many objections to it, although I think it is really not unlikely to be detrimental to his own health and strength....

I spent yesterday evening with some very pleasant people here, who are like old-fashioned English folk, the Catons, Lady Wellesley's father and mother. They are just now in deep mourning for Mrs. Caton's

father, the venerable Mr. Carroll, who was upward of ninety-five years old when he died, and was the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence. I saw a lovely picture by Lawrence of the eldest of the three beautiful sisters, the daughters of Mrs. Caton, who have all married Englishmen of rank. [The Marchioness of Wellesley, the Duchess of Leeds, and Lady Stafford. The fashion of marrying in England seems to be traditional in this family. Miss McTavish, niece of these ladies, married Mr. Charles Howard, son of the Earl of Carlisle.]

The Baltimore women are celebrated for their beauty, and I think they are the prettiest creatures I have ever seen as far as their faces go; but they are short and thin, and have no figures at all, either in height or breadth, and pinch their waists and feet most cruelly, which certainly, considering how small they are by nature, is a work of supererogation, and does not tend to produce in them a state of grace.... We act every night this week, and as we are obliged to rehearse every morning, of course I have no time for any occupations but my strictly professional ones. I do not approve of this quantity of hard work for either my father or myself, but I do not like to make any further protest upon the subject....

Good-by, dearest H——.

I am ever your affectionate

F. A. K.

To Mrs. Jameson.

Baltimore, January 11, 1833.

Thank you across the sea, dear Mrs. Jameson, for your letter of the 1st of November. I had been wondering, but the day before it reached me, whether you had ever received one I wrote to you on my first arrival in New York, or whether you were accusing me of neglect, ingratitude, forgetfulness, and all the turpitudes that the delay of a letter sometimes causes folk to give other folk credit for. My occupations are incessant, or rather, I should say, my occupation, for to my sorrow I have but one. 'Tis not with me now as in the fortunate days when, after six rehearsals, a piece ran, as the saying is, twenty nights, leaving me all the mornings and three evenings in the week at my own disposal. Here we rush from place to place, at each place have to drill a new set of actors, and every night to act a different play; so that my days are passed in dawdling about cold, dark stages, with blundering actors who have not even had the conscience to study the words of their parts, all the morning. All the afternoon I pin up ribbons and feathers and flowers, and sort out theatrical adornments, and all the evening I enchant audiences, prompt my fellow-mimes, and wish it had pleased Heaven to make me a cabbage in a corner of a Christian kitchen-garden in—well, say Hertfordshire, or any other county of England; I am not particular as to the precise spot.... Whenever I can I get

on horseback; it is the only pleasure I have in this world; for my dancing days are drawing to a close. But I mean to ride as long as I have a hand to hold a rein, or a leg to put over a pommel. By the by, I ought to beg your pardon for the last sentence; I ought to have said a foot to put into a stirrup; for if you are not ashamed of having legs you ought to be—at least, we are in this country, and never mention, or give the slightest token of having such things, except by wearing very short petticoats, which we don't consider objectionable.... I am glad you have furbished up and completed your little room, because it is a sign you mean to stay where you are, and I like to know where to find you in my imagination.... I have just seen dear Washington Irving, and it required all my sense of decent decorum to prevent my throwing my arms round his neck, he looked so like a bit of home, England.

You will be glad to hear that we are thriving, in body and estate. We are all well, and our work is very successful. The people flock to see us, and nothing can exceed the kindness which we meet with everywhere and from everybody.... I read nothing whatever since I am in this blessed land. The only books I have accomplished getting through have been Graham's "History of North America," Knickerbocker's "History of New York," which nearly killed me with laughing; "Contarini Fleming," which is very affected and very clever; sundry cantos of Dante, sundry plays of Shakespeare, sundry American poems [which are very good], and

old Captain John Smith's quaint "History of Virginia." As fast as I gather my wits together for any steady occupation, I am whisked off to some new place, and do not recover from one journey before I have to take another. The roads here shake one's body, soul, thoughts, opinions, and principles all to pieces; I assure you they are wicked roads.

Our theater, Covent Garden, is, we understand, going to the dogs. I cannot help it any more, that is certain, and feel about that as about all things that have had their day—it must go. Taglioni is like a dream, and you must not abuse Mademoiselle Mars to me. I never saw her but twice—in "L'Ecole des Vieillards" and "Valérie"—and I thought her perfection in both.... If I do not leave off, you will be blind for the next fortnight with reading this crossed letter. I wish you success most heartily in all you undertake, and am truly and faithfully yours,

FANNY KEMBLE.

[Washington Irving was intimately acquainted with my father and mother, and a most kind and condescending friend to me. He often told me that when first he went to England, long before authorship or celebrity had dawned upon him, he was a member of a New York commercial house, on whose affairs he was sent to Europe. It was when he was a mere obscure young man of business in London that he had been introduced to my mother, whose cordial kindness to him in his foreign isolation seemed to have made a profound impression on him; for when I knew him, in the days of his great literary

celebrity and social success, he often referred to it with the warmest expressions of gratitude. I think, of all the distinguished persons I have known, he was one of the least affected by the adulation and admiration of society. He remained quite unchanged by his extreme social popularity. Simple, unaffected, unconstrained, genial, kindly, and good, he seemed so entirely to forget his own celebrity, that one almost forgot it too in talking to him. I remember his coming, the day after my first appearance at Covent Garden, to see us, and congratulated my parents on the success of that terrible experiment. I, who was always delighted to see him, ran to fetch the pretty new watch I had received from my father the night before, and displayed its beauties with an eager desire for his admiration of them. He took it and slowly turned it about, commending its fine workmanship and pretty enamel and jewelry; then putting it to his ear, with a most mischievous look of affected surprise, he exclaimed, as one does to a child's watch, "Why, it goes, I declare!"

To my great regret and loss, I saw Mademoiselle Mars only in two parts, when, in the autumn of her beauty and powers, she played a short engagement in London. The grace, the charm, the loveliness, which she retained far into middle age, were, even in their decline, enough to justify all that her admirers said of her early incomparable fascination. Her figure had grown large and her face become round, and lost their fine outline and proportion; but the exquisite taste of her dress and graceful dignity of her deportment, and sweet radiance of her expressive countenance, were still indescribably charming; and the voice, unrivaled in its fresh melodious brilliancy, and the pure and perfect enunciation, were unimpaired, and sounded like the clear liquid

utterance of a young girl of sixteen. Her Celimène and her Elmire I never had the good fortune to see, but can imagine, from her performance of the heroine in Casimir de la Vigne's capital play of "L'Ecole des Vieillards," how well she must have deserved her unrivaled reputation in those parts.

