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FIVE FAMOUS WOMEN

BY
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LAHORE
UTTAR CHAND KAPUR & SONS
1930

PRINTED BY
GURAN DITTA KAPUR
AT THE KAPUR ART PRINTING WORKS
LAHORE.

PREFACE

The Deputy Directress, Public Instruction Panjab, wrote on the 1st of March, 1929, to the Secretary, School Board, suggesting that the books prescribed for the Matriculation Examination should be interesting for girls. The Board considered the letter on April 15, 1929, and directed the English Sub-Committee to bear the proposal in mind, at the time of recommending Courses of Reading for the year 1932.

I am not aware of many books suitable for Indian girls and, have, therefore, ventured to write the present one in the hope that it will satisfy a real need and appeal to our boys and girls alike.

“Five Famous Women,” frankly an inspirational book, is an attempt to supply that type of juvenile literature which plays an important part in the formation of character. Examples of courage, piety, patriotism, service and devotion to a cause are sure to have an ennobling influence on young and growing minds.

The teachers of English will find plenty of material in the book for composition, conversation and practice in usages.

I am grateful to Principal H. L. O. Garrett, of the Government College, Lahore, for his so kindly going through the manuscript.

RAM RATTAN

CHAND BIBI

AHALYA BAI

QUEEN VICTORIA

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

MADAME CURIE

CHAND BIBI

CHAND BIBI

A WARRIOR QUEEN

Vijayanagar in the Deccan was a constant menace to Bijapur and Ahmednagar, and it was felt that an alliance between these two kingdoms could save them from destruction. In order to effect this, Chand Bibi, daughter of the Sultan of Ahmednagar, was married to Ali Adil Shah, the Sultan of Bijapur, who, to strengthen the alliance still further, gave his sister in marriage to the Crown Prince of Ahmednagar.

In Chand Bibi great natural gifts were combined with an unusual variety of accomplishments. She was a woman of delicate build with not one rough line to mar the soft beauty of her face. She always wore a light veil which did not hide her queenly beauty. She was skilled in the art of war and no less versed in the arts of peace. A perfect rider, she was ever at her husband's side as he went hunting or marched to battle. Everybody in the kingdom knew that no minstrel could play so skilfully on the lyre or sing half so sweetly as she did. With ease she spoke Arabic, Persian, Turki, Kanarese and Marathi. Painting flowers was one of her favourite hobbies.

Adil Shah had full confidence in Chand Bibi and on his death in 1580 it was found that he had

appointed her as Queen Regent, and guardian to his young nephew Ibrahim Adil, whom he nominated his successor. No better choice could have been made, for the Queen had qualities which soon endeared her to her people. But as time passed, some of the ministers grew jealous of her and began to spread discontent. They met with some success in the beginning and Chand Bibi had to fly to Satara. Then ensued a period of warfare amongst these ministers each of whom wanted the kingdom for himself. This struggle among them strengthened the cause of the young king who now began to assert his authority. Chand Bibi was recalled, and the people and the king gave her an enthusiastic welcome. But she was sick at heart and had now no desire to take part in the government of the country. She led a secluded life doing little except when Adil was on tour in his kingdom or out fighting his enemies.

This peaceful life did not last long. Chand Bibi sat in the royal palace, one day surrounded by her maidens to whom she was, as usual, reading stories of chivalry and adventure. While thus engaged, her eyes would very often wander through the open windows to the green fields below. What a contrast between her past stormy life and these happy peaceful days ! And she would heave a sigh of relief at the thought. Little did she know that troublous times were ahead.

Suddenly there was heard a clatter of hoofs in the courtyard below. The maidens around her

sprang to their feet.

“There are many horsemen below, what brings them here ?”

Chand Bibi asked the maidens to leave her and with graceful obeisance they withdrew. Scarcely had they gone when a servant stood before her. “An envoy from Ahmednagar accompanied by mounted horsemen has arrived and craves audience of your honour.”

“See that he is treated well till I have time to see him, and inform my son Abbas Khan that I desire his presence immediately.”

Prince Abbas was soon before his mother.

“What news, dear son ?”

“Ahmednagar is in sore straits. There is a bitter strife between two powerful parties each of which wishes to place its own candidate on the throne. There is division in the kingdom and Prince Murad, Great Akbar’s son, is hovering about the Deccan with a vast army awaiting his chance to pounce upon the country like a bird of prey. Poor country ! How shall it save itself ?”

“And so my country has need of me. I am ready. How shall I refuse ? I must go. Say, Abbas, will you accompany me ?”

“Ah ! jest not, dear mother,” spoke Abbas placing his hand on the hilt of his sword. “Abbas is yours and will follow you to death or victory, till there is life in him.”

“Let there be no delay then. The messenger had better be summoned although we know his

errand.”

The envoy was ushered into the presence of Chand Bibi. She bade him state the purpose of his visit. He narrated in what desperate plight the state of Ahmednagar stood and how sorely it needed a saviour like herself. She learnt from him every detail of his country's strength and weakness. And then she spoke:

“The welfare of my country is very dear to me. But after all I am a woman. Tell me if you and those who have sent you are ready to accept me as their leader.”

“Have no apprehensions on that score, noble Queen. Your name alone will inspire our men. So great is your wisdom that peace will surely smile once more, upon Ahmednagar if you but deign to come.”

“I wish this were true. Once I went to Ahmednagar to save it from warfare, but nobody let me do anything. I returned in disgust to pass the rest of my life in peace at Bijapur. Will they let me have my own way now? Shall I succeed where I failed formerly?”

“Fail you will not, brave Queen. Pray, do come and you will see how anxiously people at Ahmednagar await you.”

“Enough! It is my duty and the will of God; I will do it. I will come. Prince Murad will have a hard time before he enters the fort.”

The envoy paid his homage and took leave, glad at heart at the success of his mission.

The Queen held a council of war and before many days were over, she rode out from Bijapur at the head of a party of picked soldiers, accompanied by Abbas and his wife Zora who refused to be left behind. Ahmednagar welcomed her joyously and she gave the people much comfort and hope with her wise counsel and charmed them with her grace and dignity. It was not long before she was the master of the situation. From Bijapur and from Golconda came soldiers who undertook to guard the hills that lay northwards of Ahmednagar. The rightful prince was placed on the throne amidst the acclamations of the people.

But the treacherous governor of the fort sent word to Prince Murad: "Royal Prince, hasten thy march. An infamous woman holds the realm, supporting a child upon the throne who has no right to it." His treachery, however, was soon discovered and he was put to death.

Then to Murad wrote the Queen: "If you come as the son of the Great Emperor and as a friend, we would welcome you. But if you come hostile and will not be conciliated, I and all my soldiers will resist you till the last shot has been fired and the last drop of fighting blood shed." The Queen prepared for the inevitable struggle. The rival leaders who had disputed with each other over the succession now put aside their quarrels and rallied round the Queen. She calmly looked to every detail of preparation, taking particular care to have the granaries well filled. Day

after day she went round with Abbas Khan inspecting all the defences.

Before long, the roads to the fort were all thick with the Mughal soldiers and it was clear that no aid from outside could be hoped for. Steadily the enemy troops advanced till they reached the fort and invested it on all sides. Nearer and nearer they pushed, mining and trenching and placing the terrible breaching batteries. It was, however, at the cost of many a life that they approached, for the Arab marksmen, who were deadly shots laid many low. The Queen, skilled as she was in the art of defence, directed everything that went on within Ahmednagar. She countermined and rendered useless every plan that the Mughals tried. If they made a breach by the aid of their batteries it was immediately repaired by the defenders whom she kept on encouraging and cheering.

Prince Murad began to think differently of Chand Bibi. The resistance had proved stouter than he had expected. Famine was threatening them and with every day that passed Murad grew more and more anxious.

The siege dragged on. One night when Chand Bibi stood with others upon the ramparts, a voice cried through the darkness across the ditch: "Well have you fought for the honour of your cause, brave Queen. Surrender now and save bloodshed. Under the very place where you stand are laid five mines loaded and ready to shatter your walls. Profit by this warning and yield."

Great was the alarm caused by this mysterious warning and many asked the Queen to surrender. But she stood firm and spoke to her soldiers in very stirring words: "Shall we surrender now that victory is ours? Shall we yield our wives and our daughters to Mughal violence? Though but a woman I will defend this spot while there is life in me. God will help me. I would tear the earth with my weak fingers to destroy this danger rather than give up the struggle." These words put heart into the garrison. With one accord they called out: "We will not desert you, O mother. We will die if God wills it, but we surrender not."

Axe in hand, the Queen led gangs to the shafts and there the men worked the whole night. Before it was morning, three mines lay bared and useless. The Mughals somehow got the alarm and Prince Murad hurried to the spot only to find that a month's work had been undone in one night. But there was yet one mine of which the besieged knew nothing, and orders were issued to fire it at once and to attack the fort, immediately a breach was caused by the blowing up. There was a loud crash and a small breach was rent in the rampart of the fort. The mine had done its work.

There was no time to be lost. The Queen donned her armour and pressed on to the breach flourishing her sword and crying "To the breach, my people! To the breach, my people! Better death than dishonour."

To many it seemed that all was lost. But the

courage and valour of the Queen once more carried the day. The breach was, before long, filled up and became a front of vantage from which to shoot at the stormers. It was, however, clear to Chand Bibi that Murad would make every possible effort to rush the breach and large reinforcements would be coming. She, therefore, so arranged that every gun in the fort should be turned on the spot. Prince Murad should know that it was no child's play to storm Ahmednagar.

It happened as Chand Bibi had expected. In the afternoon an unending line of Mughal troops was seen approaching. Wave after wave of men came pouring over the trenches to be laid low by that awful hail of round shot and copper pieces from the guns above. The Mughal leader foolishly thinking that the breach had been won urged on those that were behind. The loss of the Mughals was terrible. As night fell, they sullenly retreated under the fearful shots of the enemy. When Abbas returned from his post at the breach, he found Chand Bibi and Zora in each other's arms shedding tears of joy.

Great was the humiliation of Prince Murad after the battle. His troops felt crestfallen. They had been beaten by a woman. Murad feeling that all further attempts would be useless, sent a messenger with a flag of truce to Chand Bibi requesting permission to remove the dead. The Queen gladly acceded to his request. In a day the horrible remnants of the battle were cleared away.

Ahmednagar was now at peace which was to prove short-lived. Selfish ministers began to quarrel with one another and again factions arose. Akbar, hearing of it, sent his son Daniyal to make another attempt to capture Ahmednagar. Chand Bibi once again prepared to meet the Mughals, though this time with a less stout heart. Her army was much reduced and therefore her chances of success were not many.

Hamid Khan was in charge of the garrison. The Queen had been particularly kind to him and this was why he now held a position of trust and authority. Hamid hated Abbas and had therefore begun to hate the Queen. He wanted the throne for himself and was constantly thinking of means to do away with the Queen. She knew not the intentions of the ungrateful wretch and in all important matters reposed full confidence in him.

The Mughal troops had come to the very walls of Ahmednagar. Abbas felt that the possibility of a successful resistance was much less this time and implored Queen Chand Bibi to leave Ahmednagar, which she would not do. The garrison declared that it would hold out to the last, if she would only lead them as she had done before.

Chand Bibi, too, had very little hope and she was thinking of some plan to save her people from destruction. She hit upon one, but she thought she might consult Hamid Khan. He was called.

“Are my people ready?” she asked.

“ Yes, ready are they to go to victory or death with you, if you will but lead them as you did of old.”

“ Alas !” said the Queen with a sigh, matters were different then. Party strife is rife in Ahmednagar. Many have turned traitors. Few there are whom I can trust.”

Hamid Khan began to fear that the Queen had discovered his intentions. Blood rose to his face.

But he composed himself to conceal his shame. The Queen went on: “ Here is a draft. Herein I have asked the Mughal Prince to allow my people to pass out in safety. I have offered the fort to him on this condition. This would save unnecessary bloodshed. If we fight we lose, why waste so many lives for nothing ? What is your advice ?”

Here was an opportunity for Hamid Khan and he made full use of it. He took the draft and pretending to hear a noise outside rushed from the palace to the place where the soldiers were practising on the plain.

“ Brothers, treachery ! treachery ! You are betrayed. Chand Bibi wants to surrender the fort into the hands of the enemy. She shall not live. Follow me ! follow me !”

There was a shout from the soldiers “ Treachery,” and they followed Hamid Khan in hot haste to the palace. The Queen thought the enemy had won entrance. Great was her anguish to find that

Hamid Khan had played her false. She knew that death was near but she stood erect and calm. Hamid Khan with savage oaths rushed upon her slashing furiously at her with his sword. The soldiers stood amazed and said not a word. The Queen fell fatally wounded. Zora hearing the tumult rushed in and was shocked to see the ghastly scene. With tears flowing profusely she knelt beside Chand Bibi and held water to her lips, but Queen Chand Bibi put it aside, saying "This is God's will. I must go." In a few minutes she expired.

The news reached Abbas and he flew to the palace.

"Who perpetrated this heinous deed?" he shouted in frenzy.

"Hamid Khan," said many a voice.

Hamid Khan had hid himself in the interval, but he was soon found. A noose was fastened round his neck and he was hanged on the nearest tree to die a slow, lingering, and painful death. The body of the Queen was buried with great ceremony.

Such was the tragic end of a woman who by her bravery, truth and honour has won for herself an undying name in the history of our country. In the annals of Ahmednagar there is not one name that is entitled to greater esteem than hers. India has had very few women rulers and among those few she ranks among the greatest and the noblest.

AHALYA BAI

AHALYA BAI

A PIOUS RULER

Among the great Mahratta Chiefs who have left a name in the history of India was Mulhar Rao Holkar who was born towards the end of the seventeenth century. His father died when he was between four and five, and his mother, in consequence of some dispute with her husband's relations, removed to the house of her brother. Mulhar used to work with his uncle in the fields and continued to do so for several years. A curious story is related as to how his life as a cultivator and shepherd came to a sudden end.

One day after having worked for some time under the hot sun, he felt tired and lay down under a shady tree. A cool breeze soon lulled him to sleep. Meanwhile his uncle, having finished his work, prepared to go home. Mulhar was nowhere to be seen and he thought the boy had probably left. On reaching home he found that he was mistaken. The boy had not yet returned. Naturally this caused great anxiety to him and his sister. Both of them hurried to the field and after a long search found him lying asleep. But a strange sight met their eyes. A snake was holding its hood between the face of Mulhar and the rays of the sun. Luckily the snake

withdrew of itself after some time and the boy was safe. This unusual happening led his uncle to believe that the boy was meant for greater things and he placed Mulhar in the army. His exploits soon won him a name and brought him to the notice of the Peshwa who before long made him a military commander and assigned to him the district of Malwa for the support of his troops.

Ahalya Bai, the heroine of our story, was born in 1735 in a village in Malwa. It is related that for many years her father and mother had no children. The birth of a child like Ahalya, however, made up for the delay. She grew up learned in the vast knowledge of ancient Hindu scriptures. She was not beautiful but her manners were so pleasing and her bearing so dignified that all who saw her were highly impressed. She had a wonderful power of winning people's hearts and keeping them loyal and true.

It so happened that Mulhar Rao while returning from a battle stayed in the village where the parents of Ahalya Bai lived; and there as chance would have it, he saw her. He as well as others who were with him were struck by her grace and dignity and enquired who she was. When Mulhar Rao learnt all about her, he was very pleased and considered her to be a most suitable bride for his son, Khando Rao, who was also with him. This proposal had the approval of everybody present. The betrothal ceremony was performed forthwith and the marriage

celebrated a month later at Poona.

It was a new life for Ahalya. She left the parental roof and devoted herself to the service of her husband's parents. Mulhar Rao who had waged many a battle was a fierce, stern man; her mother-in-law, Gotma, was a proud and impatient woman. But Ahalya by her gentleness made a conquest of them both. At times when Mulhar's wrath was roused and his bravest soldiers dared not go to him, the sweet temper of Ahalya would win him back to milder moods. In the same way, she smoothed away the frowns of Gotma. Above all, Khando Rao, who had been the despair of his parents on account of his evil ways, began to reform himself and take interest in the affairs of government. As Mulhar Rao realised the worth of his daughter-in-law, he threw more and more work on her shoulders. Ahalya Bai ordered the great palace wisely, charming away the petty jealousies by her sweetness and rendering harmless the many intrigues that arose. Afraid of committing even the smallest sin, she always endeavoured to do what was right. Daily she read the Hindu scriptures and tried to live according to the teachings found therein.

