



EMMA
MARSHALL

A
BIOGRAPHICAL
SKETCH



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Anna Marshall

EMMA MARSHALL

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY

BEATRICE MARSHALL

' I cannot hide that some have striven,
Achieving calm, to whom was given
The joy that mixes man with Heaven :

' Who, rowing hard against the stream,
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,
And did not dream it was a dream ;

* * * * *

' Which did accomplish their desire,
Bore and forbore, and did not tire,
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.'

TENNYSON

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PREFACE

THE poet Longfellow wrote to my mother, apropos of her removal from Exeter to Gloucester in 1874:

‘How fortunate you are that wherever you go you have a cathedral!

‘I am tempted to call you

“This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet.”’

Her lot was cast for the greater part of her life in cathedral cities, and for her they were ‘pleasant places.’ She always loved the old-world calm and repose of a cathedral close, and the deep-voiced chime of cathedral bells; and worship beneath the storied Gothic roof of an ancient minster was to her a source of infinite spiritual enjoyment. Long and intimate association with such surroundings developed in her unconsciously the historic sense which

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she turned to account in her later stories, and enabled her with little effort to catch the charm and aroma of a vanished time.

It has seemed to me, therefore, only natural to divide this brief record of my mother's life into the periods during which she lived beneath the shadow, or within no great distance, of the five cathedrals of Norwich, Wells, Exeter, Gloucester and Bristol, believing that the story, though a comparatively uneventful one, cannot be without interest to the many readers, old and young, for whom she has made bygone days in these old cities live again.

I wish to express here my best thanks to those of my mother's friends who have been so good as to allow me to publish letters; in this respect I am especially indebted to the courtesy of Miss Longfellow, Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. John Addington Symonds and Miss Nichol; also to Mr. Seeley, who has kindly set at my disposal a correspondence between author and publisher extending over a number of years.

BEATRICE MARSHALL.

19, CHURCH ROW,
HAMPSTEAD.

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I

NORWICH

1830—1855

CHILDHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH

‘Heaven lies about us in our infancy.’

WORDSWORTH.

‘I remember, I remember,
How my childhood fled by,
The mirth of its December,
And the warmth of its July.’

T. HOOD.

‘Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty ;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature’s daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.’

WORDSWORTH.



I

NORWICH

1830—1855

CHILDHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH

IN the first decade of the now dying century, Norwich, with her graceful cathedral spire, her thirty-five old flint churches, Elizabethan gateways, and massive square gray castle, had scarcely outlived her reputation as a centre of advanced intellectual life, a very Athens of culture and art, whose fame spread far beyond the borders of East Anglia. Two at least of the celebrities who had helped to expand that fame, my mother, when a child, saw in the flesh: Amelia Opie, still brilliant in old age and in the sober garb of a Quakeress, which the world said she had donned, instead of azure plumes and floating scarves, for love of a Gurney Adonis; and Elizabeth Fry, the ministering angel of Newgate, fair, portly, and majestic, as Richmond painted her in his well-

known portrait, a print of which holds a place of honour in every Quaker household. Other figures belonging to a remoter past my mother may have pictured in imagination as she walked with her governess through the quaint old streets and lanes of Norwich: the courtier-poet Surrey, returned from wandering under Italian skies to the great palace of the Dukes of Norfolk, with its world-famed bowling-green, to muse on fresh sonnets to his Geraldine; Sir Thomas Browne, physician and scholar, with his huge ruff and grave face, crossing the market-place from his house to the noble church of St. Peter Mancroft, his profound meditations undisturbed by the distant clash of arms and the rumours of civil war; and, to come nearer our own times, the fearless schoolboy Nelson, playing at marbles perhaps on the very spot where his statue now stands, proclaiming proudly the share Norwich took in the education of him who fulfilled the nation's ideal of chivalric heroism.

It was much easier then to reconstruct the ancient city's past than it is to-day, when the peaceful aspect of the steep, once quiet streets, has been revolutionized by electric trams, and motor-cars dash pertly out into the mellow, undulating country beloved of the Norwich School, and repeatedly painted



SIMON MARTIN THE ELDER.

From a Painting by John Opie, R.A.

by the brush of Stark, Cotman, and 'Old Crome.' But on the Yare, winding through its verdant meadows, the tall, stately wherries with black patched sails glide sleepily by; for they, at least, have not altered their pace to keep up with the stride of modern civilization, and must look exactly the same as they did in more leisurely days—days when my grandmother, Hannah Ransome, the little Quakeress, watched them drifting seawards from the windows of her home in Paradise Row, Castle Meadow.

The families of Ransome and Martin were intimate through meeting at Lakenham, the country seat of my grandfather's uncle, Simon Martin, a magnate in the banking firm of Gurney, whose keen, searching eye and striking features are depicted in a masterpiece of Opie, which still hangs in the 'parlour' of the Norwich Bank. When my grandfather, an impecunious youth, began to pay his addresses to Miss Ransome, this unique uncle, instead of dashing cold water on his nephew's somewhat audacious aspirations, told him to go and learn banking, and to draw on his account whenever he wanted money. Simon Martin the younger did not take advantage of the generous offer, but managed without touching his uncle's money to learn banking,

and to such good purpose that he himself became later a partner in the great Gurney Bank, his untiring zeal and devotion to duty contributing largely to promote its prosperity.