It is remarkable that one of the most striking points in Madame d'Orval was suggested by herself to the author. De la Vigne, according to the frequent usage of French authors, was reading his piece to the great actress, upon whom its success was mainly to depend, and when he came to the scene where the offended but unjustly suspicious husband recounts to his wife the details of his duel with the young duke whose attentions to her had excited his jealousy, and that when, full of the tenderest anxiety for his safety, she flies to meet him, and is repulsed by the bitter irony of his speech, beginning, "Rassurez-vous, madame, le duc n'est point blessé," Mademoiselle Mars, having listened in silence till the end of D'Orval's speech, exclaimed, "Mais, quoi! je ne dis rien, elle ne dit rien!" De la Vigne, who had made the young woman listen in speechless anguish to the bitter and unjust reproach conveyed by her husband's first words and his subsequent account of the duel, said, in some surprise at Mademoiselle Mars' suggestion, "Mais quoi encore—que peut-elle dire? que voudriez-vous qu'elle dise?" "Ah, quelquechose!" cried Mademoiselle Mars, clasping her hands in the imagined distress of the situation; "rien—deuxmots seulement. 'Ah, monsieur!' quand il dit, 'Rassurez-vous, madame, le duc n'est point blessé.'" "Eh bien! dites, dites comme cela," cried De la Vigne, amazed at all the expression the exquisite voice and face had given to the two words. And so the scene was altered, and the long recital of D'Orval

was broken by the reproachful "Ah, monsieur!" of his wife, and seldom has the utterance of such an insignificant exclamation affected those who heard it so keenly. For myself, I never can forget the sudden, burning blush that spread tingling to my shoulders at all the shame and mortification and anguish conveyed in the pathetic protest of that "Ah, monsieur!" of Mademoiselle Mars.

Dr. Gueneau de Mussy, who knew her well, and used to see her very frequently in her later years of retirement from the stage, told me that he had often heard her read, among other things, the whole play of "Le Tartuffe," and that the coarse flippancy of the honest-hearted Dorinne, and the stupid stolidity of the dupe Orgon, and the vulgar, gross, sensual hypocrisy of the Tartuffe, were all rendered by her with the same incomparable truth and effect as her own famous part of the heroine of the piece, Elmire. On one of the very last occasions of her appearing before her own Parisian audience, when she had passed the limit at which it was possible for a woman of her advanced age to assume the appearance of youth, the part she was playing requiring that she should exclaim "Je suis jeune! je suis jolie!" a loud, solitary hiss protested against the assertion with bitter significance. After an instant's consternation, which held both the actors and audience silent, she added, with the exquisite grace and dignity which survived the youth and beauty to which she could no longer even pretend, "Je suis Mademoiselle Mars!" and the whole house broke out in acclamations, and rang with the applause due to what the incomparable artiste still was and the memory of all that she had been.]

NEW YORK, February 21, 1833.

It is a long time since I have written to you, my dearest H——.... My work is incessant, ... and there is no end to the breathless hurry of occupation we pass our days in. Here is already a break since I began this letter, for we are now in Philadelphia, on our way to Washington, and it is Thursday, the 3d of March.... It has been matter of serious regret to me that I have not, from the very first day of my becoming a worker for wages, looked more into the details of my earnings and spendings. I have felt this particularly lately from circumstances relative to V——'s position, which is a very sad one, from which I have been very anxious to relieve her.... All I know at present is, that since we have been here in America our earnings have already been sufficient to enable us to live in tolerably decent comfort on the Continent.... Do you know, dearest H——, that it is not impossible that I may never return to England to reside there. See it again, I will, please God to grant me life and eyes, but the state of my father's property in Covent Garden is such that it seems more than likely that he may never be able to return to England without risking the little which these last toilsome years will have enabled him to earn for the support of his own and my mother's old age. He will be compelled, in all likelihood, to settle and die abroad, as my uncle John did, by the liabilities of that ruinous possession of theirs, the first theater of London. When first my father communicated this chance to me, and

expressed his determination, should the affairs of the theater remain in their present situation, to buy a small farm in Normandy, and go and live there, my heart sank terribly. This was very different from my girlish dream of a life of lonely independence among the Alps, or by the Mediterranean; and the idea of living entirely out of England seems to me now very sad for all of us.... However, there are earth and skies out of England. What does Imogen say?—

> "I prithee think, there's livers out of Britain;"

and if God vouchsafe me my faculties, and I can bid farewell to this life of distasteful toil, I have visions of studies and pursuits which I think might make existence very happy in a farm in Normandy, though such might not have been my own choice.... What special inquiries did you wish me to make about General Washington? I was, when at Washington, within fifteen miles of Mount Vernon, his home and burying-place, but could not make time to go thither. I have one of his autograph letters, and if there be any indication of character in handwriting—which I hope to goodness there is not—it certainly exists in his, for a firmer, clearer, and fairer hand I never saw—an excellent, honest handwriting. His likeness confronts one at every corner here; not only at every street corner, where he lends his countenance to the frequenters of drinking-houses, but over every chimney-piece in every sitting-room. He is like the frogs of the

old Egyptian plague, except that they were in the king's chamber, where he was too good a Republican ever to have been.

I am amused at your summing up your account of the restless and perturbed state of poor Ireland by saying, "After all, I believe America is the land of peace and quiet." It seems to me, who am here, that everything at this moment threatens change and disintegration in this country. It is impossible to imagine more menacing elements of discord and disunion than those which exist in the opposite and antagonistic interests of its southern and northern provinces, and the anomalous mixture of aristocratic feeling and democratic institutions.... God bless you, my dear H——. I will write to you soon again; if possible, before the breathing-time this snow-storm is giving us is over.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. K.

NEW YORK, April 3, 1833.

MY DEAREST H——,

... I am working very hard, what with rehearsing, acting, studying new parts, devising new dresses, and attending—which, of course, I am obliged also to do—to the claims of the society in which we are living, and my time is so full that I barely contrive to fulfill all my duties and answer all the claims made upon me.... The spring is in the sky, and in the air her soft smile and sweet

breath are gladdening the world; but the process of vegetation is much later in beginning, and much more rapid in its operations when they do begin here, than with us. Though the last three days have been as hot as our midsummer weather, the trees are yet leafless and budless—as dry and unpromising-looking as they were in mid-winter; and, indeed, the transition from winter to summer is almost instantaneous here. The spring does not stand coaxing and beckoning the shy summer to the woods and fields as in our country, but while winter yet seems lord of the ascendant, and his white robes are still covering land and water, suddenly the summer looks down upon the earth from the cloudless sky, and, as by magic, the ice melts, the snow evaporates, the trees are clothed with green, the woods are full of flowers, and the whole world breaks out into a hallelujah of warmth, beauty, and blossoming like mid-July in our deliberate climate. This again lasts, as it were, but a day; the sun presently becomes so powerful that the world withers away under the intense heat, the flowers and shrubs fade, and instead of screening and refreshing the earth, are themselves scorched and parched with the glaring fierceness of the sky; the ground cracks, the watercourses dry up, the rivers shrink in their beds, and every human creature that can flies from the lowlands and the cities to go up into the north or to the mountains to find breath, shelter, and refreshment from the sultry curse. Then comes the autumn, and that is

most glorious; not soft and sad as ours, but to the very threshold of winter bright, warm, lovely, and gorgeous. Two seasons remain to our earthly year, remembrances, I think, of Paradise; the spring in Italy, and autumn in America....