In 1754 Khando Rao was sent to punish the Jats of Ajmer who had failed to pay their taxes. He was killed in the fight and thus left Ahalya Bai a young widow with one boy, Mali Rao and one girl, Mukta Bai. Great indeed was the grief of Mulhar Rao and still greater the sorrow of

Ahalya who, it was feared, would burn herself on the funeral pyre of her husband. Mulhar Rao, already sad at the death of his son, could not bear another shock and with tears in his eyes entreated her thus: "Child, be not overcome by grief. Why are you bent upon leaving this old man wretched and desolate? Khandoji is gone, you are my only hope, the only joy left to me. If you go away, shame upon me if I live a moment! Child, seeing you I live. My wealth, my kingdom, my all is yours, only deign to live, if not for yourself, for my sake."

These words softened Ahalya's heart and she abandoned her resolve. Buried as she remained in the work that fell to her after the death of her husband, she gradually forgot her sorrow. Mulhar Rao grew more and more indifferent to the work of government and Ahalya had to manage practically everything. She saw that accounts were kept in order, that expenditure was controlled and that attention was paid to all important matters of the state. All this prepared her for the mighty part she was to play later on.

Mulhar Rao was seventy-six when he died. For more than forty years of his life he had been a commander of reputation, and, during the latter part, one of the most distinguished among the Mahratta chiefs. His remains were buried at a place named after him, Malharganj, forty miles from Gwalior.

Mulhar Rao's only son having died before his

father's death, it was decided to put Mali Rao, his grandson, on the throne. This youth did not long enjoy the new dignity, for he died nine months after his accession. The boy was strangely unlike his mother. He was cruel and perverse, and it is said of him that he used to put scorpions and snakes in clothes that he gave to poor Brahmins in charity, and that when he saw them stung, his joy was as great as the grief of the pious Ahalya Bai who used to lament her hard lot in having got such a monster of a son. He slew in anger an embroiderer whose innocence was proved after his death. It was believed that the man was possessed of some supernatural power and that he had warned Mali Rao not to slay him or else he would wreak a terrible revenge. Mali raved during his illness and people thought that the spirit of the dead man haunted him. Ahalya, like other people of those days, was satisfied of this fact and used to sit days and nights by the bed of her afflicted son, shedding profuse tears and constantly praying to God. But all in vain; a voice still seemed to answer: "He slew me innocent and I will have his life." This is the strange story that is related about Mali's death, which was perhaps good for the kingdom.

Ahalya Bai knew of none who could occupy worthily the vacant throne. So putting aside her grief, she determined to do all in her power to fill it wisely and well.

Now Gangadhar Jaswant, an old and crafty

minister of Mulhar Rao, wished Ahalya to adopt a son whose regent he himself wanted to become or, perhaps, as some say, he aimed at the rulership himself. To Ahalya he wrote: "You are a woman and, perhaps, too frail to bear this heavy burden of governing a great state. Your work as a ruler will interfere with your religious duties which are so dear to you. The people of Indore will not tolerate a woman ruler, and then, how can you lead your soldiers to war? Let, therefore, a male child of your race be placed on the throne and the burden of responsibility thrown on me, your willing servant. If this is not done, enemies will come upon you and how will you meet them, a woman as you are?"

Ahalya's reply was, "I am the wife of a ruler, the mother of another. Both are dead and the kingdom is lawfully mine. I will rule and none else, unless it pleases me to put another on the throne." Thereupon Gangadhar wrote to Raghoba, the uncle of the Peshwa, to come with an army and capture Ahalya's kingdom. When Ahalya Bai heard all this, she wrote to Raghoba saying, "Uphold a wrong cause if you will, but know that this kingdom is rightfully mine and mine it will remain." Raghoba was furiously angry and said to himself "Mulhar was but a servant of ours, and now this widow of his son has grown so haughty and arrogant. She shall know the consequences soon."

Ahalya Bai called her soldiers together, and they gathered in the great Durbar Hall. Strong,

brave men they were, warriors old and young, all ready to risk their lives for their Queen. She smiled upon her loyal followers and thanked them for their devotion. She showed her determination to lead them to combat in person by directing four bows with quivers full of arrows to be fitted to the corners of the howdah on her favourite elephant. Letters were sent to many Mahratta chiefs for help, and, before many days were over, thousands of soldiers from different districts arrived to support the Queen. Great was the astonishment of Raghoba to find a vast army marshalled to meet him. He had expected that Ahalya would surrender without striking a blow, and he was in a strange plight. To go back was cowardly; to go forward meant utter ruin. Sorry for his hasty action he sent a message to Tukoji, the commander of Ahalya's army: "Having heard of the death of Mali Rao, I have come to offer my heartfelt condolence. Far be it from me to think of doing any harm to her."

"How shall we know that your errand is a peaceful one?" was the reply.

With a few attendants Raghoba rode to Tukoji's camp. Tukoji received him well and then accompanied him to meet Ahalya Bai with whom Raghoba stayed for some days. All this time he kept watching with astonishment how well she managed her affairs. Gangadhar, thus thwarted in his schemes, fled away and led an obscure life thereafter.

Ahalya used to lead a highly pious life. She rose an hour before daybreak to say her morning prayers. She then heard the holy books of her faith and distributed alms to the poor. After taking her food and a little rest, she went to her Durbar where the rest of the day was spent attending to the many duties that a ruler has to perform. All who came had ready access. At sunset she withdrew for her evening prayers and her supper. Her ministers would begin to come at about 9 o'clock and discussion about state matters went on till eleven at which hour she retired to rest.

Ahalya had received a good training in the art of government during the lifetime of her father-in-law, and that stood her in good stead when she assumed the rulership herself. It was her habit to attend to every detail of administration. Whether the matter related to some battle that had to be fought or to the provision of fresh tyres for a cart, it must be referred to her. It was due to her care and devotion that Indore, a small village prior to her rule, became a wealthy and flourishing city. Living in peaceful times we cannot imagine how much tact and sagacity was needed to keep the city secure from the raids of the Bhils, Gonds and other plundering tribes that infested the outskirts of Indore.

Ahalya spent vast sums of money in charity and on public works. She built several forts and near that of Jam constructed a road over the

Vindhya range at a great cost. She built temples at almost all the places of Hindu pilgrimage and sent annual sums to be distributed in charity. The more important of these are at Gaya where a figure of herself is preserved in one of the temples to this day. Far and wide, the roads were planted with shady trees, and wells and rest-houses were constructed for travellers. The widows and the orphans were helped according to their needs.

All the same, she was a jealous guardian of her kingdom's wealth. Once, when Tukoji went out to fight a battle against Jaipur, and was beaten, he sent to Ahalya for money. "This sum you shall have, but no more," wrote she in reply, "fight and win. If you feel nervous, I myself will come to take the battlefield." She was then fifty-eight years of age.

Similarly, Raghoba who knew of the great wealth in Indore once wrote to Ahalya, "I am in sore need of money. From your treasury send me what I need," and he mentioned a large sum. Ahalya's reply was, "The wealth lying in the treasury is not mine. I can take nothing from it except for the country. A Brahmin as you are, I can send you money in charity if you so desire it."

When Raghoba got this reply, he was touched to the quick, and more so, that he should be called a begging Brahmin. "I am no mendicant to receive charity," he wrote, "I can get things by force of arms and I come to take what I need."

Ahalya made preparations to meet him. She donned her armour and went out to the battlefield with five hundred women but not a single man.

“Where is the army?” enquired Raghoba. “It does not behove us,” answered Ahalya, “to fight against the Peshwas whom we have served so long. If I am killed by you, my kingdom with its wealth is yours. But as long as I live, you shall touch naught that belongs to the kingdom.” Raghoba felt very humiliated, and went away discomfited.

A very sad event darkened the declining years of Ahalya's life. Her son-in-law, the husband of Mukta Bai, died and according to the notions of the day the latter declared her resolution to burn herself on the pyre of her husband. All arguments that a mother and a sovereign could use were tried to dissuade her from her purpose. Ahalya humbled herself to the dust before her and entreated her not to leave her desolate and alone upon earth. Mukta was calm and resolved. “You are old, mother,” she said, “and a few years will end your pious life. My husband is gone, and, when you follow, life, I feel, will be intolerable and the opportunity of ending it with honour will then have passed.” When she found all entreaties unavailing, Ahalya nerved herself to witness the dreadful scene. The heart-rending sight of her daughter's voluntary death so overwhelmed her with grief that for three days she never uttered a word.

This sad event hastened her end. She died

at the age of sixty, full of honour and glory. Her husband was killed when she was hardly twenty and her only son was insane and perverse. But she did not despair. She decided to devote her life to service and religion. After Khando Rao's death she never wore coloured clothes, nor any jewels except a small necklace, and indeed, remained, amid every temptation, unchanged in habits and character. She was one of the purest rulers of India that ever lived. Her memory is cherished to this day with deep and loving reverence by the inhabitants of Indore, Hindu and Muslim alike.

QUEEN VICTORIA



QUEEN VICTORIA

QUEEN VICTORIA

A GOOD AND GREAT SOVEREIGN

Few men and women have left the world so much better than they found it, as did Queen Victoria. She ascended the throne, when England was little better than a powerful kingdom, but left to her son and successor a mighty Empire on which the sun never sets. With such a glorious record to her credit, she may well be considered the greatest sovereign of her age. But it is not merely as a great ruler that she occupies such an eminent position. Her domestic virtues, the purity of her life, her example as a dutiful wife and a devoted mother, make her the pride of her sex. For this reason she is called Victoria the Good.

Victoria Alexandrina, to call her by her full name, was born on May 24, 1819. Her father, the Duke of Kent, and the fourth son of King George III had married only two years previously in 1817, the widowed sister of Leopold who became later on the King of the Belgians. The Duke and the Duchess took but little part in public life, they lived quietly and happily at Kensington Palace.

Towards the close of the year, the family went down to Sidmouth in Devonshire to spend

the winter. Not many days after their arrival, the princess had a narrow escape. An idle boy, shooting at small birds, approached so near the house that a shot broke the window of the nursery and passed close to the head of the princess. Naturally much alarm was caused, and a search being made, the boy was captured and brought in, but on the Duke finding that the matter had arisen simply from carelessness, he forgave him.

Father and mother were both passionately fond of the baby, who, however, was not destined to enjoy long the fatherly care. While still at Sidmouth, the Duke was seized with a severe indisposition and chill and died after a brief illness. The Duchess was now left the sole guardian of the princess. She returned to Kensington Palace and devoted herself to the bringing up of her child. In her own words she says: "We stood alone—almost friendless and alone in this country; I could not even speak the language of it. I did not hesitate how to act; I gave up my home, my kindred, my duties, to devote myself to that duty which is to be the whole object of my life." She was her constant companion, she directed her studies, and took part in her amusements. Never did a little girl have a more loving and devoted mother.

Soon after she reached the age of four, it was thought proper that a regular tutor should be provided for her, and the Rev. George Davys was

appointed to that post, which he retained until her accession to the throne.

Nothing could be more simple and regular than the life which the princess led. Lessons, a walk or drive, a very few and simple pleasures made up her day. She read much, chiefly books dealing with history. She was especially fond of music and drawing, though she never attained excellence in these arts.

The fact that she was in all probability destined to succeed to the crown of Britain was most carefully concealed from the princess. Her mother feared lest the thought of such a possibility should excite her or interrupt her in her studies. But now that she had reached her eleventh year, it was deemed right that she should know the truth. Accordingly, a short time before the death of George IV. while engaged in reading English history with her governess, in the presence of her mother, she came across a 'family tree' which had been purposely placed in her book to excite her curiosity. Naturally the question arose as to who was to succeed George IV. after his death. The governess replied that her uncle the Duke of Clarence was the heir presumptive to the throne, and, as the Duke had no children alive, the Princess Victoria, whose father was next in succession to the Duke, would be his successor. This pleasant discovery excited in her no childish joy or pride. When her mother spoke to her of the grave cares and heavy responsibility of that lofty position,

tears came into her eyes. All that she said was, "I see, I am nearer the throne than I thought," and, giving her hand to the governess, added: "I will be good. . . ."

Throughout the rest of the day, the princess was serious and thoughtful, as if weighed down by the thought of the high position she would be called upon to occupy.

In 1830, George IV. died and was succeeded by his brother the Duke of Clarence, as William the Fourth. Now the chance of Victoria's succession was almost certain. But this nearer approach to the throne made no difference in the simplicity of her life or in her unaffected intercourse with all whom she came in contact with. Thus one day, when out walking near Malvern, where she was staying for a change of air, she was running on before her mother and governess, accompanied by her little dog. Presently she overtook a girl of her own age of the peasant class, neatly dressed, and probably wishing to enter into conversation with her, she said:

"My dog is very tired; will you carry him for me, if you please?"

The good-natured child, ignorant of the exalted rank of the speaker, immediately took up the dog, and walked along for some time by the side of the princess, the girls chatting merrily together. At last she said:

"I am tired now, and can't carry your dog any longer."

“Tired!” the princess said—“impossible; why, you have only carried him a little way.”

“Quite far enough,” the girl said. “Besides, I am going to my aunt’s; and if your dog must be carried, why can’t you carry him yourself?”

“And who is your aunt?”

“Mrs. Johnson, the miller’s wife.”

“And where does she live?”

“In that pretty little white house which you see at the bottom of the hill.”

As they were talking they stood still, which gave the Duchess of Kent and the governess time to come up to them.

“Oh, I should like to see your aunt,” the princess said. “I will go with you, so let us run down the hill together.”

“No, no, princess,” the governess said, taking her hand. “You have talked long enough with that little girl, and now the Duchess wishes you to walk with her.”

At the word “princess” the other child blushed, frightened at the thought of the liberty she had taken in telling a princess to carry her dog herself; but she was kindly thanked by the Duchess for her trouble, and received a present of half a crown. She curtsied her thanks, ran off to her aunt’s, and told her of the adventure.

The princess pursued her studies even more diligently than before, with the result that her progress was marked. She spoke French, German, and Italian fluently; had a fair knowledge of Latin;

and had made considerable progress in mathematics; while her knowledge of history was exceptionally good.

As soon as King William came to the throne, he requested Parliament to make arrangements for a regency, in case of his death before the princess came of age. It was settled that the princess should attain her majority at the age of eighteen, and that her mother should be regent, if the King died before she arrived at that age.

On May 24, 1837, Princess Victoria attained her majority. The occasion was celebrated with the greatest enthusiasm throughout the country. The whole of London was decorated and illuminated. In every church, the congregations met to offer up prayers for the long life and happiness of the future Queen of Britain. The princess received a number of magnificent presents and congratulations from public bodies.

King William the Fourth, who had been ailing for some time, grew worse and, in spite of the best efforts of the doctors, sank rapidly. On Monday, June 20, 1837, at two, in the early hours of the morning, he died.

Immediately after his death, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain hurried off at once to Kensington Palace to break the news to the young princess. They arrived there at five o'clock in the morning. They knocked and rang for a considerable time before they could arouse the porter of the gate. They were again kept

waiting in the courtyard. After much waiting the princess was awakened and informed of what had occurred. She did not keep the Archbishop and the Lord Chamberlain waiting, but in a few minutes came into the room in a loose white night-gown and shawl, her night-cap thrown off, and her hair falling upon her shoulders, her feet in slippers, tears in her eyes, but perfectly collected and dignified. Her first words upon being informed were addressed to the Archbishop:

“I ask your prayers on my behalf,” she said; and the two old men and the young Queen knelt together, and asked God to give her strength and wisdom to worthily maintain the high dignity to which she had been called.