Simon and Hannah Martin were married in the Church of St. Michael-at-Plea in 1809. The bridegroom not being a Quaker (although he was more than tolerant of Quakerism, using the familiar 'thee' and 'thou' mode of speech, which he said was the true language of affection), the bride, on account of her marriage, was expelled from the Society of Friends, and publicly disowned. However, this rigorous measure appears to have been rapidly reconsidered, with the result that before her first child was born she was again received into the bosom of the quiet community, and remained a Friend for many years afterwards.

My grandparents went to live in the spacious old Bank House, and there six children were born—three sons and three daughters. Their seventh and youngest child, Emma, first saw the light on the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, 1830, in Northrepps Hill House, the property of Mr. Richard Gurney, who lent it to my grandfather for the summer months. The trio of Northrepps houses—The Hall, The Cottage, and The Hill—are charmingly



HANNAH RANSOME.

From a Painting by A. Opie.

situated near Cromer, the scenery round uniting all the beauties and delights of seaside and country. A beautified farmhouse, The Hill was an ideal spot for town children to spend their holidays, with its rambling garden and old-fashioned well and bucket—of the kind that play such an important part in the fairy tales of Grimm. A path through a small wood connected The Hill House with The Cottage, where in those days lived the spinster cousins Miss Elizabeth Gurney and Anna Buxton, who did so much philanthropic work in the neighbourhood. My grandfather used to go out by coach from Norwich to spend the week-ends with wife and children, during the time they deserted the old house and walled garden in the city, to enjoy a freer and more open-air life at Northrepps. But on the day of my mother's birth he did not wait for the coach, and was brought instead by his bay pony Betsy, who is said to have trotted the twenty miles in an incredibly short time, as if understanding her master's anxiety to hold his new-born daughter in his arms.

She was called Emma, after the eldest little daughter, a child of great beauty and promise, who a few months before had died of consumption at the age of thirteen. Very welcome, then, was the second Emma, who seemed to come as a special

Heaven-sent comforter to solace her parents' sorrowing hearts. She grew into a lovely little girl, with eyes as blue as the bluebells in the Northrepps woods, silky light hair, cropped short according to the fashion for little Quaker girls, and a skin exquisitely fair. Beloved, admired, and petted by all the family, being so much the youngest, it was no wonder she ran the risk of becoming spoilt; but her father, though immensely proud of her, could exercise judicious firmness, and she has related in one of her early tales, which is mainly autobiographical, how a stern look from him was enough to bring her to reason when going too far in merry pranks with nurses or governess.

As quite a small child she stood by her father's chair and repeated Mrs. Hemans' poem, 'See'st thou my home is where yon woods are waving'—early evidence of a gift for committing verse to memory, which remained with her throughout her life. For scribbling stories, or even a journal, she showed no precocious aptitude. Her first little letter has a pathetic interest, because it *is* the first, not because it differs from any such letter as the ordinary child writes. Beautifully neat, and somewhat stilted in style, one can picture how laboriously it was penned by the childish hand—the hand which

in future years was to wield the pen of a ready writer, far into the night, often into the small hours of the morning, 'at the point of the bayonet,' as she herself expressed it. It is addressed 'Hannah Martin, Bank':

'CROMER,
'September 5.

'MY DEAR MAMA,

'I thank thee for writing to me. I am very glad John is home; give my very dear love to him, and I hope the monkey is well. We have been to Mundesley with the same driver and conveyance that we went with to Sherringham. We saw all the dogs—Don, Fido, Dido, and Juno. As soon as we opened the gate they all greeted us by barking. The afternoon we got there I went a ride with Jane Barcham on a donkey. We stayed all night. Tell Simon I am glad he is quite well and able to pursue his banking business. I am very happy indeed. I enjoy myself on the beach very much. Love to papa and all at home.

'I am thy very affectionate daughter,

'EMMA.'

John and Simon were the grown-up brothers, who made a pet and plaything of their baby sister. The other brother, Tom, handsome and gay, administered the teasing he thought necessary for little Emma's

good. He had a great talent for drawing, and illustrated his letters from abroad with the cleverest pencil sketches. A very amusing caricature heads a letter written to his youngest sister in the playfully patronizing strain of a big brother :

‘ NORWICH,
‘ June 4, 1840.