You ask me how I "fit in" to my American audiences? Why, very kindly indeed. At first they seemed to me rather cold, and I felt this more with regard to my father than myself, but I think they have grown to like us; I certainly have grown to like them, and their applause satisfies me amply.... I heard yesterday of one of Sir Thomas Lawrence's prints of me which was carried by a peddler beyond the Alleghany Mountains [the Alleghany Mountains then were further than the Rocky Mountains are now from the Atlantic seaboard], and bought at an egregious price by a young engineer, who with fifteen others went out there upon some railroad construction business, were bidding for it at auction in that wilderness, where they themselves were gazed at, as prodigies of strange civilization, by the half-savage inhabitants of the region. That touched and pleased me very much.... We are going to act here till the 12th of this month, when we go to Boston, where we shall remain for a month; after which we return here for a week, and then proceed to Philadelphia by the 1st of June, where we intend closing our professional labors for the summer. Thence we shall probably go to Niagara and the Canadas. My father has talked of spending a little quiet time in Rhode Island, where the

weather is cool and we might recruit a little; but there does not seem much certainty about our plans at present. In the autumn we shall begin our progress toward New Orleans, where we shall probably winter, and act our way back here by the spring, when I hope and trust we shall return to England.... The book of Harriet Martineau's which you bade me read is delightful. I have not quite finished it yet, for I have scarcely any time at all for reading; for want of the habit of thinking and reading on such subjects I find the political economy a little stiff now and then, though the clearness and simplicity with which it is treated in this story are admirable. I did not know that I was supposed to be the original of Letitia.... God bless you, my dearest H——.

I am ever your most affectionate,

F. A. K.

"For Each and for All" was, I think, the name of the volume taken from Miss Martineau's admirable series of political economy tales, which my friend, Miss S ——, sent me. The heroine of the story is a young actress, and Miss Martineau once told me that she had derived some slight suggestion of the character from me.

NEW YORK, Friday, April 10, 1833.

MY DEAREST H——,

... On Monday last I acted Lady Macbeth; on Tuesday, Lady Townley; on Wednesday, Belvidera; and last night, Portia, and Mary

Copp in "Charles II." This is pretty hard work. To-morrow we start for Boston, which we shall reach on Sunday, and Monday our work begins there.... I think four nights a week as much as either my father or myself ought to work, and as much as we really can work profitably, the rest being money taken from our capital—*i.e.*, our health. But in Boston we shall act for three weeks or a month every night but the Saturdays. [The days when four or five performances a week were considered a sufficient exertion for popular actors or singers are far enough in the past, and now there seems to be no limit to the capacity of such artists for earning money by the exercise of their talents. Five and six performances a week are the normal number now expected from great European stars, or rather those which great European stars expect to give and to be paid for. Their health is one invariable sacrifice to this over-work, and their artistic excellence a still more grievous one. It has been asked why artists invariably return to Europe comparatively coarse and vulgar in the style of their performances, and the result is attributed to the want of refined taste and critical judgment of the American audiences —in my opinion very unjustly, for if want of knowledge and nice perception in the public induces carelessness and indifference in performers, the grasping greed of gain and incessant over-exertion, mental and physical, for the sake of satisfying it, is a far more certain cause of artistic deterioration. During Madame Ristori's last visit to America, I went

to see a morning performance of "Elizabeta d'Inglterra" by her. Arriving at the theater half an hour before the time announced for the performance, I found notices affixed to the entrances, stating that the beginning was unavoidably delayed by Madame Ristori's non-arrival. The crowd of expectant spectators occupied their seats and bore this prolonged postponement with American—*i.e.*, unrivaled—patience, good-temper, and civility. We were encouraged by two or three pieces of information from some official personage, who from the stage assured us that the moment Madame Ristori arrived (she was coming by railroad from Baltimore) the play should begin. Then came a telegram, she was coming; then an announcement, she was come; and driving from the terminus straight to the theater, tired and harassed herself with the delay, she dressed herself and appeared before her audience, went through a part of extraordinary length and difficulty and exertion—almost, indeed, a monologue—including the intolerable fatigue and hurry of four or five entire changes of costume, and as the curtain dropped rushed off to disrobe and catch a train to New York, where she was to act the next morning, if not the evening, of that same day. I had seen Madame Ristori in this part in England, and was shocked at the great difference in the merit of her performance. Every particle of careful elaboration and fine detail of workmanship was gone; the business of the piece was hurried through, with reference, of

course, only to the time in which it could be achieved; and of Madame Ristori's once fine delineation of the character, which, when I first saw it, atoned for the little merit of the piece itself, nothing remained but the broad claptrap points in the several principal situations, made coarse, and not nearly even as striking, by the absence of due preparation and working up to them, the careless rendering of everything else, and the slurring over of the finer minutiæ and more delicate indications of the whole character. It was a very sad spectacle to me.]

Besides your letter, the poor old *Pacific* (the ship that brought us to America) brought me something else to-day. While Washington Irving was sitting with me, a message came from the mate of the *Pacific* with a large box of mould for me. I had it brought in, and asking Irving if he knew what it was, "A bit of the old soil," said he; and that it was.... Washington Irving was sure to have guessed right as to my treasure, and I was not ashamed to greet it with tears before him.... He is so sensible, sound, and straightforward in his way of seeing everything, and at the same time so full of hopefulness, so simple, unaffected, true, and good, that it is a privilege to converse with him, for which one is the wiser, the happier and the better....

Here is Monday, April 15th, Boston, my dear H——. We arrived here yesterday evening, and in the course of this morning I have already received fourteen visitors, all of

whom I shall have to go and waste my time with in return for their kind waste of theirs upon me.... To-morrow I begin my work with "Fazio" and go to a party afterward....

Tuesday, 16th.

... This morning I have been to rehearsal, and out shopping, and received crowds of strangers who come and call upon us.... To-night I make my first appearance here in "Fazio," and we hear the theater will be crammed, and I am going to a party after that dreadful play; not by way of delight, but of duty, and a severe one it will be. To-morrow I act Mrs. Haller, Thursday Lady Teazle, and Friday Bianca again; Saturday is a blessed holiday.... I have finished Smith's "Virginia," which I found rather tiresome toward the end. I have finished Harriet Martineau's political-economy story, which I liked exceedingly. I am reading a small volume of Brewster's on "Natural Magic," which entertains me very much; but I am dreadfully cramped for time, and my poor mind goes like a half-tended garden, which every now and then makes me feel sad.

You would have been pleased, dear H——, if you had heard Washington Irving's answer to me the other day when, in talking with him of my profession and my distaste for it, I complained of the little leisure it left me for study and improving myself, for reading, writing, and the occupations that were congenial to me. "Well," he said, "you are living, you are seeing men and things, you

> are seeing the world, you are acquiring materials and heaping together observations and experience and wisdom, and by and by, when with fame you have acquired independence and retire from these labors, you will begin another and a brighter course with matured powers. I know of no one whose life has such a promise in it as yours." Oh! H——, I almost felt hopeful while he spoke so to me....

[Alas! my kind friend was no prophet. Not many months after, sitting by him at a dinner-party in New York, he said to me, "So I hear you are engaged to be married, and you are going to settle in this country. Well, you will be told that this country is like your own, and that living in it is like living in England: but do not believe it; it is no such thing, it is nothing of the sort; which need not prevent your being very happy here if you make the best of things as you find them. Above all, whatever you do, don't become a creaking door." "What's that?" asked I, laughing. He then told me that his friend Leslie, the painter, who was, I believe, like his contemporary and charming rival artist, Gilbert Stewart Newton, an American by birth, had married an Englishwoman, whom he had brought out to America, "but who," said Irving, "worried and tormented his and her own life out with ceaseless complaints and comparisons, and was such a nuisance that I used to call her 'the creaking door.'"]