The same day at eleven o'clock the Privy Council met at Kensington Palace. Only an hour before, the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, had arrived to instruct the young Queen in what she would be required to do on that occasion. The simple dignity with which she read her speech in a clear and loud voice before some hundred strange Privy Councillors, astonished all. She said:—

“The severe and afflicting loss which the nation has sustained by the death of His Majesty, my beloved uncle, has devolved upon me the duty of administering the government of this Empire. This awful responsibility is imposed upon me so suddenly and at so early a period of my life, that I should feel utterly oppressed by the burden, were I not sustained by the hope that Divine Providence

which has called me to this work, will give me strength for the performance of it, and that I shall find in the purity of my intentions, and in my zeal for the public welfare, that support and those resources which usually belong to a more mature age, and to longer experience.

I place my firm reliance upon the wisdom of Parliament, and upon the loyalty and affection of my people. . . .

Educated in England, under the tender and enlightened care of a most affectionate mother, I have learned from my infancy to love and respect the constitution of my native country I shall steadily protect the rights and promote, to the utmost of my power, the happiness and welfare of all classes of my subjects."

Noble words these and as we shall see later on, she strove all her life to fulfil them.

Immediately after the Council, the Queen went to her mother's room and begged with deep emotion to be left in absolute solitude for two hours. No one dared invade that sacred privacy; in all probability that fair young head was bowed in earnest prayer for strength and wisdom to discharge the duty of her high position.

There is another incident on that day which deserves to be mentioned. One of her first acts had been to write a loving letter full of tenderest sympathy to the widowed Queen. Some one reading the superscription, "Her Majesty the Queen," observed that it should be, "Her Majesty the

Queen Dowager." "I am quite aware of Her Majesty's altered position," was the reply, "but I will not be the first person to remind her of it,"—an answer instinct with the finest delicacy.

On the following day she was formally proclaimed "Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith."

Her great responsibilities had begun. The quiet life she had led alone with her mother at Kensington Palace was to be changed for a life of publicity, tried by that "fierce light that beats upon a throne." She now took up her abode at Buckingham Palace, and gave her whole attention to learning the high affairs of State.

But she did not forget the humble friends of her early life. An example of this was given in the case of the family of a soldier named Hillman, who was with the Duke of Kent at Gibraltar, and had behaved remarkably well. When the man left the service the Duke placed him in a cottage near Kensington Palace, and, a short time before his death, asked the Duchess to look after the soldier and his family.

The Duchess had faithfully carried out his wishes, and, as the princess grew up, often took her along on her visits. Hillman died, leaving a son and daughter. Both were in bad health, the boy especially, and the princess frequently visited him until he died. At the time the Queen came to the throne the daughter was lying ill. When the clergyman called upon her as usual

—two days after the Queen's accession—he found the child unusually bright and cheerful, and she drew forth from under her pillow a book of the Psalms.

“Look here,” she said, “what the new Queen has sent me to-day by one of her ladies, with the message that, though now as Queen of England she had to leave Kensington, she did not forget me.”

The book was marked with the dates of the days on which the Queen herself used to read the Psalms, and there was a marker in it worked by the princess's own hand. This thoughtfulness for her humble friend, at the moment when such great events were passing in her own life, is typical of the character of the Queen.

Similar kindness was shown by her towards a poor man who had for the last six or seven years swept the crossing opposite the avenue leading to Kensington Palace. The princess had always kindly noticed him, and rarely passed through the gates without throwing him some silver from the carriage window. He received a communication, on the day after that of the Queen's accession, informing him that Her Majesty had ordered that in future an allowance of eight shillings a week should be regularly paid him.

One of the most painful duties of a sovereign is that of signing the death-warrants of criminals condemned to death. The first of these was presented to the Queen by the Duke of Wellington;

the offence for which the man was condemned to die was desertion from the army. The young Queen read it and looked up earnestly at the Duke:

“Have you nothing to say on behalf of this man? Think again, my lord,” the Queen urged.

Seeing the Queen’s anxiety, the Duke replied:

“He is certainly a very bad soldier, Your Majesty, but, as there was somebody who spoke as to his general conduct, he may be a good man for aught I know to the contrary.”

“O, thank you for that a thousand times!” the Queen exclaimed, and, hastily writing “pardon-ed” in large letters on the fatal paper, she gave it to the Duke with a hand trembling with eagerness and emotion.

The Queen was very anxious to pay her father’s debts—indeed she never rested until all his liabilities had been discharged. His allowance had not been large, and his generosity had been great, and his indiscriminating charity had involved him in pecuniary embarrassment. “I want to pay all that remains of my father’s debts,” she said to the Prime Minister, “I must do it. I consider it a sacred duty.”

On June 28, 1838, a year after the death of her uncle, the Queen was crowned in the presence of her loyal subjects and representatives from many powers of Europe and foreign nations. The interest in the occasion was immense and London was thronged with visitors from all parts of the

country. In her state coach, drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, the Queen drove to Westminster Abbey, the scene of so many past coronations. She was no longer unknown and untried; she had won all hearts by her considerate acts; and as she appeared radiant with health and youth, the air was rent with shouts from the great crowds around her. This outburst of loyalty with which she was greeted all along the route of procession greatly affected the Queen. In response, she must have resolved, if she had not done it already, to dedicate herself completely to her country.

Before anything is said about the glorious reign of Queen Victoria or her great achievements, it is necessary to glance for a moment at the condition of the country when she came to the throne. We must know something about the life that people led, and the great problems that English statesmen had to solve.

In the England of those days there were no rapid means of communication. In 1830, the first passenger train had been driven between Liverpool and Manchester at the rate of twelve miles an hour by the inventor, George Stephenson, himself. There were no motors, no bicycles, no telephones. The invention of the electric telegraph had been made in 1837. The introduction of the penny post had not yet found favour in the country. Letters were charged for according to the distance that they had to travel. Wireless telegraphy and aeroplanes. had not yet been dreamed of even by

the best scientists of the day.

The children of the poor people did not attend schools as they do now. Many of them, little children of tender years, were condemned to work in the depths of coal pits, and amid the clang and roar of machinery. Girls were taught by their mothers to sew, cook, and to wash, though few of them could read and write. There were few books to read and these were expensive, while newspapers were fewer still, because the tax on paper and advertisement was very heavy and the postage almost prohibitive.

England had scarcely recovered from the long war against Napoleon. The introduction of steam and machinery had enriched a few, but had brought misery and poverty to struggling thousands. The price of corn had risen. A series of bad harvests had caused a great migration to the factory towns and the already large ranks of the unemployed grew greater day by day. Wages were kept low by keen competition and the working classes were in a deplorable condition. The struggle between the rich and the poor raged fiercely.

Parliament did not represent the people's wishes. The workman had as yet no voice in the government of his country. Considerably more than half the members were not elected at all, but were nominated by patrons. The huge class of toilers now arose to call attention to an injustice to which it had awakened. They demanded univer-

sal suffrage, that is, a vote for every full grown man. But, as they were not listened to, the discontent grew. No longer did these common people look up to and reverence their monarch as their leader.

Britain took little interest in her Colonies. Canada, the oldest colony, was like a house divided against itself. The accession of the young Queen, received with rejoicing in Upper Canada, was greeted with sullen silence by the French Canadians, and soon smouldering discontent broke into open rebellion. In South Africa, Cape Colony and Natal were the only British possessions. The Transvaal did not exist and no one dreamed of its gold fields. As yet, Britain played no part in Egypt. India was governed by the East India Company. Australia was only half explored. It was thought to be a great lone waterless land, fit only for convicts and idlers. Over New Zealand, natives still ran wild. Such was Victoria's Empire, when she ascended the throne.

Unlike Elizabeth, who had, for political reasons, remained all her life a virgin, Queen Victoria decided soon after her coming to the throne that she should marry. Her choice fell on her cousin, Prince Albert of Coburg, a small province in Germany. The prince was a man of unusual culture and talent. He was very well-read and was a bright and pleasant companion. On November 23, the proposal of intended marriage was communicated to the Privy Council. A bill for the

naturalization of Prince Albert was at once passed through both Houses of Parliament, and Her Majesty shortly afterwards conferred upon her future husband the title of Royal Highness, as well as the rank of Field Marshal in the British Army. An annuity of £30,000 was fixed for the Prince. On February 8, he arrived in London accompanied by his father and elder brother. On February 10, 1840, the marriage was solemnized at the Chapel Royal, St. James's.

The maiden monarch no longer stood alone. She had now a strong arm on which to lean, and a faithful adviser ever beside her. The young prince determined from the first to master both national and European politics and this he did marvellously well. He was then in a position to attend to every little detail of the mass of correspondence and State documents which the Queen received from the crowned heads of Europe, from her ministers of State and from her friends and relatives. In addition to being his wife's right hand, he took a leading part in all movements calculated to improve the condition of the people. His fine training, tact and sympathy enabled him, little by little, to be the means of helping on important reforms. This made the Prince, who was at first looked upon as a foreigner, very popular.

On the 10th of June when they were in London an event took place which caused a very painful sensation in the country. As the Queen and Prince Albert were out driving, a young man stepped for-

ward, presented a pistol and fired at the Queen. A moment later he drew another pistol and taking a deliberate aim, fired again. Happily neither of the bullets took effect, and the man was at once seized by the indignant spectators. He was taken to the police station, and was found to be a youth named Edward Oxford, who had been employed as a barman at a public-house.

He was tried for the attempt on the Queen's life, and the jury found him guilty, but declared him to be out of his mind. He was kept for several years in a lunatic asylum, and as he showed no other signs of madness he was released on his promise to emigrate at once to Australia. In July, 1840, as it was considered necessary to appoint a Regent in case of the Queen's death, Parliament named the Prince as Regent, without any opposition—a clear proof of the golden opinion the Prince had won for himself everywhere on account of his noble character.

If the Prince evinced so much interest in public affairs, his influence at home was no less good. The Queen writes in her journal, "At breakfast and at luncheon, and also at our family dinners, he sat at the top of the table, and kept us all enlivened by his interesting conversation, by his charming anecdotes, and droll stories without end, of his childhood, of people at Coburg, of our good people in Scotland, which he would repeat with a wonderful power of mimicry, and at which he would himself laugh most heartily. Then he would,

at other times, entertain us with his talk about the most interesting and important topics of the present and of former days, on which it was ever a pleasure to hear him speak."

On November 21, 1840, the Queen's first child, the Princess Royal, was born. There was great rejoicing when, on the following November 9, 1841, the Queen gave birth to a son. In a letter to her uncle Leopold, the King of Belgium, the Queen wrote, ".... we all have our trials and vexations, but if one's home is happy, then the rest is nothing." No other words can better describe the domestic happiness that the royal pair enjoyed at this period of their life.

Twice during the year 1842 attempts were made to assassinate the Queen. The first was by a man named John Francis, and took place on the evening of the 30th of May as she was out driving. He fired at the royal carriage when he was no more than seven feet away, but, as in the case of Oxford, the bullet missed.

The man had made a similar attempt on the previous Sunday, when, as the royal party were on their way to the Chapel Royal, Prince Albert saw him step out of the crowd and snap a pistol at him. It did not go off, and the man escaped. The Queen behaved on this occasion, as on that of Oxford's attempt, with the greatest calmness and presence of mind, and attended the theatre on the same evening to show herself to her subjects. She was received with the greatest enthusiasm.

Francis was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death, but the Queen granted him a reprieve and he was transported for life.

On the very day following that on which she granted the reprieve to Francis, another attempt on her life was made, and again as she was driving to church. This was made by a lad who levelled a pistol and attempted to fire it. Fortunately it did not go off. He was immediately seized and handed over to the police. As it was evident that all these attempts had been made not from any personal animosity against the Queen but simply from a desire for notoriety, a special law was passed making attempts on the Queen's life punishable by transportation for seven years or imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years; the culprit, moreover, was to be flogged.

The Queen and her husband made many tours during their early married life. It was a great source of pleasure to both of them to feel that everywhere they went they were received with the greatest delight and enthusiasm. They visited Scotland, Wales and Ireland. The Queen also paid a flying visit to France, Belgium and Germany, the home of her husband.

The Queen had long wished to possess a retreat of her own in the Highlands where her husband could indulge in some outdoor sport, and where they both could enjoy a brief rest from the care and anxiety of State affairs. In 1848, they took on lease Balmoral Castle on the upper course

of the river Dee. Here they led a simple life free from all restraints—a small house, small rooms, small establishment, no soldiers, the whole guard of the sovereign consisting of a single policeman. As private individuals, they drove and walked about quite unattended, entering into conversation freely with the peasants and others whom they met. The Queen loved her life at Balmoral even more than the Prince, and every year she yearned for it more and more. “It is not alone the pure air, the quiet and beautiful scenery, which makes it so delightful,” she wrote; “it is the atmosphere of loving affection, and the hearty attachment of the people around Balmoral which warms the heart and does one good.”

In 1849, the Prince Consort proposed the scheme of a great exhibition of the works and industries of all nations. But it was coldly received. The public was uneasy at the thought of large numbers of foreigners collecting in London, and at the expected importation of foreign goods. But the support of Sir Robert Peel and of many great firms gradually wore down the opposition. The great exhibition was opened on May 1, 1851. Perhaps the Queen's own words best describe the scene on the opening day: “The great event has taken place,” she says, “a complete and beautiful triumph—a glorious and touching sight, one which I shall ever be proud of for my beloved Albert and my country. Hyde Park was one densely crowded mass of human beings in the highest good-

humour and most enthusiastic. A little rain fell just as we started; but before we came near the Crystal Palace the sun shone and gleamed upon the gigantic edifice, upon which the flags of all nations were floating.

We drove through the Park and got out at the entrance on that side. The glimpse of the palace through the iron gate, of the waving palms, flowers, statues, myriads of people filling the galleries and seats all round and the flourish of trumpets as we entered, gave us a sensation which I can never forget, and I felt much moved. The sight, as we came to the middle, where the steps and chairs were placed, with the beautiful crystal fountain, just in front of it, was magical—so vast, so glorious, so touching

The tremendous cheers, the joy expressed in every face, the immensity of the building, the mixture of the palms, flowers, trees, statues, fountain, the organ (with 200 instruments and 600 voices) and my beloved husband, the author of this 'Peace Festival,' which united the industry of all nations of the earth—all this was moving indeed; it was and is a day to live for ever." It was a unique success. Six million people visited the great Fair during the time it remained open.

In a letter to Lady Lyttelton the Queen writes, " . . . the great and glorious 1st of May. The proudest and happiest day of—as you truly call it—my happy life."

The great exhibition was a sufficient proof—if

any had been needed—of how the Prince with his wife laboured incessantly for the good of others. Without his courage, perseverance and ability, there is no doubt this great undertaking would never have been carried through successfully. He recognised the fact that Princes live for the benefit of their people.

Clouds were now gathering on the horizon, and troublous times coming for England and England's Queen. On February 28, 1854, Her Majesty signed a formal declaration of war with Russia; and for the next two years her life was spent in consuming anxiety. The Queen felt keenly for her soldiers, and constantly wrote herself to Lord Raglan, the Commander-in-Chief, to look to their comfort and well-being. During the war the Queen paid several visits to the hospitals, and had a kind word for each of the patients. To reward the individual acts of heroism, the Queen instituted the medal known as the Victoria Cross.

While the Queen was presenting the Victoria Cross on one summer day of 1857 to those of her brave soldiers who had distinguished themselves in the Crimea, alarming news reached England of the revolt of Indian soldiers against the British. The loss of life was great and the suffering of the survivors terrible. The Mutiny was quelled by the end of the year and it was arranged that the East India Company, which had governed up to this time, should cease to exist and that India should be ruled by the Queen through a British Viceroy.

The year 1861 was a black year for the Queen. On March 5, her mother, the Duchess of Kent died.

“She is gone,” the Queen wrote to her uncle, King Leopold, during those first hours of bereavement, “that precious, dearly beloved, tender mother, whom I never parted with but for a few months, without whom I cannot imagine life, has been taken from us” Throughout these sad days of bereavement the Prince was her truest comforter.