Good-by, and God bless you, dearest H——.

I am affectionately yours,

FANNY KEMBLE.

BOSTON, Sunday, April 21, 1833.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

There lies in my desk, and has lain, I am ashamed to say, for a long time now, an unanswered letter of yours, which smites my conscience every time I open that useful receptacle (desk, not conscience), where it has, I am sorry to say, many companions in its own predicament. My time is like running water, and the quickest, but the rapids of Niagara, that ever ran, I think; and every hour, as it flies away, is filled with so much that must be done, letting alone so much that I would wish to do, that I am fairly out of breath, and feel as if I were flying myself in a whirling high wind, and if ever I stop for a moment, shan't be surprised to find that I have gone crazy. I think I should like to spend a few days entirely alone in a dark room, secluded from every sight and sound, for my senses are almost worn out, and my sense exhausted, with looking, hearing, feeling, going, doing, being, and suffering. Our work is incessant; we never remain a month in any one place, and we are scarce off our knees from putting things into drawers than we are down on them again to take them out and put them all back into trunks. My health has not suffered hitherto from this constant exertion, but I am occasionally oppressed with the dreadful unquietness of our life, and long for a few moments' rest of body and of mind.

This is our first visit to this place, and I am enchanted with it. As a town, it bears more

resemblance to an English city than any we have yet seen; the houses are built more in our own fashion, and there is a beautiful walk called the Common, the features of which strongly resemble the view over the Green Park just by Constitution Hill. The people here take more kindly to us than they have done even elsewhere, and it is delightful to act to audiences who appear so pleasantly pleased with us....

Only think! a book was sent to me from Philadelphia the other day which proved to be the "Diary of an Ennuyée." I have no idea who it came from, or who made so good a guess at that old predilection of mine. I fell to forthwith—for that book has always had a most powerful charm for me—and read, and read on, though I have read it many a time through before, and though I had been acting Bianca, and my supper was on my plate before me.

I heard the other day mention of another work of yours, since the Shakespeare book. If you are not weary of writing to me, with such long intervals between your question and my reply, tell me something of this new work in your next letter.

Our plans for the summer are yet unsettled.... I was much disappointed on arriving here to find that Dr. Channing has left Boston for the South. His health is completely broken, and the bleak and bitter east wind that blows perpetually here is a formidable enemy to life, even in stronger frames than his....

The hotel in which we are lodging here is immediately opposite the box-office, and it is a matter of some agreeable edification to me to see the crowds gathering round the doors for hours before they open, and then rushing in, to the imminent peril of life and limb, pushing and pommeling and belaboring one another like madmen. Some of the lower class of purchasers, inspired by the thrifty desire for gain said to be a New England characteristic, sell these tickets, which they buy at the box-office price, at an enormous advance, and smear their clothes with treacle and sugar and other abominations, to secure, from the fear of their contact of all decently-clad competitors, freer access to the box-keeper. To prevent, if possible, these malpractices, and secure, to ourselves and the managers of the theater any such surplus profit as may be honestly come by, the proprietors have determined to put the boxes up to auction and sell the tickets to the highest bidders. It was rather barbarous of me, I think, upon reflection, to stand at the window while all this riot was going on, laughing at the fun; for not a wretch found his way in that did not come out rubbing his back or his elbow, or showing some grievous damage done to his garments. The opposite window of my room looks out upon a churchyard and a burial-ground; the reflections suggested by the contrast between the two prospects are not otherwise than edifying.... Good-by; God bless you!

I am ever yours, most truly,

FANNY KEMBLE.

NEW YORK, Friday, May 24, 1833.

MY DEAREST H——,

I received your last letter, dated the 22d March, a week ago, when I was in Boston, which we have left, after a stay of five weeks, to return here, where we arrived a few days ago....

Boston is one of the pleasantest towns imaginable. It is built upon three hills, which give it a singular, picturesque appearance, and I suppose suggested the name of Tremonte Street, and the Tremonte Hotel, which we inhabited. The houses are many of them of fine granite, and have an air of wealth and solidity unlike anything we have seen elsewhere in this country. Many of the streets are planted with trees, chiefly fine horse-chestnuts, which were in full leaf and blossom when we came away, and which harmonize beautifully with the gray color and solid handsome style of the houses. They have a fine piece of ground, like a park, in one part of the town, which, together with the houses round it, reminded me a good deal of the Green Park and the walk at the back of Arlington Street.

[The addition of the new part of Boston, stretching beyond the Common and the public Gardens, has added immensely to the beauty of the city, and the variety of the buildings and alternate views at the end of the vistas of the fine streets, looking toward

Dorchester Heights, and those ending in the blue waters of the bay and Charles River, not unfrequently reminded me both of Florence and Venice, under a sky as rich, and more pellucid, than that of Italy.]

> The country all round the neighborhood of Boston is charming. The rides I took in every direction were lovely, and during the last fortnight of our stay nothing could exceed the exquisite brightness of the spring weather. The apple trees were all in bloom, the lilacs in flower, and everything as sweet, fresh, and enchanting as possible.... How I wish you could have seen the glorious Hudson with me the other day, now that the woods on its banks are dark with the shade of their thick and varied foliage! How you would have rejoiced in the beautiful and noble river scenery! This is "a brave new world," more ways than one, and we are every way bound to like it, for our labor has been most amply rewarded in its most important result, money; and the universal kindness which has everywhere met us ever since we first came to this country ought to repay us even for the pain and sorrow of leaving England. We are to remain here about ten days longer, and then proceed to Philadelphia, where we shall stay a fortnight, and then we start for cool and Canada, taking the Hudson, Trenton Falls, and Niagara on our way; act in Montreal and Quebec for a short time, and then adjourn, I hope, to Newport in Rhode Island, to rest and recruit till we begin our autumnal

work.... And now I have done grumbling at "the state of life into which it has pleased God to call me." My dear H——, I began this letter yesterday, and am this moment returned from a long visit to Dr. Channing.... The outward man of the eloquent preacher and teacher is rather insignificant, and produces no impression at first sight of unusual intellectual supremacy; and though his eyes and forehead are fine, they did not seem to me to do justice to the mind expressed in his writings; for though Shakespeare says,

> "There is no art to read the mind's
> construction in the face,"

I think the mental qualities are more often detected there than the moral ones. He is short and slight in figure, and looks, as indeed he is, extremely delicate, an habitual invalid; his eyes, which are gray, are well and deeply set, and the brow and forehead fine, though not, perhaps, as striking as I had expected. The rest of the face has no peculiar character, and is rather plain.

He talked to me a great deal about the stage, acting, the dramatic art; and, professing to know nothing about it, maintained some theories which proved he did not, indeed, know much. As far as knowledge of the stage and acting goes, of course this was not surprising, his studies, observation, and experience certainly not having lain in that direction; indeed, if they had, he might not have shown more comprehension of the

subject. Sir Thomas Lawrence is the only unprofessional person I ever heard speak upon it whose critical opinion and judgment seemed to me worth anything; but it appeared to me that, in the course of the discussion, some of Dr. Channing's opinions (with all respect be it spoken) betrayed an ignorance of human nature itself, upon which, after all, dramatic literature and dramatic representation are founded. He asked me if at the present day, and in our present state of civilization, such a character as Juliet could be imagined possible; so that I believe I was a little disappointed, in spite of his greatness, his goodness, and my reverence and admiration for him.

I went to call on him with a Miss Sedgwick, a person of considerable literary reputation here, and whose name and books you may perhaps have heard of. One of them, "Hope Leslie," is, I think, known in England. Though she is a good deal older than myself, I have formed a great friendship with her; she is excellent, as well as very clever and charming. She knows Dr. Channing intimately, and is a member of his church....

It is now Monday morning, dear H——, and I am presently going to set off to the races. American races! only think of that! I who never saw but one in my own country, and was totally uninterested by it! But I am going chiefly to please a nice little woman who is just married, and whose husband has several horses that are to run, so perhaps I shall find these more exciting than I did the races I

attended at home. They are very little supported or resorted to here; the religious and respectable part of the community disapprove of them. There is a general prejudice against them, and they are even preached against; so that they are entirely in the hands of a few gentlemen of fortune, who keep them up, partly for their amusement, and partly with a view to the improvement of the breed of horses in this country. The running is said to be very good, the show is nothing.... However, I am going, and therefore you may look hereafter to hear —what you shall hear now—because I'm just come back, and am happy to inform you that my friend's husband's horse won the race. The stake was only £2000—no very great matter—but still enough to make the result interesting, if not important; though I think the hazard we ran of our lives at starting was the most exciting part of the day.

The racecourse is on Long Island, and, to reach it, one crosses the arm of the sea that divides that strip of land from New York in a steam ferryboat. All these transports were so thronged to-day with carriages, horses, and a self-governed, enlightened, and very free people, that in all my life I never saw anything so frightful as the confusion of the embarking and disembarking....

Dr. Channing was talking to me the other day of Harriet Martineau's writings, and has sent me "Ella of Garvelock," recommending it highly as an interesting story, though he does not seem to think Miss Martineau's

principles of political economy sufficiently sound to make her works as useful upon that subject, or to do all the good which she herself evidently hopes to produce by these tales....

God bless you, dear friend! I am ever most truly yours,

F. A. K.

NEW YORK, Sunday, June 24, 1833.

Great was my surprise, dear Mrs. Jameson, to find accompanying your letter of April 9th a card of Mr. Jameson's. My father called upon him almost immediately, but had not the good fortune to find him at home, and I presume he is now gone on to Canada, whither we are ourselves proceeding, and where we may very possibly meet him. Our spring engagements are all over, and we are now going away from the hot weather to Niagara, into which, if all tales be true, I expect to fall headlong, with sheer surprise and admiration; after which I shall accompany my father to Montreal and Quebec, where we shall resume our professional labors....

I am very sorry you have been ill. You do not speak of your eyes, from which I argue that you were not painfully conscious of the existence of those valuable luminaries at the time you wrote....

The accounts, public and private, that we

receive of the state of England are not encouraging, and the trouble seems such as neither Tory, Whig, nor even Radical, can cure. You talk of bringing out a colony to this country; bring out half of England, and those who starve at home will have to eat, and to spare, here. How I do wish our poor laboring people could be made to know how easily they might exchange their condition for a better one!

I wish you could have heard what my father was reading to us this morning out of Stewart's "North America;" not Utopian dreams of some imaginary land of plenty and fertility, but sober statements of authentic fact, telling of the existence of unnumbered leagues of the richest soil that ever rewarded human industry an hundredfold; wide tracts of lovely wilderness, covered with luxuriant pasture, and adorned profusely with the most beautiful wild flowers; great forests of giant timber, and endless rolling prairies of virgin earth, untouched by ax or plow; a world of unrivaled beauty and fertility, untenanted and empty, waiting to receive the over-brimming populations of the crowded lands of Europe, and to repay their labor with every species of abundance. It is strange how slow those old-world, weary, working folk have hitherto been to avail themselves of God's provision for them here.... You tell me you are working hard, but you do not say at what. Innumerable are the questions I have been asked about you, and a Philadelphian gentleman, a very intelligent and clever person, who is a large bookseller and

publisher here, bade me tell you that you and your works were as much esteemed and delighted in in America as in your own country. He was so enthusiastic about you that I think he would willingly go over to England for the sole purpose of making your acquaintance.

[It is a pity that the American law on the subject of copyright should have rendered Mr. Carey's admiration of my friend and her works so barren of any useful result to her. Any tolerably just equivalent for the republication of her books in America would have added materially to the hardly earned gains of her laborious literary life.]

I am already half moulded into my new circumstances and surroundings; and though England will always be home to my heart, it may be that this country will become my abiding-place; but if you come out to Canada we shall meet on this side of the Atlantic instead of the other....

Believe me ever yours truly,

F. A. K.

To Miss Fitzhugh.

Montreal, July 24, 1833.

My dearest Emily,

Within the last fortnight we have progressed, as we say in this country, over about nine

hundred and fifty miles of land and water. We have gone up the Hudson, seen Trenton, the most beautiful, and Niagara, the most awful, of waterfalls. As for Niagara, words cannot describe it, nor can any imagination, I think, suggest even an approximate idea of its terrible loveliness. I feel half crazy whenever I think of it. I went three times under the sheet of water; once I had a guide as far as the entrance, and twice I went under entirely alone. If you fancy the sea pouring down from the moon, you still have no idea of this glorious huge heap of tumbling waters. It is worth crossing the Atlantic to see it.... As I stood upon the brink of the abyss when I first saw it, the impulse to jump down seemed all but an irresistible necessity, and but for the strong arm that held mine fast I think I might very well have taken the same direction as the huge green glassy mountain of water that was pouring itself headlong into—what no eye can penetrate. It literally seemed as if everything was going down there, and one must go along with everything. The chasm into which the cataract falls is hidden by dense masses of snowy foam and spray, rising in an everlasting creation of cloud up into the sky, and vailing the frantic fury of the caldron below, where the waves churn and tread each other underfoot in the rocky abyss that receives them, in darkness which the sun's rays cannot penetrate nor the strongest wind for a moment disperse; a mystery, of which its thousand voices reveal nothing. It is nonsense writing about it—seeing and

hearing are certainly, in this case, the only reasons for believing. I think it would be delightful to pass one's life by this wonderful creature's side, and quite pleasant to die and be buried in its bosom....

We left that wonderful place a few days ago, steamed across Lake Ontario, came down the rapids of the St. Lawrence in an open boat, sang the Canadian boat song, and are now safe and sound, only half roasted, in his Majesty's dominions. Of all that we have seen, Niagara is, of course, the old object beyond all others, but we were delighted with the softness and beauty of a great deal of the scenery that we saw in traversing the State of New York—one of twenty States, not the largest of the twenty, but large enough to hold England in its lap.