In August, Her Majesty and the Prince Consort accompanied by their children paid another visit to Ireland. Then they proceeded to their beloved Highland home, where they spent a few weeks of retirement; the last they were to spend there together, for the shadow of death was soon to draw over that happy married life.

For the last several years the health of the Prince Consort had been unsatisfactory. The severe mental strain entailed by incessant work, and the sense of his responsibility as private adviser to Her Majesty, had weakened his constitution.

On the 1st of December, the Queen felt anxious and depressed. Her husband, who had begun to suffer much from sleeplessness, grew worse and could not take food without considerable difficulty, and this made him very weak and irritable.

The physicians in attendance were now obliged to tell her that the illness was low fever. The

Queen was greatly alarmed. Each day, the fever gained strength. Other physicians were called in, and although they regarded the case as very serious, they did not consider it hopeless. On the 12th of December, the fever increased. There was slight improvement on the following day, but on the 14th there was a change for the worse.

Some hours passed without any further change, but even the Queen saw that death was near at hand. His last articulate words were, "Good little wife." The children came one after the other into the room, but the Prince gave no sign of recognising them; and at a quarter to eleven, with his wife and children kneeling round him, he passed away quietly.

The Queen was now a widow. Her distress was terrible, her loss irreparable. For three days her condition caused great anxiety to her medical attendants, for she had become so weak that her pulse could scarcely be felt. At last, she had sleep. "There is no one to call me Victoria now," she is said to have exclaimed and perhaps no words could have expressed more strongly the sense of her great loneliness.

The funeral took place at Windsor on December 23. Throughout the country there was long and sincere mourning for the "blameless Prince."

For twenty-one years the Prince had been a loving husband and an affectionate father. His rule in life was to make his position entirely a part

of the Queen's, 'to place all his time and powers at her command.' No wonder, if the Queen felt so lonely and miserable.

On the 18th of December, in the following year, the body of the Prince Consort was removed from its temporary resting-place at Windsor to the splendid mausoleum which the Queen had erected at Frogmore. To this tomb the Queen and the members of her family in England repaired annually on the anniversary of his death.

For some years after the death of the Prince Consort, the Queen appeared very little in public. Overwhelmed with grief, she lived almost wholly in retirement; but even at that time no official duty was neglected. The first public ceremony which the Queen attended was the unveiling of the statue of the Prince Consort at Aberdeen.

The greatest event of the year 1863 was the marriage of the Prince of Wales to the daughter of the King of Denmark. On the 7th of March the Princess Alexandra, accompanied by her father, mother, brother and sister, landed on English soil. In London the excitement was immense, the streets along which she was to pass were brilliantly decorated, the united flags of Great Britain and Denmark waved everywhere. The marriage ceremony took place three days afterwards in St. George's Chapel. All the brothers and sisters were present together with the high officers of state and a vast number of distinguished personages. The Queen did not mingle with the brilliant throng in

the Chapel, but dressed in her widow's dress witnessed the ceremony from the royal closet, apart from the rest. The rejoicings were general throughout the whole country; every town was decorated; every church bell pealed out its joyful notes. The illuminations in the streets of London were magnificent.

On May 20, 1866 the Queen, with all the members of her family present in England, attended the opening ceremony of the building in London known as the Albert Hall. It was intended to benefit those branches of human knowledge in which the Prince Consort had taken so lively an interest.

The Prince of Wales, who had been spending a few days at the seat of Lord Londesborough near Scarborough became very unwell. The news filled the Queen and her people with anxiety. Several other persons who had been staying in the house were also attacked by symptoms of typhoid fever and one of them, the Earl of Chesterfield, died.

The Prince returned to Sandringham, his country-house in Norfolk. On his arrival, the illness rapidly assumed a more serious character, and developed symptoms similar to those which had proved fatal to his father. For several days the Prince remained in a critical state, and, at one time, hope was all but abandoned. Prayers were offered up in all the churches of the United Kingdom, and at last, on the 14th of December, 1871, the

anniversary of the death of the Prince Consort, the telegraph flashed the news over the country that there was a slight change for the better. The corner once turned, the improvement was rapid.

On the 26th, the Queen wrote a letter in which she warmly expressed her deep sense of the sympathy shown by the people towards both herself and the Princess of Wales during those painful and terrible days, as well as of the general joy at the improvement in the Prince of Wales' state. These manifestations of sympathy made a deep and lasting impression on her heart. It was, indeed, nothing new to her, for the Queen had met with the same sympathy when, just ten years ago, a similar illness removed from her side the mainstay of her life, the best, wisest and kindest of husbands.

When the Prince was sufficiently recovered, a solemn thanksgiving service was held at St. Paul's, and was attended by the Queen, the Prince and the rest of the royal family.

Years rolled on, marked by peace and prosperity. The ever-increasing commerce and colonization had brought new and extensive lands under her sway. Victoria had been proclaimed Queen of Great Britain on June 20, 1837, and it was fitting that her Jubilee in 1887 should be celebrated in a manner worthy of the occasion.

The great day, June 21, 1887, dawned. The streets of London were lavishly decorated, no pains were spared to make the great centre of the Empire

—the largest city in the world—as gay and bright as possible. From end to end London was gaily decorated with flags, banners, and loyal inscriptions. Early in the morning trains poured people into London from outlying parts. Such crowds had never been seen before. Representatives had gathered from all parts of the Empire, and royal princes had come from the courts of Europe. The Kings of Denmark, Saxony and Greece were personally present. Every window along the route was filled, every balcony and gallery contained eager spectators of the royal procession.

At eleven o'clock the great procession started from Buckingham Palace, and cheer upon cheer rose from the dense waiting masses. The first part of the procession consisted of carriages full of foreign kings and princes. A body of Life Guards preceded the royal carriages containing the Queen's married daughters and grand-daughters; these were followed by a brilliant escort of royal princes, riding on horseback; including her three sons, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Duke of Connaught.

The appearance of the Queen's carriage, drawn by the famous cream-coloured horses, was the signal for a tremendous outburst of cheering, which was kept up continuously along the route till Westminster Abbey was reached. With the Queen drove her eldest daughter and the Princess of Wales.

A short and simple thanksgiving service took

place: the Queen sat in the old chair of Edward the Confessor, in which fifty years before she had been crowned as a young untried girl.

At night the whole city was illuminated, feasts were given to vast numbers of school children. In every town there were festivals, decorations and illuminations. Great bonfires blazed on the top of some two hundred of the highest hills in England, Scotland and Wales.

“The enthusiastic reception I met with . . . has touched me most deeply,” she said in a letter of thanks to her subjects some days later. “It has shown that the labour and anxiety of fifty long years, twenty-two of which I spent in unclouded happiness, shared and cheered by my beloved husband, while an equal number were full of sorrows and trials borne without his sheltering arm and wise help, have been appreciated by my people. This feeling and the sense of duty towards my dear country and subjects, who are so inseparably bound up with my life, will encourage me in my task, often a very difficult and arduous one, during the remainder of my life.”

But great as was the enthusiasm of June 21, 1887, it was far surpassed by that roused by the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of her reign—The Diamond Jubilee, 1897. The Queen had now reigned longer than any other British sovereign. Hundreds of thousands of people from all parts of the country came up to witness an event unparalleled in English history. Once more the

foreign lands sent representatives, indeed, no fewer than fifty foreign countries were represented, and many gorgeous gifts in silver and gold were showered on the Queen.

The procession was a mile and a half in length. Cheer upon cheer rose and fell on the air, when the royal carriage came in sight and escorted by her two sons on horseback, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Connaught, the aged Queen, bowed with the burden of her seventy-nine years, came before her delighted subjects.

“From my heart I thank my beloved people. May God bless them.”

These simple words—the thanks of a mother to her children—were flashed to every corner of the Empire on this royal day, while wire and cable alike carried congratulations to her, who was the centre of an admiring world.

Throughout the country the occasion was observed with as much enthusiasm as that displayed in the capital. Feasts were organised for the poor; while for the children of the schools there were decorations and fireworks. So great and general an outburst of loyalty has never been witnessed in any country, and the feeling that the Queen was not only the sovereign of her people, but their mother, was universal.

The last years of the Queen's life were saddened by the outbreak of war in South Africa. It is scarcely necessary to go into the causes of this war. She followed the events with the deepest

interest and anxiety. Not only did she despatch frequent telegrams to the troops, expressing her admiration of their courage and grief at their losses, but she sent numerous messages of sympathy to wives or parents who had lost their loved ones there, and even requested that their photographs should be sent to her. When Lord Roberts returned to England, leaving Lord Kitchener in command in South Africa, the Queen insisted on an interview with him, so that she might hear with her own ears the prospects of peace. To those who saw her ever-increasing weakness, there was cause for alarm in the coming interview on such a critical subject as the war. But the Queen was firm, and she gathered together her sinking energies for this final task.

This was early in January, 1901. The public was already uneasy about the state of her health. On January 20, it was announced that her condition had become serious. Through the length and breadth of her great Empire, the news ran, causing widespread anxiety. Till Tuesday morning, January 22, she was conscious and recognised the members of her family watching by her bedside, but on the afternoon of the same day she passed away peacefully. The news, "The Queen is dead" flashed across land and sea and caused universal mourning and grief. On the death of the Queen, Mr. Arthur Balfour, speaking in the House of Commons said, "She passed away with her children and her children's children to the third generation around her, beloved and cherished of all. She passed away,

without, I well believe, a single enemy in the world. Even those who loved not England loved her. She passed away not only knowing that she was, I had almost said, worshipped and revered by all her subjects, but that their feelings towards her had grown in depth and intensity with every year she was spared to rule over us."

From every part of the world came expressions of sorrow and admiration. The solemn funeral military procession through the streets of London which had witnessed two great Jubilee processions, festivals of rejoicing and thanksgiving, testified to the world-wide sorrow.

They laid her, not with other kings and queens of England in Westminster Abbey, but at Windsor, beside him whom she had loved and who forty years before had been laid there.

The longest reign in the annals of British History was over.

Let us look back over the wonderful period of her long reign extending over sixty four years, South Africa till Britain had become paramount the British Crown; British power had spread in with the most surprising progress. The area and see what changes the Queen had witnessed in the country under her sway. Her reign is coincident over which she reigned had increased enormously, and the number of her subjects had trebled in the British Isles alone. Canada had grown into a great Dominion; Australasia had sprung into a great and powerful Commonwealth; India had passed under

in the African continent; in Egypt the influence of England had become complete. But it was neither the increased wealth nor the added miles to her Empire that interested her so much as the improved condition of her poorer subjects. They were now with better wages and shorter hours of work, better housed, better fed, better clothed than in the early years of her reign. Free and compulsory education for the children of Great Britain had elevated and refined the national mind, the effects of which were visible everywhere. Where most could read and write, there was a growing demand for cheap books and newspapers. At the accession of the Queen there were but five newspapers, but their number was well over two thousand when she died. This had been made possible by the abolition of stamp duties and the introduction of penny-postage and printing by steam.

Now the people had an opportunity of learning the affairs of the state from day to day—a matter of great importance, since already the working man had a voice in the government of his country. The formation of County Councils, to deal with local matters relating to small areas, brought the possibility of governing on a small scale within the reach of all. Thus, by means of education, the poorest of the Queen's subjects could rise to the highest position in the Empire, impossible at the beginning of the reign.

The construction of railways proceeded apace, till the whole country was covered with a network

of railway lines. Steam ocean traffic progressed equally rapidly. These improved and rapid means of communication together with the introduction of Free Trade resulted in the cheapening of food. No longer did the working man live on home produce. The great ocean-going ships steamed from shore to shore, bringing to Britain foods cheaper than she could produce them on the spot. Similarly, the huge imports of wool from Australia and cotton from Egypt and elsewhere made the manufacture of cloth cheaper, which found a ready sale in the new markets secured by adventurers and explorers.

Before the Queen came to the throne, Britain, by reason of her steam power and ready production of coal and iron, had turned from an agricultural to a manufacturing country; and at the time of the Queen's accession she had already had a long start of the rest of the world. She had also the command of the sea, and the finest merchant service in the world.

As new lands came under the Queen's sway, the people there naturally looked to Britain for the supply of their needs. They needed material for development and protection, they needed luxuries of modern civilized life. All this they could obtain from her. In return, as the new countries grew and developed, they were able to produce more food-stuffs and more raw materials than before. They, therefore, sent their supplies to Britain. To keep her trade, she had to preserve her trade-routes

and coaling stations. She linked together every part of her scattered possessions by submarine cables, she added ships yearly to her huge mercantile marine, until at the Queen's death, she owned half the carrying trade of the whole world and possessed the finest and strongest Navy.

Great as was the progress made in these directions, the achievements of Queen Victoria's reign in Literature and Science were still greater. The great thinker, Thomas Carlyle, the great novelist, Charles Dickens, the great poet, Lord Tennyson, lived during her time. Wonderful discoveries were made in the realm of science. The art of photography was discovered during this period. The use of chloroform made it possible to perform surgical operations slowly and painlessly. The wonderful discovery of X-rays still further helped surgery in the exact location of a bullet or foreign substance imbedded in the flesh. Sir Joseph Lister, an eminent physician, greatly facilitated the work of surgeons by pointing out the use of antiseptics. Electricity came to be used more commonly both in homes and factories. Throughout the reign of Victoria the field of science was full of eager workers—all toiling in the great cause of humanity.

The late Earl of Carlisle once happily observed that the glories of Queen Victoria's reign were "The glories of peace, of industry, of commerce, of genius: of justice made more accessible; of education made more universal; of virtue more honoured; of religion more beloved!"

No account of the reign of Queen Victoria would be complete without some reference to her friends and advisers. The person to whom the Queen owed most—next to her husband—was Lord Melbourne. He was her first Prime Minister. Victoria was just nineteen, when she came to the throne. She stood alone, and it was clear that some one must help her to grapple with the thousand and one difficulties which surrounded her. In Lord Melbourne she found a 'guide, philosopher, and friend.' He devoted himself to this work so earnestly and sincerely that no one—not even any of his opponents—regarded him with the slightest mistrust and jealousy.

The Queen was equally fortunate in his successor, Sir Robert Peel, a statesman in whom she had every confidence, "a man who thinks but little of party and never of himself." The relations between the Queen and her minister were very cordial. Prince Albert, in a letter, speaks of Peel as "the best of men, our truest friend, the strongest bulwark of the throne, the greatest statesman of his time."

By far the most interesting person who acted as both friend and adviser to the Queen and her husband was the Baron Christian Friedrich von Stockmar, who had been private physician to Prince Leopold, and afterwards private secretary and controller of his household. Immediately before Victoria's accession, King Leopold had sent him to England where his counsel, judgment, and

thorough knowledge of the English Constitution were placed at the service of the young Princess. All that he did was done quietly and behind the scenes. He soon became the Prince's confidential adviser, and his unrivalled knowledge and strict sense of truth and duty proved of the utmost value. He endeared himself to both the Queen and the Prince and successive statesmen trusted him absolutely for his freedom from prejudice and for his sincerity. The Prince corresponded regularly with 'the good Stockmar,' and always, in time of doubt and trial, came sage counsel from his trusted friend.

Disraeli, afterwards Lord Beaconsfield, obtained the Queen's fullest confidence and won her friendship to an extent which no minister since Melbourne had ever been able to do. Him the Queen regarded with sincere affection, and he too possessed a remarkable influence over her. He did more than any other minister to raise the Crown to the position it now occupies and no monarch ever had a more devoted and faithful servant. Bismark who welded the disunited States of Germany into a united and powerful Empire said of Beaconsfield, "Disraeli is England." The annual celebration of 'Primrose Day,' April 19, the anniversary of his death, is sufficient proof that this great statesman's services to the British Empire are not yet forgotten.

The central figure of his time was the great Duke of Wellington, 'the Duke.' He was the best

known person in London, and though he never courted popularity or distinction, yet he served his Queen as Prime Minister when she desired. "The path of duty" was for him "the way to glory."

Among the foremost of Victorian statesmen stands Gladstone. He had been three times Chancellor of the Exchequer and four times Prime Minister. As an orator he had no equal in the great Victorian age.