The rapids of the St. Lawrence, though, I believe, really rather dangerous to descend, have so little appearance of peril that I derived none of the excitement I had expected, and which a little danger always produces, from going through them. Instead of shooting down long sheets of rushing water, which was what I expected, we were tossed and tumbled and shaken up and down, in the midst of a dozen conflicting currents and eddies, which break the whole surface of the river into short pitching waves, and dance about in frantic white whirligigs, like the circles of the bad nuns' ghosts, in Meyerbeer's devilish Opera....

Good-by, my dearest Emily. I am always

affectionately yours,

F. A. K.

STEAMBOAT ST. PATRICK,
ON THE ST. LAWRENCE, August 17, 1833.

MY DEAREST H——,

There is lying in my desk an unfinished letter to you, begun about a week ago, which is pausing for want of an opportunity to go on with it; but here I am, a prisoner in a steamboat, destined to pass the next four and twenty hours on the broad bosom of the St. Lawrence, and what can I do better than begin a fresh chapter to you, leaving the one already begun to be finished on my next holiday. My holidays, indeed, are far from leisure time, for when I have nothing to do I have all the more to see; so that I am as busy and more weary than if I were working much harder.

We have been staying for the last fortnight in Quebec, and are now on our way back to Montreal, where we shall act a night or two, and then return to the United States, to New York and Boston.... The greater part of these poems of Tennyson's which you have sent me we read together. The greater part of them are very beautiful. He seems to me to possess in a higher degree than any English poet, except, perhaps, Keats, the power of writing pictures. "The Miller's Daughter," "The Lady of Shalott," and even the shorter poems, "Mariana," "Eleänore," are full of exquisite

form and color; if he had but the mechanical knowledge of the art, I am convinced he would have been a great painter. There are but one or two things in the volume which I don't like. "The little room with the two little white sofas," I hate, though I can fancy perfectly well both the room and his feeling about it; but that sort of thing does not make good poetry, and lends itself temptingly to the making of good burlesque.

I have much to tell you, for in the last two months I have seen marvelous much. I have seen Niagara. I wish you had been there to see it with me. However, Niagara will not cease falling; and you may, perhaps, at some future time, visit this country. You must not expect any description of Niagara from me, because it is quite unspeakable, and, moreover, if it were not, it would still be quite unimaginable. The circumstances under which I saw it I can tell you, but of the great cataract itself, what can be told except that it is water?

I confess the sight of it reminded me, with additional admiration, of Sir Charles Bagot's daring denial of its existence; having failed to make his pilgrimage thither during his stay in the United States, he declared on his return to England that he had never been able to find it, that he didn't believe there was any such thing, and that it was nothing but a bragging boast of the Americans.

At Albany, our first resting-place from New York, we had been joined by Mr. Trelawney,

who had been introduced to me in New York, and turned out to be the well-known friend of Byron and Shelley, and author of "The Adventures of a Younger Son," which is, indeed, said to be the story of his own life.

[His wild career of sea-adventure with De Ruyter, who was supposed to have left him at his death all his share of the results of their semi-buccaneering exploits, his friendship and fellowship with Byron and Shelley, the funeral obsequies he bestowed upon the latter on the shore of the Gulf of Spezzia, his companionship in the mountains of Greece with the patriot chief Odysseus, and his marriage to that chief's sister, are all circumstances given with more or less detail in his book, which was Englished for him by Mary Shelley, the poet's widow, who was much attached to him; Trelawney himself being quite incapable of any literary effort which required a knowledge of common spelling.... He was strikingly handsome when first I knew him, with a countenance habitually serene, and occasionally sweet in its expression, but sometimes savage with the fierceness of a wild beast. His speech and movements were slow and indolently gentle, his voice very low and musical, and his utterance deliberate and rather hesitating; he was very tall, and powerfully made, and altogether looked like the hero of a wild life of adventure, such as his had been. I hear he is still alive, a very wonderful-looking old man, who sat to Millais for his picture, exhibited in 1874, of the "Old Sea-Captain."]

We all liked him so well that my father invited him to join our party, and travel with us to Niagara, whither he was bound as well as ourselves. He had seen it before, and

though almost all the wonders of the world are familiar to him, he said it was the only one that he cared much to see again.

We reached Queenstown on the Niagara River, below the falls, at about twelve o'clock, and had three more miles to drive to reach them. The day was serenely bright and warm, without a cloud in the sky, or a shade in the earth, or a breath in the air. We were in an open carriage, and I felt almost nervously oppressed with the expectation of what we were presently to see. We stopped the carriage occasionally to listen for the giant's roaring, but the sound did not reach us until, within three miles over the thick woods which skirted the river, we saw a vapory silver cloud rising into the blue sky. It was the spray, the breath of the toiling waters ascending to heaven. When we reached what is called the Niagara House, a large tavern by the roadside, I sprang out of the carriage and ran through the house, down flights of steps cut in the rock, and along a path skirted with low thickets, through the boughs of which I saw the rapids running a race with me, as it seemed, and hardly faster than I did. Then there was a broad, flashing sea of furious foam, a deafening rush and roar, through which I heard Mr. Trelawney, who was following me, shout, "Go on, go on; don't stop!" I reached an open floor of broad, flat rock, over which the water was pouring. Trelawney seized me by the arm, and all but carried me to the very brink; my feet were in the water and on the edge of the precipice, and then I looked

down. I could not speak, and I could hardly breathe; I felt as if I had an iron band across my breast. I watched the green, glassy, swollen heaps go plunging down, down, down; each mountainous mass of water, as it reached the dreadful brink, recoiling, as in horror, from the abyss; and after rearing backward in helpless terror, as it were, hurling itself down to be shattered in the inevitable doom over which eternal clouds of foam and spray spread an impenetrable curtain. The mysterious chasm, with its uproar of voices, seemed like the watery mouth of hell. I looked and listened till the wild excitement of the scene took such possession of me that, but for the strong arm that held me back, I really think I should have let myself slide down into the gulf. It was long before I could utter, and as I began to draw my breath I could only gasp out, "O God! O God!" No words can describe either the scene itself, or its effect upon me.

We staid three days at Niagara, the greater part of which I spent by the water, under the water, on the water, and more than half in the water. Wherever foot could stand I stood, and wherever foot could go I went. I crept, clung, hung, and waded; I lay upon the rocks, upon the very edge of the boiling caldron, and I stood alone under the huge arch over which the water pours with the whole mass of it, thundering over my rocky ceiling, and falling down before me like an immeasurable curtain, the noonday sun looking like a pale spot, a white wafer, through the dense thickness. Drenched

through, and almost blown from my slippery footing by the whirling gusts that rush under the fall, with my feet naked for better safety, grasping the shale broken from the precipice against which I pressed myself, my delight was so intense that I really could hardly bear to come away.

The rock over which the rapids run is already scooped and hollowed out to a great extent by the action of the water; the edge of the precipice, too, is constantly crumbling and breaking off under the spurn of its downward leap. At the very brink the rock is not much more than two feet thick, and when I stood under it and thought of the enormous mass of water rushing over and pouring from it, it did not seem at all improbable that at any moment the roof might give way, the rock break off fifteen or twenty feet, and the whole huge cataract, retreating back, leave a still wider basin for its floods to pour themselves into. You must come and see it before you die, dear H——.