Splendid as were the achievements of her able ministers, the Queen's own personality was, no doubt, an equally important factor in the wise administration of her country. Her influence for good was immense; she was ever a peacemaker, and desired above all things peace, but peace with honour. Nothing was done by her ministers in any important affair without every despatch being submitted to her for approval; no step was taken without receiving her sanction. She reigned as well as ruled, quietly, ever constitutionally and wisely.

Her influence was not confined to the affairs of her own Empire, but was continually exercised for the good of the world in general. Her great age, her unique experience, her connection by marriage with so many rulers, the known breadth of her views, her commonsense and wisdom, gave her an influence far beyond that of any other reigning monarch, and was always employed for good.

But while as a Queen her subjects respected

and admired her, it was as a woman that deep in their hearts they loved her. Her private life was a model, free from all blame and all reproach. Before her life was saddened by the untimely loss of her husband, the Queen was the leader of English Society, and her influence was thoroughly good and wholesome.

Her intense sympathy with all sorrow and suffering was one of her supreme virtues. She was never more happy than when she was visiting some poor sufferer and comforting those in sorrow. Her memory for the little events which made up the lives and happiness of those far below her in social rank was amazing. She was a great and a truly democratic Queen. She gave the greater portion of her Jubilee presents towards a fund to establish institutions to provide nurses for the sick and poor.

Queen Victoria was exceptionally fortunate in her children, they were all loving and dutiful. This was largely due to their careful upbringing and education. No trouble was ever spared by her to obtain the best possible advice on the training of her family. The nursery was as well-governed as her kingdom.

On one occasion the Queen expressed her views upon the education of children. "The greatest maxim of all is," she declared, "that the children should be brought up as simply, and in as domestic a way as possible; that (not interfering with their lessons), they should be as much as

possible with their parents, and learn to place their greatest confidence in them in all things." The children were all brought up strictly. They were all taught to use their hands as well as their heads, and at Osborne, the boys worked at carpentry and gardening, while the girls were employed in learning cooking and housekeeping. Christmas was always celebrated in splendid fashion by the family, and the royal children were always encouraged to give as presents something which they had made with their own hands. Lessons in riding, driving and swimming also formed part of their training, for, the Queen was wise enough to realise that open-air exercise was very necessary for the health of her children.

Even on their walks and rambles their instruction was continued. They were taught to make collections of plants, insects, and geological specimens, and to arrange them scientifically in their museum. They had the constant care and companionship of their father, who, while strict in enforcing attention to their studies, was, in all other respects one of the kindest and most indulgent of parents. Their education was extremely thorough, and they worked more hours a day at their lessons than do most boys and girls at school. These children, so well brought up and trained, were her strength and her comfort, when the trouble of her life came to the Queen, with the death of the Prince Consort.

The whole life of Queen Victoria is a Royal

Idyll, noble in its simplicity, its truth, its purity;
and as child, crowned maiden, wife, mother, and
widowed ruler, she alike claims our reverence and
love.'

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE



MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

THE PIONEER OF A NOBLE PROFESSION

There is a story told by Sarah Tooley, in the life of our heroine, that at a dinner given to the naval and military officers at the close of the Crimean War, each guest was asked to write on a slip of paper the name of the person whose services during the late campaign would be longest remembered by posterity, and that when the papers were examined, each bore the same name—"Florence Nightingale."

Who was this lady ?

Florence Nightingale first saw the light of day on May 12, 1820, and was named Florence after that fair city of flowers on the banks of the Arno. Little did her parents then think that the name then chosen was destined to become one of the most popular throughout the British Empire.

Her father, Mr. William Nightingale, was a well-to-do landowner, a tall, slim man of irreproachable character. He had been educated at Edinburgh and Trinity College, Cambridge, had broadened his mind by foreign travels and was far in advance of the country gentry of his time, in matters of education and culture. Sport had no special attraction for him, but he was a student, a lover of books and art. He never grudged money,

for the support of rural education and one of his tenants once remarked: "Many poor people in Lea would not be able to read and write if it had not been for Miss Florence's father."

Her mother was daughter of William Smith, who for fifty years was M.P. for Norwich. He was a constant and notable opponent of slavery, and well-known for his interest in various branches of philanthropy. Mrs. Nightingale, imbued with her father's spirit, was very kind and benevolent to the poor. She was a stately and beautiful woman and one of the race now fast dying out, of gentlewomen who were at once capable housekeepers and charming and cultured ladies. While our heroine's mother trained her in deeds of benevolence, her father inspired her with a love for knowledge and guided her studies on lines much in advance of the usual education given to young ladies at that period.

When quite a child she showed characteristics which pointed to her vocation in life. Her dolls were always in a delicate state of health and required the utmost care. Florence would undress and put them to bed, with many cautions to her sister not to disturb them. She soothed their pillows, tempted them with imaginary delicacies from toy cups and plates and nursed them to convalescence. Her sister did not exhibit the same tenderness for her waxen favourites, who frequently suffered the loss of a limb or got burnt at the nursery fire. Then, of course, Florence's superior skill was in demand and a modern bone-

setter might envy the facility with which she would set and bandage a broken arm or leg.

It was when she was about ten years old that the future Queen of Nurses tended her first 'real live patient.' One day, riding over the Hampshire downs on her shaggy pony in company with the vicar, Florence noticed that the sheep were all scattered over the hill-side and ran hither and thither regardless of the voice of the old shepherd, who, with his sheepskin over his shoulders and his tall crook in his hand vainly strove to keep them together.

'Yes, he does seem in trouble,' said the child's companion, watching the old man's futile efforts.

'Shall we ride across and ask him what is the matter?'

'Oh, yes! do let us,' was the ready answer.

In a few seconds the two had ascended the hill-side and were within hail of the shepherd, who, worn out by the exertions he had made, had sunk down on the soft green grass grumbling aloud, 'It is of no use, they must take their own way.'

'Well, Roger, what is wrong with you? Where is your dog?' asked the vicar, as he drew up his horse.

'The boys have been throwing stones at him, sir,' was the reply, 'and they have broken his leg, poor beast. He will never be any good for anything again and I am thinking of putting an end to his misery.'

‘Poor Cap’s leg broken?’ said a girlish voice at the clergyman’s side. ‘Oh! cannot we do something for him, Roger, it is cruel to leave him alone in his pain. Where is he?’

‘You can’t do any good, missy,’ said the old shepherd sorrowfully, ‘I will just take a cord to him to-night, that will be the best way to ease his pain. I left him lying in the shed over yonder.’

‘Oh, can’t we do something for poor Cap?’ pleaded Florence to her friend; and the vicar seeing the look of pity in her young face turned his horse’s head towards the group of cottages nestling under the hill-side. But Florence put her pony to the gallop and reached the shed first. Kneeling down on the mud floor, she caressed the suffering dog with her little hand, and spoke soothing words to it, until the faithful brown eyes seemed to have less of pain in them and were lifted to her face in pathetic gratitude. That look of the shepherd’s dog which touched her heart on the lonely hill-side, Florence was destined to see repeated in the eyes of suffering men, in the hospital of Scutari.

The vicar soon joined his young companion and finding that the dog’s leg was only badly bruised, decided that a little careful nursing would put him all right again.

‘What shall I do first?’ asked Florence, all eagerness to begin nursing in real earnest.

‘Well,’ said her friend, ‘I should advise a hot compress on Cap’s leg.’

Florence looked puzzled, for though she had

poulticed and bandaged her dolls, she had never heard about a compress. However, finding that in plain language it meant cloths wrung out in boiling water and laid upon the affected part, she set nimbly to work under the vicar's directions. Boiling water was the first requisite and calling in the services of the shepherd's boy she lighted a fire of sticks in the cottage near by and soon had the kettle boiling.

Next thing, she looked round for cloths to make a compress. The shepherd's clean smock hung beside the door, and Florence seized it with delight, for it was the very thing. "If I tear it up, mamma will give Roger another," she reasoned, and, at an approving nod from the vicar, tore the smock into suitable lengths for fomentation. Then going back to the place where the dog lay, accompanied by the boy carrying the kettle and a basin, Florence Nightingale set to work to give 'first aid to the wounded.' Cap offered no resistance—he had a wise confidence in his nurse—and as she applied the fomentations the swelling began to go down and the pain grew less.

Florence was resolved to do her work thoroughly, and a messenger having been despatched to allay her parents' anxiety at her prolonged absence, she remained for several hours in attendance on her patient.

In the evening, old Roger came slowly and sorrowfully towards the shed, carrying the fatal rope, but no sooner did he put his head in at the

door than Cap greeted him with a whine of pleasure and tried to come towards him.

'Dear me, missy,' said the old shepherd in astonishment, 'why, you have been doing wonders, I never thought to see the poor dog greet me again.'

'Yes, doesn't he look better?' said the youthful nurse with pardonable pride. 'You can throw away the rope now and help me to make compresses.'

'That I will, missy,' said Roger, and stooping down beside Florence and Cap, he was initiated into the mysteries.

'Yes,' said the vicar, 'Miss Florence is quite right, Roger—your dog will soon be able to walk again, if you give it a little rest and care.'

'I am sure I can't thank your reverence and the young lady enough,' replied the shepherd, quite overcome at the sight of his faithful dog's look of content and the thought that he would not lose him after all, 'and you may be sure, sir, I will carry out the instructions.'

'But I shall come again to-morrow, Roger,' interposed Florence, who had no idea of giving up her patient yet, 'I know mamma will let me if I tell her about poor Cap.'

Then Florence took her leave, stroking and caressing the dog to the last and those who, standing at the cottage door, watched her disappear, little thought they were gazing upon one whose mission would be to tend the sick and wounded in

the great battlefield of life.

She longed to be always doing something for somebody, and the poor people on her father's estates soon learned what a kind friend they had in Miss Florence. They also grew to have unbounded faith in her skill, and whenever a pet animal was sick, the owner would contrive to let *Miss Florence* know.

The two sisters were encouraged in their love of animals and were allowed to have many pets. Florence was particularly attached to Peggy, an old grey pony long since past work, who spent her days in the paddock at Lea Hurst. Florence never missed a morning, if she could help it, without going to talk to Peggy, who knew her footsteps, and would come trotting up to the gate ready to meet her young mistress. Then would follow some good-natured sport.

'Would you like an apple, poor old Peggy?' Florence would say as she fondled the pony's neck; 'then look for it.'

At this invitation Peggy would put her nose to the dress-pocket of her little visitor and discover the delicacy. Or it might be a carrot, held well out of sight, which Peggy was invited to play hide-and-seek for.

The young animals in the fields were quickly won by her kind nature, and would come bounding towards her. Out in those beautiful woods she made companions of the squirrels, who came fearlessly after her to pick up the nuts mysteriously

dropped in their path. With what delight she watched their funny antics, for she had the gift to make these timid creatures trust her ! Her love of flowers, like fondness for animals, was a part of her nature.

Wherever Florence went the same glad welcome awaited her. Hers was a familiar face in the poor cottages around her home, especially when there was sickness or trouble therein. As her mother's almoner she would take food and clothes to those who stood in need. But what they valued more than the material help she brought was the gentle presence, the delicate touch of the child's hand on the aching head, the serious face so full of sympathy, and the soft voice speaking words of encouragement and hope. 'A ministering angel' even while she stood on the threshold of life, her child's soul was touched by the pain and sorrow of those around her. She was not of common mould, her mission was born with her. It came naturally to her to bear others' burden, to lighten the weight of sorrow.

Not only was Florence reared in scenes of exceptional beauty but she was mentally trained in advance of the custom of the day. She and her sister did their lessons together under the care of a governess and their education was closely supervised by their father. Mr. Nightingale, a cultured man of broad sympathies and intellectual tastes, made a hobby of giving a classical education to his daughters, and found a fertile soil in the quick

brain of Florence. From him she learnt elementary science, Greek, Latin and mathematics and, under his guidance, made acquaintance of the best authors and poets. He was a strict disciplinarian; rules were, therefore, rigidly fixed for lessons and play, and careless work was never passed unpunished. It was in the days of childhood that the future heroine of the Crimea laid the foundation of an orderly mind and a habit of method which served her so admirably when suddenly called to organise the ill-regulated hospital at Scutari.

She was also a skilful needlewoman, and worked cushions and slippers, mastered the finest and most complicated patterns, sewed delicate embroideries, and achieved almost invisible hems on muslin frills.

The mother supervised the domestic side of her little girls' education and before Florence was twelve years old, she could hemstitch, seam, and embroider bookmarkers. She had trained her, too, in matters of deportment, and nothing was omitted in her early years which would tend to mould her into a graceful and accomplished girl.

As the years passed, a restlessness grew upon her. There began to arise in her mind obstinate questionings. Was this comfortable life of hers as 'the squire's daughter' a really useful one? Was there no nobler work—work demanding stern practical preparation? So much suffering went unrelieved in the world, could she do nothing to relieve it? She eventually decided on her sphere

of work: it was to be hospital nursing. But Mrs. Nightingale could not understand this high seriousness, and one day her perplexity was changed into consternation and alarm, when Florence announced an extreme desire to go to Salisbury Hospital for several months as a nurse. The scheme was brushed aside as preposterous, for not only was it an almost unimaginable thing in those days for a woman of means to make her own way in the world and to live in independence but the particular profession for which Florence was marked out both by her instincts and her capacities, was at that time a peculiarly disreputable one. A 'nurse' meant then a coarse old woman, always ignorant, usually dirty, often brutal, tipping at the brandy-bottle or indulging in worse irregularities. The nurse in the hospital was especially notorious for immoral conduct; sobriety was almost unknown and they could hardly be trusted to carry out the simplest medical duties. Certainly, things have changed since those days; and that they *have* changed is due, far more than to any other human being, to Miss Nightingale herself, a pioneer of pioneers.

With an amazing persistency, during the eight years that followed her *rebuff* over Salisbury Hospital, she struggled and worked and planned. The pleasures of society had no charm for her. She seemed to take no interest in marriage. In secret she devoured the reports of medical commissions, the pamphlets of sanitary authorities, the histories of hospitals and homes. She spent the intervals of

the London season in ragged schools and work-houses. There was hardly a great hospital in Europe with which she was not acquainted, hardly a great city whose slums she had not passed through. She managed to spend some days in a Convent school in Rome and some weeks as a Sister of Mercy in Paris. Then, when her mother and sister were taking the waters at Carlsbad in 1849, she succeeded in slipping off to the Deaconesses Institute at Kaiserwerth founded by Pastor Fliedner, of which the distinguished philanthropist, Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, had told her. It was the first training school for nurses of the sick established in modern times and it seems a happy conjunction of circumstances that she who was to lead the blue ribbon of the nursing sisterhood of the world should have studied within its walls. Her stay here formed the foundation of all her future work and finally fixed her in a career. She devoted the proceeds of her booklet on Kaiserwerth to charitable objects. The teacher and pupil were not destined to meet again, but the good Pastor lived to hear the name of Florence Nightingale resound through the world.

Florence Nightingale believed in training and qualifying herself for a vocation. In a letter on the subject she wrote: "I would say to all young ladies who are called to any particular vocation, qualify yourselves for it as a man does for his work. Don't think you can undertake it otherwise. Submit yourselves to the rules of business, as men do, by which alone you can make God's

business succeed; for He has never said that He will give His success and His blessing to sketchy and unfinished work."

Three more years passed and at last the pressure of time told; her family seemed to realise that she was old enough and strong enough to have her way; and she became the superintendent of a nursing home at 47, Harley Street. There she devoted herself with energy and ardour to the organisation of this institution, which remains to-day as a monument of her work and method. A lady who visited her in Harley Street said, "She was to be found in the midst of the various duties of a hospital—for the Home was largely a sanatorium—organising the nurses, attending to the correspondence, prescriptions and accounts; in short, performing all the duties of a hard-working matron as well as largely financing the institution."

And now Fate knocked at the door. The Crimean War broke out; the whole nation echoed the words of Napier to his men: "Lads, war is declared, we are to meet a bold and numerous enemy. Should they offer us battle, you know how to dispose of them. Should they remain at port, we must try to get at them. Success depends upon the quickness and decision of your fire. Lads, sharpen your cutlasses and the day is ours."