After our short stay at Niagara, we came down Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence to Montreal and Quebec. Before I leave off speaking of that wonderful cataract, I must tell you that the impression of awe and terror it produced at first upon me completely wore away, and as I became familiar with it, its dazzling brightness, its soothing voice, its gliding motion, its soft, thick, furry beds of foam, its vails and draperies of floating light, and gleaming, wavering diadems of vivid colors, made it to

me the perfection of loveliness and the mere magnificence of beauty. It was certainly not the "familiarity" that "breeds contempt," but more akin to the "perfect love" which "casteth out fear;" and I began at last to understand Mr. Trelawney's saying that the only impression it produced on him was that of perfect repose; but perhaps it takes Niagara to mesmerize him.

[The first time I attempted to go under the cataract of Niagara I had a companion with me, and one of the local guides, who undertook to pilot us safely. On reaching the edge of the sheet of water, however, we encountered a blast of wind so violent that we were almost beaten back by it. The spray was driven against us like a furious hailstorm, and it was impossible to open our eyes or draw our breath, and we were obliged to relinquish the expedition. The next morning, going down to the falls alone, I was seduced by the comparative quietness and calm, the absence of wind or atmospheric disturbance, to approach gradually the entrance to the cave behind the water, and finding no such difficulty as on the previous day, crept on, step by step, beneath the sheet, till I reached the impassable jutting forward of the rock where it meets the full body of the cataract. My first success emboldened, me to two subsequent visits, the small eels being the only unpleasant incident I encountered. The narrow path I followed was a mere ledge of shale and broken particles of the rock, which is so frayable and crumbling, either in its own nature, or from the constant action of the water, that as I passed along and pressed myself close against it, I broke off in my hands the portions of it that I grasped.]

> A few miles below the falls is a place called the whirlpool, which, in its own kind, is almost as fine as the fall itself. The river makes an abrupt angle in its course, when it is shut in by very high and rocky cliffs—walls, in fact—almost inaccessible from below. Black fir trees are anchored here and there in their cracks and fissures, and hang over the dismal pool below, most of them scathed and contorted by the fires or the blasts of heaven. The water itself is of a strange color, not transparent, but a pale blue-green, like a discolored turquoise, or a stream of verdigris, streaked with long veins and angry swirls of white, as if the angry creature couldn't get out of that hole, and was foaming at the mouth; for, before pursuing its course, the river churns round and round in the sullen, savage, dark basin it has worn for itself, and then, as if it had suddenly found an outlet, rushes on its foaming, furious way down to Ontario. We had ridden there and alighted from our horses, and sat on the brink for some time. It was the most dismal place I ever beheld, and seemed to me to grow horribler every moment I looked at it: drowning in that deep, dark, wicked-looking whirlpool would be hideous, compared to being dashed to death amid the dazzling spray and triumphant thunder of Niagara.

[There are but three places I have ever visited that produced upon me the appalling impression of being accursed, and empty of the presence of the God of nature, the Divine Creator, the All-loving Father: this

whirlpool of Niagara, that fiery, sulphurous, vile-smelling wound in the earth's bosom, the crater of Vesuvius, and the upper part of the Mer de Glace at Chamouni. These places impressed me with horror, and the impression is always renewed in my mind when I remember them: God-forsaken is what they looked to me.]

I do not believe this whirlpool is at all as generally visited as the falls, and perhaps it might not impress everybody as it did me.

Quebec, where we have been staying, is beautiful. A fortress is always delightful to me; my destructiveness rejoices in guns and drums, and all the circumstance of glorious war. The place itself, too, is so fiercely picturesque—such crags, such dizzy, hanging heights, such perpendicular rocky walls, down to the very water's edge, and such a broad, bright bay. The scenery all round Quebec is beautiful, and we went to visit two fine waterfalls in the neighborhood, but of course to us just now there is but one waterfall in the world.... God bless you, dear!

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. K.

To Mrs. Jameson.

New York, Tuesday, October 15, 1833.

You are wandering, dear Mrs. Jameson, in

the land of romance, the birthplace of wild traditions, the stronghold of chivalrous legends, the spell-land of witchcraft, the especial haunt and home of goblin, specter, sprite, and gnome; all the beautiful and fanciful creations of the poetical imagination of the Middle Ages. You are, I suppose, in Germany; intellectually speaking, almost the antipodes of America. Germany is now the country to which my imagination wanders oftener than to any other. Italy was my wishing land eight years ago, but many things have dimmed that southern vision to my fancy, and the cloudier skies, wilder associations, and more solemn spirit of Germany attract me more now than the sunny ruin-land....

I shall not return to England, not even to visit it now—certainly never to make my home there again. "The place that knew me will know me no more," and you will never again have the satisfaction of coming to me after a first night's new part to say all manner of kind things about it to me. My feelings about the stage you know full well, and will rejoice with me that there is a prospect of my leaving it before its pernicious excitements had been rendered necessary to me by habit. Yet when I think of my "farewell night," I cannot help wishing it might have taken place in London, before my own people, who received my first efforts so kindly, and where I stood in the very footprints, as it were, of my kindred.... Thank you for your long and entertaining letter, and for the copy of the second edition of

"Shakespeare's Women." You cannot think how extremely popular you are in this country. A lady assured me the other day, that when you went to heaven, which you certainly would, Shakespeare would meet you and kiss you for having understood, and made others understand, him so well. If ever you do come to this side of that deep, dividing ditch, which you speak of as not an improbable event, you will find as much admiration waiting for you here as you can have left behind; whether it is equally valuable, it is for you to judge.... I have seen Niagara since last I wrote to you, and it was in a balcony almost overhanging it that I saw your husband, and that he gave me long accounts of your literary plans.

Dear Mrs. Jameson, this is a short and stupid letter, but I have been working awfully hard, and have not been well for the past month, and am not capable of much exertion. It is quite a novelty to me, and not an agreeable one, to feel myself weak, and worn out, and good for nothing. Good-by; write to me from some of your halting-places, and believe me ever yours truly,

F. A. K.

I noted the altered frontispiece of my little book.

BOSTON, April 16, 1834.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I received a kind and interesting letter from

you, dated "Munich," some time past, and lately another from London, telling me of the alarm you experienced with regard to your father's health, and your sudden return from Germany, which I regretted very much, for selfish as well as sympathetic motives. You were not only enjoying yourself there, but were gathering materials for the enjoyment of others; and I am as loath to lose the benefit of your labors as sorry that your pleasant holiday was thus interrupted.

It is now probable, unless the Atlantic should like me better going than it did coming, and that it should take me to its bosom, that I may be in London in July, when I hope I shall find you there.... I am coming back to England, after all, and shall, I think, remain on the stage another year....

I received, a few days ago, a letter from dear H——, in which she mentioned that you had an intention of writing a memoir or biographical sketch of "the Kemble family," in which, if I understood her right, you thought of introducing the notice which you wrote for Hayter's drawings of me in Juliet. She said that you wished to know whether I had any objection or dislike to your doing so, and I answered directly to yourself, "None in the world." I had but one fault to find with that notice of me, that it was far too full of praise; I thought it so sincerely. But, without wishing to enter into any discussion about my merits or your partiality, I can only repeat that you are free to write of me what you will, and as you will; but, for your own

sake, I wish you to remember that praise is, to the majority of readers, a much more vapid thing than censure, and that if you could admire me less and criticise me more, I am sure, as the housemaids say, you would give more satisfaction. However, keep your conscience by you; praise or blame, it is none of my business. Talking of that same Juliet, I received a letter from Hayter the other day which gave me some pain. He tells me that he has all those sketches on his hands, and asks me if I am inclined to take them of him. I fear his applying to me, at such a distance, on this subject, is a sign that he is not prosperous or doing well. He is an amiable, clever little man, and I shall feel very sorry if my surmise proves true. My father wishes to have the collection, and I shall write to tell him so forthwith.