When tidings came of the victory of the battle of the Alma and the news came of the wounded lying uncared for, the sick untended, the

dying unconsolated, in the midst of the nation's rejoicings at victory, a cry of indignation arose on behalf of our soldiers. The transport utterly broke down: the soldiers in addition to undertaking hard fighting, were forced to turn themselves into pack-mules and tramp fourteen miles through the mud in the depth of winter in order to obtain food and warm blankets for their comrades and themselves. "The commonest accessories of a hospital are wanting," wrote the veteran war correspondent, William Howard Russell. "There is not the least attention paid to decency or cleanliness, the stench is appalling, and for all I can see, the men die without the least effort to save them." "Are there no devoted women amongst us," rang the clarion voice, "willing to go forth to minister to the sick and suffering soldiers of the East in the hospitals at Scutari? Are none of the daughters of England, at this extreme hour of need, ready for such a work of mercy?"

At that time Sidney Herbert was at the War Office and in that Cabinet. His industry was proverbial, his power of organization remarkable, and great as was his work, 'there was something, if possible still greater, and that was his character.' It was said that men would give up to Sidney Herbert, what they would grant to no one else. The whole nation looked to him in this hour of need.

The rousing appeal to the women of the country had the effect of inundating the authorities with

applications from women of all classes, who, moved by the sad accounts of the suffering soldiers, were anxious to go out as nurses. The offers of help were numerous, but Herbert's trained mind could see in them no signs of capacity, of power to lead and to organise. Yet he knew of one friend endowed with strength of character for the task and prepared by training for it. His thoughts turned to her. How could he ask her, unless she volunteered, to take her life in her hands to brave the hardships, the breaking toil and worse than these the certainty of slanderous criticism? But would she forgive him, if he denied her this noble opportunity?

In her quiet country home, Miss Florence Nightingale, too, pondered over the stirring words of Mr. Russell. For years she had been getting ready. She was experienced, free, mature and yet still young—she was thirty-four—desirous to serve, accustomed to command. Now the desperate need of a great nation came. Was she *able* to obey the call? Her resolve was made. Before the sun had set on that memorable 15th of October, she had written to Mr. Sidney Herbert offering her services unreservedly at her country's disposal. The same day he had penned a long letter to her asking for "the services of the one woman in England, fitted by character and training to organise a nursing staff and take them out to the Crimea." The letter in which she offered her services and Sidney Herbert's letter, in which she asked for them

actually crossed in the post.

In just one week, she was ready to start with her first batch of thirty-eight nurses. Shunning the glare of publicity, she set forth with her devoted band on the evening of October 21, 1884, under cover of night. As the last handshake was given and the last farewell said, her beautiful face retained its calm demeanour and was illumined by a sweet smile. Early next morning at Boulogne, where word of these good women and their mission had preceded them across the Channel, a stalwart company of fishwives, a merry and picturesque band in snowy caps and gay petticoats seized their trunks and bags and almost fought for the privilege of carrying their luggage to the station, as a labour of love. Tears streamed down many of the old and weather-beaten cheeks. Not one sou would they accept but handshakes again and again, and the train steamed out amid cries of *Vivent les soeurs*.

They reached Scutari on November 4, 1884, ten days after the battle of Balaclava and *one day before* the battle of Inkerman. It was a heart-breaking sight for the Lady-in-Chief, when she had made her first round of the wards at Scutari. The beds were reeking with infection and the sheets were of canvas and so coarse that the wounded men begged to be left in their blankets and recoiled from them. The sick had no other couch than the bare ground itself and a dripping canvas between them and the clouds—the veriest hovel would be

a heaven in comparison. At night, when the wards were lit only by the glimmer of candlesticks, rats would venture out and bite the weakest of the sufferers, drawing blood, for the rats too were starving. There was no bed-room furniture of any kind, and empty beer bottles were used for candlesticks. There were no basins, no soap, no brooms, no mops, no trays, no plates; there were neither slippers nor scissors, neither shoe brush nor blacking; there were no knives, or forks or spoons. Stretchers, splinters, bandages, all were lacking and so were the most ordinary drugs. The immediate surroundings of the hospital were a hotbed of pestilence: Miss Nightingale counted six dogs lying under the window in a state of decomposition. There was no proper provision for washing, no kitchens and no sanitation. Want, neglect, confusion, misery prevailed everywhere. In these surroundings, the strongest hand was struck with trembling and the boldest eye would turn away its gaze.

Miss Nightingale came, and she, at any rate, did not abandon hope. For one thing, she brought material succour. Though the head of the Army Medical Board had told her that nothing was needed, she preferred to trust her own instinct and at Marseilles purchased a large quantity of miscellaneous provisions which were of the utmost use at Scutari. She came, too, amply provided with money—in all, during her stay in the East, about £7,000 reached her from private resources and



MISS NIGHTINGALE IN THE SCUTARI HOSPITAL

Mr. Macdonald put the Times' Fund at her disposal. "I cannot conceive," wrote an eye-witness, "as I now calmly look back on the first three weeks after the arrival of the wounded from Inkerman how it could have been possible to have avoided a state of things too disastrous to contemplate, had not Miss Nightingale been there, with the means placed at her disposal by Mr. Macdonald."

When all was wrong, the whole service from commander to orderly conspired to say all was right. But she stood firm, a rock in the angry ocean. And so it was that hope dawned at Scutari. The reign of chaos began to dwindle, order and cleanliness replaced dirt and confusion. Day and night the Lady superintendent was at her task, in the turret chamber, whence the brain in command sent out its orders. On more than one occasion, she is said to have stood twenty hours at a stretch, beside the wounded, helping the doctors. When all the medical officers retired for the night and silence and darkness settled down on those miles of prostrate sick, she would be observed with a little lamp in her hand making her solitary rounds. Within ten days the hospital was so organised that it was hardly possible for a groan to escape from a sickman without its being heard by one of the nurses, ready to minister to him. All this was the work of one woman—all the gold in the Bank of England could not have accomplished such a transformation without her cool head and loving heart.

Her greatest enemy was perhaps red-tapism of the officials. On one occasion, twenty-seven thousand shirts, sent out at her instance by the Home Government, were landed, and were only awaiting to be unpacked. But the official purveyor intervened; he could not unpack them without a Board. She pleaded in vain: the sick and wounded lay half-naked for want of clothing: and three weeks elapsed before the Board released the shirts. A little later, however, she felt she could assert her own authority. She ordered a government consignment to be forcibly opened, while the miserable official stood by grumbling. This defiance made her some enemies and an old colonel put forward the touching complaint that the Lady-in-Chief did not choose to give the officer time to distribute the stores and the moment a want declared itself she made haste to supply it herself. The fact is that the dispensing orderlies did not even know what the stores contained. One of Miss Nightingale's helpers applied three times for chloride of lime and was told there was none. She insisted on a thorough search being made and 90 lbs. were found. But all England now, from the Queen to the humblest peasant, was busy in work and making warm garments and preparing lint and bandages for the soldiers. The Patriotic Fund for the relief of the widows and orphans rose by leaps and bounds, until within a year it amounted to one million pounds.

When the wounded were brought by hundreds to Scutari, it was the first duty of the surgeons to separate the hopeful cases from the desperate. On one occasion Florence saw five soldiers set aside apparently in a hopeless condition. At once she inquired from the surgeon if nothing could be done for the poor fellows, and the surgeon replied that their first duty was with those whom there seemed to be more hope of saving. "Will you give me these men?" said the Lady-in-Chief. "Do as you like with them," replied the surgeon; we think their case is hopeless." All through the night, she sat beside the men, feeding them with a spoon, until their senses awakened and their strength began to return. She washed their wounds and cheered their hearts with kind words. The next day, the surgeons pronounced the men fit for operation.

"The magic of her power over men," Kinglake tells us, "used often to be felt in the room where operations were performed. There, perhaps, the wounded soldier, if not yet resigned to his fate, might at first be craving death but when such a one looked and saw that the honoured Lady-in-Chief was patiently standing by him and, with lips closely set and hands folded, decreeing herself to go through the pain of witnessing pain, he used to fall into the mood for obeying her silent command, and finding strange support in her presence would bring himself to submit and endure." When serious surgical operations were performed she was

nore than equal to the trial. She had an utter disregard of contagion and spent hours over the dying.

And yet, as is the fate of all public workers, she too had small-minded fanatics who attacked her religious opinions. But an inflexible will and iron nerve carried her over all difficulties. Queen Victoria and the Prince-Consort had from the first taken a sympathetic interest in Miss Nightingale's work, and the following letter from the Queen to Mr. Sidney Herbert did much towards silencing adverse criticism, as it showed the confidence which her Majesty had in Miss Nightingale and her nurses:—

“WINDSOR CASTLE,

December 6, 1854.”

“Would you tell Mrs. Herbert,” wrote the Queen to Mr. Sidney Herbert, “that I beg she would let me see frequently the accounts she receives from Miss Nightingale or Mrs. Bracebridge, as *I hear no details of the wounded*, though I see so many from officers, etc., about the battlefield, and naturally the former must interest *me* more than any one.

“Let Mrs. Herbert also know that I wish Miss Nightingale and the ladies would tell these poor, noble, wounded and sick men that *no one* takes a warmer interest or feels *more* for their sufferings or admires their courage and heroism *more* than their Queen. Day and night she thinks of her beloved troops. So does the Prince.

“ Beg Mrs. Herbert to communicate these my words to those ladies, as I know that *our* sympathy is much valued by these noble fellows.”

“ VICTORIA.”

It was difficult not to obey her. She had a master voice. Its clear tones were in no need of emphasis. “ I have never heard her raise her voice,” said one of her companions. Only, when she had spoken, it seemed as if nothing could follow but obedience. Once when she had given some directions, a doctor ventured to remark that the thing could not be done. “ But it must be done,” said Miss Nightingale. A chance by-stander who heard the words never forgot through all his life the irresistible authority of them. And they were spoken quietly—very quietly indeed.

On another occasion she came to a fever patient who refused to take his medicine.

“ Why will you not take the medicine ? ” asked Miss Nightingale.

“ Because I took some once,” the man replied, “ and it made me sick; and I haven’t liked physic ever since.”

“ But if I give it to you myself,” said the Queen of Nurses with a pleasant smile, “ you will take it, won’t you ? ”

The poor fellow looked very hard at her and replied, “ Well, sure enough, ma’am, it will make me sick just the same.” However he took the draught and forgot the anticipated consequence as Miss Nightingale chatted to him about the last

engagement he was in.

It was in May, 1855, after having spent some six months at Scutari, that Miss Florence Nightingale went to Balaclava to see how the sick and wounded were faring at the seat of war. She was attended by Thomas, a young drummer, who had abandoned his instruments and sticks as he called them, to devote himself to Lady-in-Chief. No general in the field had a more devoted Aide-de-Camp than Florence Nightingale had in Thomas. He was a lad of twelve, full of life, fun and activity, but such was his devotion that he would have been cut to bits, ere harm came near his beloved mistress.

When she went out past the huts to the cooking encampment, some of the men who had been patients at the Barrack Hospital recognised Miss Nightingale, gave her three hearty cheers, followed by three times three. She was much affected by such an unexpected demonstration, and being on horseback could only bow to the men by way of thanks. The shouts grew so vociferous that Miss Nightingale's horse turned restive and one of her friends was obliged to dismount and lead it by the bridle, until the men's enthusiasm had abated. Miss Nightingale was in an adventurous mood and proposed to go still further into the trenches although a sharp artillery fire was being exchanged. Her friends were favourable to her wish, but the sentry was in a state of consternation. "Madam," said he, "if anything happens,

I call on these gentlemen to witness that I did not fail to warn you of the danger." "My good young man," replied Miss Nightingale, "more dead and wounded have passed through my hands than I hope you will ever see in the battlefield; believe me, I have no fear of death." Yet the sentry was right, and her life too valuable to be lightly risked.

It was while she was transacting business with one of her nursing staff, that Miss Nightingale was suddenly seized with alarming illness. The doctors pronounced it to be the worst form of Crimean fever, and ordered that she should be immediately removed to the sanatorium. She was laid on a stretcher, and tenderly carried by sad-eyed soldiers through Balaclava and up the mountain-side amid general consternation. Her own private nurse, Mrs. Roberts, attended her, a friend held a large white umbrella to protect her from the glaring sun, and poor Thomas, the drummer-boy, who had proudly called himself "Miss Nightingale's man," followed his mistress, crying piteously. A hut was selected near a small stream, the banks of which were gay with spring flowers, and there for twelve days she lay in a most critical condition.

The sad news was heard amidst the most pathetic scenes. The sick men turned their faces to the wall and cried like children. Lord Raglan, the Commander-in-Chief was deeply concerned at Miss Nightingale's illness, and as soon as he re-

ceived her doctor's permission, he rode over from headquarters to visit her. He arrived at her hut, at about five o'clock in the afternoon. Miss Nightingale was dozing, after a very restless night. There was a knock at the door.

"And pray, who are you?" asked Mrs. Roberts, her nurse.

"Oh, only a soldier," was the reply; "but I must see her—I have come a long way—My name is Raglan, she knows me very well."

Miss Nightingale overhearing him called the nurse and said, "Oh! Mrs. Roberts, it is Lord Raglan. Pray tell him I have very bad fever and it is dangerous for him to come near me."

"I have no fear of fever or of anything else!" said Lord Raglan, as he went in, took up a stool, sat down at the foot of the bed and kindly asked her how she was, expressing his sorrow at her illness and thanking and praising her for the good she had done for the troops. He wished her a speedy recovery and bade her good-bye. As he was going out, the nurse wished to apologise. "No, no. Not at all, my dear lady," said Lord Raglan. "You did very right, for I perceive that Miss Nightingale has not yet received my letter, in which I announced my intention of paying her a visit, having previously inquired from her doctor if she could be seen."

Miss Nightingale attributes her first step towards convalescence to the joy caused on receiving a bunch of wild flowers. The doctors urged

that she should immediately sail for England, which the heroic lady steadfastly refused to do. Her health was barely re-established when, on 8th September, the Allies delivered their final assault upon Sebastopol, and in the following night the Russians evacuated the city, leaving it in flames. Peace was in sight, and amid the general rejoicings at home people were asking how best the nation could show its gratitude to the heroine of the war. Already Queen Victoria, anticipating the wish of her people, had put this question to Sidney Herbert.

His answer was that there was one and one way only in which Florence Nightingale would consent to accept the nation's material expression of its gratitude to her. This was in the form of a subscription to found a hospital in London. Miss Nightingale looked to her reward in this country in having a fresh field for her labours and means of extending the good that she had already begun. A compliment dearer to her heart could not be paid than in giving her more work to do.

At the public meeting held to inaugurate the scheme of "A Nightingale Hospital Fund" Mr. Sidney Herbert read a letter from a friend who said, "I have just heard a pretty account from a soldier describing the comfort it was even to see Florence pass. 'She would speak to one and another,' he said, "and nod and smile to many more, but she could not do it to all, you know, for we lay there by hundreds. But we could kiss her shadow as it fell, and lay our heads on the pillow

again content." That story brought £10,000 to the Nightingale Fund, and the soldier who had related it out of the fulness of his heart must have felt a proud man. The Fund was the people's gift to Florence Nightingale, and continued to be enthusiastically supported by private contribution, from the pennies of the poor to the cheques of the rich.

The Fund had amounted to a sum of £44,000, when it was closed at the request of Florence Nightingale in order that public benevolence might be directed to the fund being raised to help the victims of the devastating floods in France in 1857. She placed the money in the hands of trustees for the training of girls, who wished to become hospital nurses. Thus to Florence Nightingale belongs the double honour of pioneer work on the field of battle in war time and of pioneer work of training nurses at home in peace time. Perhaps the crowning glory of her professional career came in 1871, when the Nightingale Home and Training School was opened as an integral part of the new St. Thomas's Hospital in London, the finest institution of its kind in Europe.