It is no slight illustration to me of the ephemeral nature of the popularity which I enjoyed, to think that those drawings, which, as works of art, were singularly elegant and graceful, should go a-begging for a purchaser. Verily "all is vanity!"

[My friend, Lord Ellesmere, purchased the series of drawings Mr. Hayter made from my performance of Juliet; and on my last visit to Lady Ellesmere at Hatchford, she pointed them out to me round a small hall that led to her private sitting-room, over the writing-table of which hung a miniature of me copied from a drawing of Mrs. Jameson's by that charming and clever woman, Miss Emily Eden.]

You will be sorry for me and for many when

I tell you that our good, dear friend Dall is dangerously ill. I am writing at this moment by her bed.... This is the only trial of the kind I have ever undergone; God has hitherto been pleased to spare all those whom I love, and to grant them the enjoyment of strength and health. This is my first lonely watching by a sick-bed, and I feel deeply the sadness and awfulness of the office.... Now that I am beginning to know what care and sorrow really are, I look back upon my past life and see what reason I have to be thankful for the few and light trials with which I have been visited. My poor dear aunt's illness is giving us a professional respite, for which my faculties, physical and mental, are very grateful. They needed it sorely; I was almost worn out with work, and latterly with anxiety and bitter distress.

We terminated our last engagement here on Friday last, when the phlegmatic Bostonians seemed almost beside themselves with excitement and enthusiasm: they shouted at us, they cheered us, they crowned me with roses. Conceive, if you can, the shocking contrast between all this and the silent sick-room, to which I went straight from the stage....

Surely, our profession involves more intolerable discords between the real human beings who exercise it and their unreal vocation, than any in the world!... In returning to England, two advantages, which I shall value much, will be obtained: a fortnight's rest during the passage, and, I

hope, not quite such hard work when I resume my labors.... As for the hollowness and heartlessness of the world, by which one means really the people that one has to do with in it, I cannot say that I trouble my mind much about it. In their relations with me I commit every one to their own conscience; if they deal ill by me, they deal worse by themselves.... I hope you may be in London when we reach it. Farewell.

I am ever yours truly,

FANNY KEMBLE.

NEW YORK, Thursday, April 24, 1834.

MY DEAR H——,

This will be but a short letter, the first short one you will have received from me since we parted. Dear Dall has gone from us. She is dead; she died in my arms, and I closed her eyes.... I cannot attempt to speak of this now, I will give you all details in my next letter. It has been a dreadful shock, though it was not unexpected; but there is no preparation for the sense of desolation which oppresses me, and which is beyond words.... I wrote you a long letter a few days ago, which will perhaps have led you to anticipate this. We shall probably be in England on the 10th of July.... The sole care of my father, who is deeply afflicted, and charge of everything, devolves entirely on me now.... We left Boston on Tuesday.... I act here to-night for the first time since I lost that dear and

devoted friend, who was ever near at hand to think of everything for me, to care for me in every way. I have almost cried my eyes out daily for the last three months; but that is over now. I am working again, and go about my work feeling stunned and bewildered....

I saw Dr. Channing on Monday; he has just lost a dear and intimate connection. With what absolute faith he spoke of her! Gone! to the Author of all good. That which was good must return to Him. It is true, and I believe it, and know it; but at first I was lost.... God bless you, dear H——. We shall meet erelong, and in the midst of great sorrow that will be a great joy to

Yours ever affectionately,

F. A. K.

We have buried dear Dall in a lonely, lovely place in Mount Orban's Cemetery, where —— and I used to go and sit together last spring, in the early time of our intimacy. I wished her to lie there, for life and love and youth and death have their trysting-place at the grave.

My aunt died in consequence of an injury to the spine, received by the overturning of our carriage in our summer tour to Niagara.

I was married in Philadelphia on the 7th of June, 1834, to Mr. Pierce Butler, of that city.

THE END.

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Transcriber's note

The following names were changed in the index for consistency with the text:

	Changed from
Alleghany	Allegheny
Belzoni	Belzini
Biagioli	Biagoli
Der Freyschütz	Der Freyschutz
Flore, Mlle.	Floré, Mlle.
Foscolo, Ugo	Foscolo, Uga
Nourrit	Nourritt
Pickersgill	Puckersgill
Roxelane	Roxelaine
Sakuntalà	Sakuntala
Sonnambula	Somnambula
Therëse Heyne	Therese Heyne
Winckelmann	Winckelman
César Malan	Cesar Malan (under Kemble, Frances Anne)
Joséphine	Josephine (Bonaparte's letters to, under Kemble, Frances Anne)
Françoise de Foix	Francoise de Foix (under Tree, Miss)

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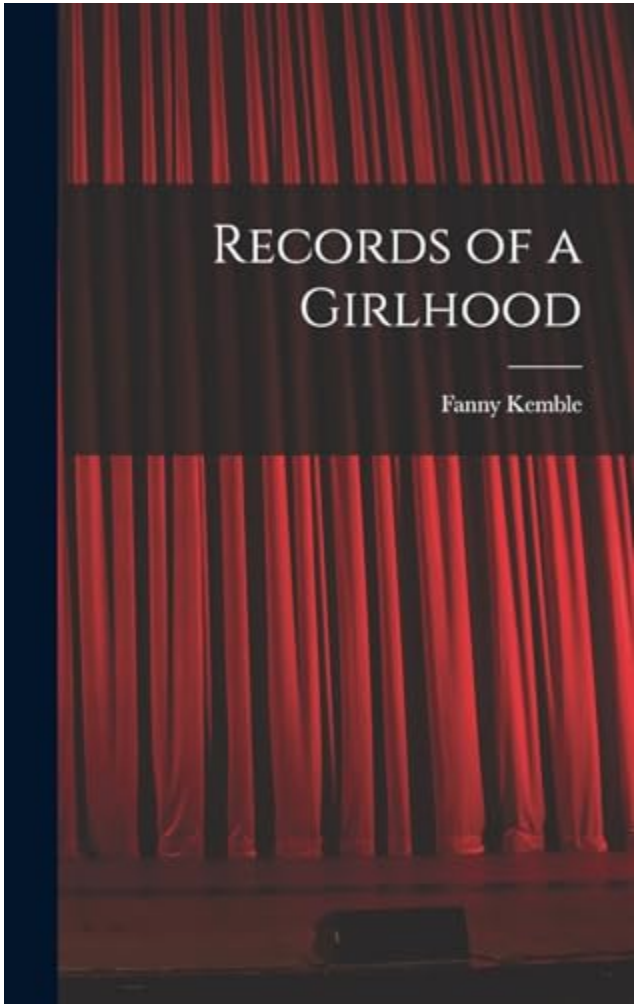
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