While the money flowed in, and while terms of peace were being discussed, Miss Florence Nightingale had gone back to the heights of the Crimea to resume her work. She was nursing the wounded who remained, and the sick men of the army of occupation. When thus occupied she received from Queen Victoria a beautiful jewel with

the following letter:—

“WINDSOR CASTLE,
January, 1856.”

“Dear Miss Nightingale,—You are, I know, well aware of the high sense I entertain of the Christian devotion which you have displayed during this great and bloody war, and I need hardly repeat to you how warm my admiration is for your services, which are fully equal to those of my dear and brave soldiers, whose sufferings you have had the *privilege* of alleviating in so merciful



a manner. I am, however, Jewel presented to Florence
anxious of marking my Nightingale by Queen Victoria
feelings in a manner which I trust will be agreeable
to you, and therefore send you with this letter a
brooch, the form and emblems of which commemo-
rate your great and blessed work, and which I hope
you will wear as a mark of the high approbation
of your sovereign!

“It will be a very great satisfaction to me when you return at last to these shores, to make the acquaintance of one who has set so bright an example to our sex. And with every prayer for the preservation of your valuable health, believe me, always, yours sincerely,

“VICTORIA R.”

The government did not forget to officially acknowledge the work of the Lady-in-Chief, and when the Treaty of Peace was under consideration in the spring of 1856, Lord Ellesmere paid the following eloquent tribute to her services:—

“ My Lords, the agony of that time has become a matter of history. The vegetation of two successive springs has obscured the vestiges of Balaclava and of Inkerman. Strong voices now answer to the roll-call, and sturdy forms now cluster round the colours. The ranks are full, the hospitals are empty. The angel of mercy still lingers to the last on the scene of her labours; but her mission is all but accomplished. Those long arcades of Scutari, in which dying men sat up to catch the sound of her footstep or the flutter of her dress, and fell back on the pillow content to have seen her shadow as it passed, are now comparatively deserted. She may be thinking how to escape, as best she may, on her return, the demonstration of a nation's appreciation of the deeds and motives of Florence Nightingale.”

It was not until July, 1856, four months after the declaration of peace and when the last soldier had embarked for home that she left her post.

Before Florence Nightingale left the scene of her labours, she marked the spot by an ever-lasting sign on the heights of Balaclava, where English courage and heroism had shone so brightly before the whole of Europe. She caused a gigantic cross

to be raised at her own expense upon which was inscribed, 'Lord, have mercy upon us.' The monument which came to be called the Nightingale Cross is dedicated to the memory of the fallen brave and to those sisters of her "Angel Band" who had slept their last sleep in that far away Eastern land.

Her reputation was now enormous and the enthusiasm of the public was unbounded. The nation was eager to give its heroine a great public welcome. Florence Nightingale would, however, have none of it. She declined the Government's offer of a British man-of-war to convey her home, and, embarking at Scutari on a French vessel, sailed for Marseilles. She passed through France at night, halted in Paris to visit her old friends, the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, and then travelling *incognito* proceeded to Boulogne and sailed for dear old England.

She arrived quietly at Whatstandwell, the nearest railway station to her Derbyshire home. on August 8, 1856, and succeeded in making her way unrecognised to Lea Hurst. According to local tradition, she entered by the backdoor and the identity of the closely-veiled lady in black was first discovered by the old family butler.

She arrived in England in a shattered state of health. The hardships and ceaseless efforts of the last two years had undermined her system, her heart was pronounced to be affected: she suffered constantly from fainting fits and terrible attacks of utter physical prostration. The doctors declared

that one thing alone would save—a complete and prolonged rest. But that was also the one thing with which she would have nothing to do. She had never been in the habit of resting, why should she begin now? Now, when her opportunity had come at last; now, when the iron was hot, and it was time to strike? No; she had work to do; and come what might, she would do it. The doctors protested in vain; in vain her family lamented; in vain her friends pointed out to her the madness of such a course.

Within a few weeks of her return she took advantage of the invitation which Queen Victoria had sent her in the Crimea, together with a commemorative brooch.

She had several interviews with both the Queen and the Prince-Consort.

“She put before us,” wrote the Prince in his diary, “all the defects of our present military hospital system, and the reforms that are needed.” She related “the whole story” of her experiences in the East. The impression which she created was excellent.....Her Majesty’s comment was “Such a *head*! I wish we had her at the War Office.” But Miss Nightingale was not at the War Office, and for a very simple reason: she was a woman.

The soldier’s nurse showed the soldier’s heroism in the service of her country. Though compelled by ill-health to be a recluse, not a day of her time passed unoccupied. Work, work, ever work,

was her great panacea. Her desire for work could scarcely be distinguished from mania. She wrote voluminously. The labour involved in writing was incredible.

Books came from her pen—*Notes on Hospitals* in 1859, which became a standard work on the subject; next came *Notes on Nursing* (1860), of which more than 100,000 copies have been sold; with many pamphlets. She was immediately recognised as the leading expert upon all questions, affecting Public Health and medical relief. Her counsel was sought eagerly by people all over England and even abroad on matters concerning Nursing, Maternity and Hospital Administration. Words of shrewd and kindly advice flowed unceasingly from the writing-room in which she lived as a recluse.

In November, 1907, King Edward VII. appointed Miss Nightingale to the Order of Merit. She was the first woman to earn it, and has been the only one. In February, 1908, the Corporation of London, resolved amidst great enthusiasm to confer upon Miss Florence Nightingale the honourable Freedom of the City in a gold box of the value of one hundred guineas.

In moving the resolution the speaker said, "Never in the history of the freedom of the City, including on its roll of fame the names of monarchs, statesmen, soldiers, and famous men of all kinds and all callings, had it enrolled among the recipients of its honorary freedom a nobler

name than that of Florence Nightingale." Miss Nightingale requested that the sum of one hundred guineas which it was proposed to spend on the gold box for containing the scroll, should be given as a donation to the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute for Nurses and the Hospital for Invalid Gentlewomen, Harley Street, of which she was the first Superintendent.

She died peacefully on the afternoon of August 13, 1910. She was quietly laid to rest on Saturday, August 20, in the little churchyard near to her old home of Embley Park, and within sight of the hills where, as a child, she had found her first patient in the old shepherd's dog. The offer of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster of a burial place in the Abbey was declined by her executors, though it would have been the fitting place for England's greatest national heroine. She had ever shunned publicity and in deference to her wishes her funeral was not of a public character.

"We honour the soldier and applaud the valiant hero," says her biographer, "but it required a more indomitable spirit, a higher courage, to purge the pestilential hospital of Scutari; to walk hour after hour its miles of fetid corridors crowded with suffering, even agonised, humanity, than in the heat of battle to go "down into the jaws of death," as did the noble "Six Hundred." A grateful nation laid its offering at the feet of the heroine of the Crimea, poets wafted her fame abroad, and the poor and suffering loved her. In barracks, in

hospital, and in camp the soldier has cause to bless her name for the comfort he enjoys, the sufferers in our hospital wards have trained nurses through her initiative, the sick poor are cared for in their own homes, and the paupers humanely tended in the workhouse, as a direct result of reforms which her example or counsel prompted. No honour or title can ennoble the name of Florence Nightingale; it is peerless by virtue of her heroic deeds."

How true and beautiful are Longfellow's lines:—

“On England's annals, through the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
A light its rays shall cast
From portals of the past.

“A lady with a lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good,
Heroic womanhood.”

MADAME CURIE

MADAME CURIE

THE DISCOVERER OF RADIUM

You have read in history about famous queens, great heroines and noble nurses and perhaps ask in wonder if ever there was a woman who made her mark in the domain of science. In this chapter, we shall tell the story of a friendless refugee whose self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of science resulted in discoveries which have enriched the world. Her life is full of thrilling incidents and a glorious record of imperishable work, in the face of obstacles which would have daunted a less courageous soul.

Marie Sklodowska was born on November 7, 1867, in Warsaw. Her father was a professor of science in one of the colleges, her mother was also a university teacher. She died young, leaving a family of small children. Dr. Sklodowska had a real passion for science and emphasised, especially in the teaching of physics, the importance of practical work and demonstration. On this point he had continual differences of opinion with the old-fashioned classical master, who held that experiments in physics were child's play. This being the general opinion in those days, the funds set apart for equipping the laboratory were quite inadequate, and Dr. Skłodowska had to buy much of the necessary apparatus out of his own pocket. He could not

possibly afford to pay any one to wash his bottles and keep things in order, and so welcomed his little daughter, Marie, when she took to coming into the laboratory, covered with a large apron and armed with towels and tidying up for him in a motherly and competent way. At first the father regarded this help as a childish game, similar to that of "dusting like mother" or playing with dolls; but soon he found to his delight that she was really interested in what went on in the laboratory, and, from the moment of this discovery till she was old enough to go to school, he taught her regularly.

When she began going to school she still kept her custom of helping her father, and, as she grew older, she could be trusted to set up in the evening the apparatus for the next day's work. Almost all her young life was spent in her father's laboratory and in her teens she had already become his most capable assistant.

No wonder if the students called her Miss Professor, not out of compliment to her father, but as a sincere tribute of regard for Marie. Her father often went through his lecture over-night, and in this way the girl's scientific education continued in the evenings, while her general education received attention at school during the day. She grew up, therefore, in surroundings which gave full play to her tastes. "Already in my youth there was inherent in me," she says, "a strong inclination towards science, and my father helped me to strengthen my love for scientific research."

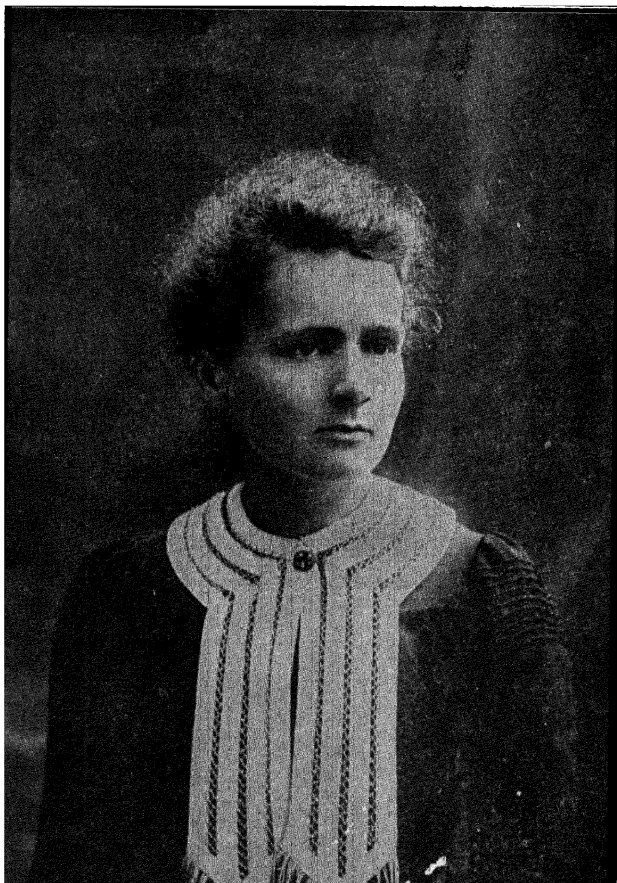
In the laboratory was peace and studious work; but outside there was seething discontent. North Poland then was under the heels of Russia and Warsaw, a great centre of Polish culture. This, in every form, it was the policy of Russia to crush; the Polish language must not be taught, the national dances must not be performed, or the national hymns sung. The result of this policy was that every Pole was filled with a flaming patriotism; Polish was studied as it had never been studied before, the children learnt it "with a Russian book on top of the desk, a Polish one beneath"; and "everybody was ready at any time to taste misery in Siberia for 'the holy cause.'" As she grew up and listened to the talk of her father and his students and friends, she too became enthusiastic for her country's freedom and was fired with the patriotism that regards death and exile as trivial incidents. The secret police got wind of the affair and she decided to leave Warsaw for Cracow, in south Poland, the former capital, to study science in some freer atmosphere. Rumour has it that the secretary of the historic university there, on being asked to enter her as a student of physics and chemistry told her that "this sort of study was not for her; he would put her down for the cooking class!"

Some time later she accepted a position as governess in Russia, which was almost tantamount to putting her head in the bear's mouth. Here it did not take her long to discover that the Russians

were harsher than ever to the Poles. So one night she left the house disguised as an old lady, and made her way to Paris to try her fortune in a foreign capital.

In her early twenties, then, she began the life of exile in a foreign land. Look at her picture at this time. Though broad-shouldered, she is not ungraceful; her mass of fair, wavy hair, brushed back, shows her magnificent brow from beneath which her blue-grey eyes look out with steady gaze. She has the high cheek-bones of the Poles and a firm mouth and chin, but in the face and in the musical voice, there is gentleness as well as strength. We are told that she combined a love of knowledge with a love of beauty, and yet her wide culture sat lightly on her shoulders and her manners were simple and natural.

She arrived in Paris with no money, no friends and only her brains and her courage between her and starvation. She rented in the 'east side' section of the town a tiny back room, four flights high, to which she carried her own coal. So poor was she that her diet consisted of milk and bread for months on end. In fact, she once said that later on she had to acquire anew the taste for meat. Ten cents were her daily expenses, and this she made largely by private tutoring or by washing bottles and preparing the furnace and chemical apparatus in the Sorbonne Laboratories. Here her superior intelligence and the knowledge shown by her in performing her menial tasks attracted the



MADAME CURIE

attention of two men of influence, Gabriel Lippmann, of the Physics Department and famous for his colour photography and Henri Poincare, a great mathematician and brother of the statesman. They discovered her history, and Lippmann got into touch with her father in Warsaw, with the result that Marie was enabled to start upon her course for a degree in Physics. For three long years she had to work incessantly before she passed brilliantly her licentiate in Mathematics and Physics.

In the spring of 1894, Pierre Curie met the young woman scientist for the first time. He was then a young man of thirty-five—the son of a doctor who freely gave up the greater part of the day to tending the needs of the poorest districts in Paris. The family means were, therefore, straitened. But the father's favourite hobby was natural history; in fact, he was so keen on it that Pierre and his brother learnt Botany and elementary Biology long before they had been initiated into the mysteries of long division or spelling. Pierre had no skill or quickness in mere routine lessons or in subjects of which he could not see the use. He loved concrete facts and first hand knowledge and possessed a great natural aptitude for Mathematics, but he never discovered this fact till, at the age of fifteen, he took his lessons from his tutor, Brazille. To this good and sympathetic teacher he owed much, for he suited his lessons to the peculiar needs of the odd pupil whom he found learned in

the flora and fauna of the district, well-read in literature, but ignorant of the simplest arithmetical processes. Curie made rapid and remarkable progress in his studies with his tutor and when only nineteen, he became an assistant in the laboratory of the Faculty of Science at Paris University. Here from the first, when he was little older than his pupils and therefore might have been excused for standing on his dignity, he was their comrade and friend as well as their master. He had the happy gift of attaching them to himself equally by his wide knowledge and unassuming goodness. He had a mastery of his apparatus and a power of clear explanation which impressed even the ignorant novice. There was ease mixed with diffidence in his bearing, and it was a joy to his pupils to work with him, because they felt he worked with them.

Standing before his black-board, he would chat with his class and start by his keen curiosity and by the breadth of his learning fruitful trains of thoughts in his students' minds. It is said of him that in all his work he had the courage to recognise and to say when there was anything that he did not understand. His character was retiring and he had the generous habit of singing the praises of his rivals.

In this way years slipped quietly away in happy absorption in his work, his pupils and his family. In the worldly sense, he had no ambition. But perhaps he would dream of finding one day his

ideal mate who could be his collaborator as well as the joy of his heart: and the dream did come true. They found at their first meeting that they had much in common. Both were poor and loved their work and had no use for idle talk; both cared for science above all else; both were serious, reflective, earnest. Both were alike in their passion for clear thought and deep understanding and in their love of simple pleasures and of beauty in nature and in art. No wonder they soon felt an instinctive sympathy with each other.

Soon they were working side by side, for Lippmann put his brilliant lady-pupil in the hands of Pierre Curie, as one of his most promising pupils. Before many months of companionship had passed, he wrote, "What a good thing it would be to unite our lives and work together for the good of science and humanity." She understood this shy proposal, sympathised and accepted. The Curies married in 1895, the year in which Röntgen made his famous discovery of X-rays.

Their combined incomes were still extremely small, so they set up housekeeping on a most modest scale. A little three-roomed flat, furnished by loans and gifts from relatives, was all they could afford. However it was really all they desired, for their life and interest lay in the laboratory. From the first their married life was one of co-operation, not only in the laboratory but also in the home. Visitors to their simple home would find Pierre sweeping the floor, while his wife cooked the meal.

This enabled Marie to continue her scientific work and, as we have read before, to obtain diplomas in Mathematics and Physical Science. Theirs was a happy home where they welcomed the play of mind on mind with each other and among their friends, and many an evening was spent in long discussions of the subjects that interested them.

In 1896, Becquerel discovered that the metal uranium emitted rays that penetrated substances just as the X-rays did. These results greatly attracted the Curies and Mme. Curie determined to investigate the matter thoroughly. She obtained figures which proved that the radio-activity of uranium-salts could be measured quantitatively and accurately. Next she found that many minerals containing uranium were far more strongly radio-active than uranium itself. Did these minerals contain an admixture of an unknown but far more active substance than uranium? She and her husband were highly excited by this hypothesis. They seemed on the brink of a great scientific discovery. They found, by testing samples of pitch-blende, that it was more radio-active than the uranium-salts. Their task was to discover the substance besides uranium which was radio-active. They found, after careful analysis, that the waste rock from which pitch-blende was extracted contained a new element which Mme. Curie christened Polonium, after her native land. Further examination ended in the isolation of another substance, and thus led them to

an epoch-making discovery. From eight tons of the mineral they extracted half a teaspoonful of something that was a million times more radio-active than uranium. They named it Radium.

To the unscientific world, radium appeared to be a kind of Aladin's Lamp; there was no end to the miracles it was to work, especially as it was generally understood that the new substance would endure for ever, and that all the energy hitherto produced by steam-engines and other engines could be procured from one minute piece of radium, all diseases were to be cured and man himself was to look to radium for the heat and light needed to keep him alive.

Let it not be forgotten that this discovery was the fruit of endless labour and patience. Despite their months of labour, they possessed only a minute quantity of their radium compound. They had to find a laboratory in which to work. The only building they could obtain was a large derelict shed, belonging to the Sorbonne, which suffered from a leaky roof and draughty walls, to say nothing of a dusty atmosphere which made delicate operations a hundred times as difficult as they should have been. There, in that tumble-down wooden building, their friends would find them, Mme. Curie clad in a laboratory overall and Perie Curie wrapped up warmly as a protection from the rheumatism that the place was apt to give him, busy over their experiments. Next they needed a large quantity of pitch-blende which is a very ex-

pensive mineral and the Curies were very poor. Luckily the Vienna Academy of Science came to their aid and presented them with several tons of the mineral from which the uranium had been extracted in an Austrian mine. So provided with raw material, in their improvised laboratory, they worked incessantly for close upon two years without further support either financial or personal. The task they had set themselves was not unlike that of looking for a needle in a bundle of hay. The preparation of radium salt and the investigation of its properties advanced hand in hand. The Curies lived for their work and they lived united in all their activities. In theoretical work, in their laboratory, in their home, they were never separated. She writes about this period:—

“During eleven years of common life we were almost never separated, to the point that only a few lines of correspondence between us exist relevant to the period.” In 1902, by tremendous hard work, Mme. Curie had managed to prepare a decigram of pure radium chloride. From this amount she was able to obtain the atomic weight of radium itself and thus to establish it beyond doubt as a new and individual element. She submitted her results to the University of Paris as a thesis and was admitted in consequence as a Doctor of Science.

The publication of the thesis carried her at a bound from obscurity to fame. But the sudden popularity was an unwelcome interruption of their

quiet life in home and laboratory. They evaded as far as possible all attempts to lionise them, refused interviews to reporters and photographers and retained in their hour of fame the simplicity of heart and soundness of judgment, which had characterised them in their years of obscurity.

In 1910, she at last succeeded in separating radium in a metallic state. Its activity surpassed even her own wildest estimates. The radium was so active that it affected anything which was brought near to the outside of the glass tube in which it was kept. Animals exposed to radium lost fur, skin and eyesight and finally died. Many investigators suffered from painful ulcers on their hands due to the handling of this mysterious white powder. Pierre Curie exposed his arm to the emanations at close quarters for some few minutes and a serious burn taking several months to heal resulted. His hands were badly crippled from contact with radium tubes. When he discovered the danger of their work, he insisted on taking the lion's share of the risks. Mr. Becquerel carried a tiny sample of radium bromide in one of his waistcoat pockets. The garment rotted to pieces in a few hours and he was very severely burnt on the chest. Pierre Curie once said that to enter any room, no matter how large, in which there was a kilogram of radium would be to court instant death, for the emanations would blind the eyes, and burn the clothes and every particle of skin of the body. If, on the one hand radium

dangerous, on the other it possesses life-giving powers, and has healed diseases thought to be incurable; it is a good servant, a bad master.

The year 1903 saw the general recognition of the Curies' work and honours rained thick upon them. At the pressing invitation of the Royal Society, the Curies went to London; the reception of them both on the occasion was a real triumph and the Davy Medal of the Royal Society was awarded to them jointly. The Nobel Prize for Physics for that year, the highest mark of distinction that can come to a scientist, was divided between them and Becquerel. The prize amounts to some £8,000 and relieved their financial anxiety. During the following year, the French Chamber of Deputies unanimously voted 18,700 francs to found a new chair of Physics for Pierre Curie. But dark days were now in store for Mme. Curie. One day, early in 1906, Pierre Curie left home to attend a luncheon given by an association of professors of science. There he sat amidst the circle of his dear intimate friends. Langevin was among them and watched his master, more gay and full of life than he had ever seen him. He had just been freed from the only teaching he had retained and was able to give himself entirely to research. Full of hopes and plans for the future he left his friends, but he never reached his home or the laboratory. Crossing a crowded thoroughfare, he slipped and fell under the wheels of a heavy dray and was killed immediately. The

shock of this tragic death was too great for the wife who was completely prostrated by this appalling and sudden accident. For a time it was understood her reason, even her life, was in danger. At home, the only cheerful sounds were the baby voices of Irene and Eve and gradually these called to Mme. Curie to take up the burden of her life again. Time is a great healer: slowly she recovered from the terrible blow and went back to the laboratory with sad and happy memories of her husband, determined to carry on the work to which they had dedicated their lives. She took over the direction and was appointed honorary professor in his place. One of her own most devoted pupils and friends, M. Debierne, was appointed her assistant. Her research work she carried on as before. But it had now a double significance; not only was it a search for truth for its own sake, but it was the best memorial she could build to her husband. She is a noble example of a true and faithful wife.

Mme. Curie is a writer of no mean repute. The Society for the Promotion of National Industry published her first book dealing with 'the magnetic properties of chemically treated metals.' In 1910 the year she isolated radium and determined its atomic weight, she brought out a treatise on Radioactivity, a monumental work which runs to over 1,000 pages. In 1911, the Nobel Prize for Chemistry was again awarded to her—a signal honour and unique distinction—for never before had this prize twice fallen to the same person. In this choice

the Swedish Royal Academy showed itself more broad-minded than the French Academy, which refused to elect her as a member and recorded in its Minute Book "there is an immutable tradition against the election of women which it seems eminently wise to respect." Old prejudices die hard.

It is fair to add that shortly after the outbreak of the Great War, a Radium Institute was started in Paris and Mme. Curie was placed at its head. In this time of crisis, the French Government was not troubled by precedent, but appointed her, as the greatest authority on radium, to take supreme control of all work in radiology in their military hospitals. She is now a member of innumerable academies and learned societies, and a doctor of several universities. She has given countless public lectures in France and abroad; she took an important part in the establishing of a Radium Institute in Warsaw, her native town.

The Radium Institute created by the Paris University consists of two laboratories: the Curie Laboratory instituted for chemical and physical research and the Pasteur Laboratory devoted exclusively to the medical application of radium activity itself. The most important of these experiments relates to the treatment of that fell disease—cancer. After fifteen years of devoted and laborious experiments, radium seems to be yielding results which already entitle it to be preferred to the knife and which almost daily go improving.

A word must be added about her valuable work during the Great War. At the start of the war, the department of Radiological service consisted of a few cars conveying radio-active apparatus to the bases and a few fixed installations in the military hospitals. The boon of Radiology to the wounded was not so widely known and appreciated as it is to-day. But Mme. Curie has unbounded faith and set about immediately to remedy the state of affairs. With apparatus collected from many sources she managed to organise several services of primary importance in the field of action. With cars supplied by private owners, she was able to equip twenty mobile centres. She travelled to the front very often to keep herself well-informed of the trend of affairs and to offer advice or install apparatus personally, and instruct operators in its usage. In urgent cases, she herself conducted a great number of examinations on the wounded. With a view to form an efficient staff, she organised a school for those who manipulated apparatus. The pupils turned out have given entire satisfaction to the hospitals and doctors. Verily, faith can move mountains.

Since the war, the Radium Institute in Paris has been entirely modernised. Friends known to her and those she has not even met send her gifts and choice samples of those metals of which she is in need to carry on her work. This is how she relates one personal reminiscence. "A remarkable mineral specimen was offered to me during my stay

in America, when I assisted in Washington at the inauguration of an important laboratory. I was exceedingly tired and my American friends averred that at the sight of that particularly fine specimen my features appeared to adopt an air of eager expectation and that I kept my eyes on it till the end of the ceremony."

She has two daughters, Irene and Eve, whom she loves with a devotion all her own. She lives with them in the Rue Pierre Curie. When not working, she prefers her daughters' company, for, excepting for science, they are her only preoccupation and care. Since her husband's death she has but little appeared in public. Once, we are told, soon after her husband's death, she lectured in Paris and among those who listened were the President of the Republic, the King of Portugal, Lord Kelvin, Sir W. Ramsay and Sir Oliver Lodge, the last three had travelled from England, merely in order to be present. As the lecturer entered, the whole distinguished audience rose in respect and a storm of applause burst out.

A frail little figure, who can take her for the most distinguished and learned woman in the world? There is no touch of ostentation and arrogance about her. Her great labours and sorrow have left their traces. She seems a being in whom all fire has been extinguished; her eyes look neutral grey till closer inspection reveals a trace of the palest blue, her complexion is pale, her hair tinged with grey. She wears a dress of the simplest

design, which fashions have no power to alter. Yet this woman, whom, perhaps, not one person in a thousand would recognise, has altered all our fundamental scientific conceptions, created a new and important branch of science and armed doctors with a weapon that may serve to solve many of their most pressing problems. There never was a discovery so sensational as the discovery of radium, a Miracle of Science.

The Radium Fund that has been raised as thanksgiving for the recovery of the King-Emperor could not be devoted to a better purpose than that decided upon, *viz.*, the purchase of supplies of radium. It is difficult to get, the supply is inadequate to cope with the most pressing needs, and its price is very high—£12 a milligram.

NOTES

CHAND BIBI

Vijyanagar—a Hindu kingdom in the Deccan founded in the beginning of the 14th century. The neighbouring Mohammadan kingdoms setting aside their private quarrels combined, in 1565, to fight against the common Hindu enemy and inflicted a crushing defeat near Talikota.

Bijapur, Ahmadnagar—these sultanates had come into existence after the break-up of the Bahmani kingdom. The ruling dynasty of Bijapur lasted until 1686, when Aurangzeb put an end to it. Ahmadnagar was finally annexed by Akbar in 1637.

Regent—a person appointed to carry on the work of government during the minority or absence of a monarch.

Golconda—another fragment of the Bahmani dominion, which separated in 1518. It was annexed by Aurangzeb in 1687.

invested—laid siege to.

mine—a passage underground in which some explosive is placed to blow up a fortification. What are other meanings of the word ?

shaft—a passage leading or giving access to a mine.

front.....vantage—an advantageous position.

draft—a rough copy of a document.

AHALYA BAI

win.....moods—calm down his wrath.

pyre—a funeral pile for burning a dead body. The rite of *Sati* was abolished by Lord William Bentinck in 1829.

haunted him—oppressed his mind frequently in dreams.

- quiver**,—a case for holding arrows. Has the word any other meaning ?
- infested**.....Indore,—made raids on the borders of Indore.
- touched**.....**quick**,—became very angry.
- cherished**,—held in heart.

QUEEN VICTORIA

- governess**—a female teacher especially of children in a private household.
- family tree**—a genealogical table.
- heir presumptive**—an heir whose right of inheritance is liable to be defeated by the birth of a nearer heir.
- attained**.....**majority**—came of age. In English law, ordinarily, a person attains majority at twenty-one.
- Victoria Cross**—the most highly prized of all the awards, instituted on January 29, 1856. It consists of a Maltese Cross, in bronze, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter. In the centre is the Royal crest (lion and crown), and beneath it a scroll with the inscription "FOR VALOUR." The Cross is now open for award to Indian soldiers. It is awarded for an act of astounding courage, initiative and sacrifice and carries with it a pension of £10, per annum to non-commissioned officers and men, with an extra £5, for every clasp.
- the Lord Chamberlain**—the officer managing the household of the sovereign.
- Privy Council**—a number of distinguished persons selected by a sovereign to form a body of advisers.
- constitution**—principles according to which a state is governed. Give other usages of the word.
- Queen Dowager**—Queen of the late king. 'Dowager' is the title given to a queen to distinguish her from the wife of her husband's heir bearing the same title.
- Defender of the Faith**—a part of the title of English sovereigns. Henry VIII. was the first English monarch to receive

it from Pope, who conferred it upon him for his writing against Luther.

Psalms—sacred songs. The Book of Psalms is a part of the Old Testament.

Duke of Wellington—also called the 'Iron Duke,' was the brother of Marquis Wellesley, one of the greatest governors-general of India. He defeated Napoleon Bonaparte at the battle of Waterloo, in 1815.

naturalization—admitting an alien to the rights of citizenship.

reprieve—remission or change of capital punishment to one more lenient.

Life Guards—a regiment of household cavalry.

county council—the governing body of a county. A county is a territorial division in Great Britain for purposes of administration. What is the administrative unit in the Panjab?

Free Trade—the principle according to which trade is left to its natural course, without customs duties, to restrict imports or protect home industries.

behind.....scenes—one who does the real work, but whose activities are not known to the public.

Idyll—a short descriptive pastoral poem. The glorious reign of Queen Victoria may well be described an "episode from an epic poem."

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

M. P.—Member of Parliament.

Scutari—a place opposite Constantinople, where there was a great hospital for the wounded British soldiers during the Crimean War.

hide-and-seek—a children's game. What is it called in your part of the country?

ministering angel—a person rendering aid or service.

accessories—smaller or less important things.

red-tapism—excessive adherence to formalities especially in public business.

Aide-de-Camp—(*aid-de-kong*), an officer selected to assist the general in his military duties.

incognito—unknown.

panacea—a universal remedy.

Order of Merit—established by King Edward VII. to celebrate his coronation. It is awarded to persons of the highest eminence in every branch of life.

Freedom.....city—a document conferring the rights and privileges of a citizen upon one who is not a resident of a town or city; a mark of honorary distinction for public services.

MADAME CURIE

Poland—formerly under Russia, has now been made an independent state as a result of the Great War.

got wind—came to know.

flora and fauna—plants and animals.

Rontgen—an eminent German physicist.

X-Rays—rays that can penetrate many substances impervious to ordinary light. They are of great value in medical diagnosis.

radio-activity—is the property of spontaneously emitting invisible rays capable of penetrating opaque matter and of producing photographic and electrical effects.

pitch-blende—an oxide of uranium greyish black in colour.

Nobel Prize—The Nobel Foundation is based upon the will of Dr. Alfred B. Nobel, the Swedish chemist, and inventor of dynamite (died December 10, 1896). Dr. Rabindar Nath Tagore is the only Indian who has so far won this prize (1913-14).