‘ DEAR EMMA,

‘ I received your note the day before yesterday, and I am glad to hear that you are well and happy at Cromer, where it is probable I may pay you a visit after “The Owl’s” wedding, at which I shall be present, dressed in a white sheet as my wedding garment. You offer me *sweets*, but not having a sweet-tooth myself, I should prefer your eating them—in *moderation*, which is, as you know, “the Thief of Time” ; at least, so says the poet. I have nothing now to send you but the picture you asked for representing a certain dinner-table in Magdalen Street, containing your portrait, as well as my own, and those of your mother, brother, and sisters. I have dined there very seldom of late, but I am going there to-day to take this letter to be sent to you. I hope your account of the reform in your swinish propensities is correct, and that I shall find you improved in every respect when next we meet. I



CARICATURE FROM A LETTER BY TOM MARTIN.

hope you are kind and obliging to your little cousins, and do not tyrannize over them, nor pick the best cakes and fruit from the dishes at table, as you are now old enough to know better; and if you don't correct your failings, when your pastor, J. J. Gurney, returns (which I believe will be in a month), he will still have reason to call you "baby." I must conclude in great haste, and remain,

‘ Your affectionate brother,

‘ T. D. M.’

In the flower of his youth and good looks, and before he had made much use of his brilliant talents—having, indeed, done little in the world except run into debt—my mother's brother Tom died of inflammation of the lungs, at chambers in Gray's Inn, and was buried in Kensal Green. I have often heard her speak of him in a tone of wistful regret, and we, as children, used to wish earnestly that this particular uncle, who had been so handsome and merry, and could draw funny pictures, had not died years and years before we were born. John and Simon were married men when my mother was still a child, so she grew up without the comradeship of brothers. Her sisters, too, Hannah and Mary, were much older, and wrapped up in each other.

They went to a large boarding-school at Stoke Newington for the daughters of plain Friends. William Allen, the celebrated chemist, was one of the directors, and my aunts learnt there chemistry among other unworldly sciences, but no music and dancing. They and all their schoolfellows (except one who suffered from headaches) wore the regulation stiff cardboard Quaker bonnets. These were made by an expert Friends' milliner in Bishopsgate Street, and were the sport of the young ladies of a rival non-Quaker establishment next door, who quizzed their neighbours' quaint costume over the wall. It seemed a shame that pretty Aunt Hannah's wavy auburn hair should have been tucked out of sight beneath a cap and that supremely uncomfortable headgear. She was a brilliant and joyous creature, though in delicate health, and her bright eyes had so captivated her father's friend and partner, Richard Gurney, at the age of seven years, that he presented her with £500. One cannot help thinking the rigid restraints of the Quaker school must have proved irksome and damping to her overflowing young spirits. Of this school my aunt, Miss Mary Martin (the only member of my mother's family who has survived her), writes :

'We were not allowed to sing hymns, only to

repeat them. On Sundays we went to Meeting twice, and before starting had to repeat either a prophecy and its fulfilment, or portions from a catechism compiled by Joseph John Gurney to confirm us in Friends' principles. There was no lack of ministry, William Allen, Cornelius Hanbury, and some others, frequently preaching and praying. I remember a certain Sarah Grubb who preached. She filled my young soul with fear and horror. She was like some weird prophetess, very forbidding and gaunt, who even eschewed a white lining to her Friends' bonnet. The great events of our school-life, instead of being theatricals, a concert, or prize-giving, were a visit to the British Museum, and the Friends' great festival of Yearly Meeting. It was a gathering of Friends from all parts of the United Kingdom and from America. There were a set of queries which had to be read and answered, as to the state of the Meetings with regard to attendance, "plainness of speech, behaviour, and apparel," and other signs of consistency. I shall never forget the impression the first Meeting I attended at Devonshire House made upon me, when I was about ten or eleven years old. We drove up to London in coaches, and most of the girls had relations who came to Yearly Meeting, so it was a treat for many.

The building was a large one, and the effect of the delicate pale-grays and drabs of the women's dresses (like a fluttering dove-cot) on one side, and the sombre tints of the men on the other, was very striking. . . . The sittings lasted about a week, and were held in the fifth month (May). During the week there was a kind of *table d'hôte* for Quakers at the Four Swans in Bishopsgate Street. It was just at the time when several Friends left the society, and at some of the sittings exciting scenes took place.'

In her story 'Life's Aftermath,' a picture of Quaker manners, my mother has introduced one of those 'exciting scenes,' which, however, she could only have described from hearsay, as it is improbable that she ever attended either the yearly or quarterly functions. Both in matters of education and dress Quaker severity was relaxed in her case. It is true she wore a bonnet, but not one turned out by the artist of Bishopsgate Street, of the approved pattern and hardness that made red marks on her sister Hannah's fair forehead. On 'First Days' she trotted by her mother's side to the Meeting-house, in the Gilden-Croft in spring, in Goat's Lane in winter, where, at the end of the last century, sat, intolerably bored, the seven Gurney sisters of Earl-

ham, those dashing, frivolous, most unorthodox young Quakeresses, who scoured the country in red riding habits, and sang, and danced, and flirted. They held their pastors in little veneration, and on their return from Meeting made irreverent entries in their journals, such as: 'Oh, how I long to get a great broom and *bang* all the old Quakers, who do look so triumphant and disagreeable.' 'I spent *four* hours at Meeting. I never, never wish to see that nasty hole again.'*

It was at Goat's Lane that Betsy Gurney (afterwards Mrs. Fry), wrapt in admiring contemplation of her new purple boots laced with scarlet, was suddenly arrested against her will by the preacher's words, and the wonderful change passed over her which converted the nearly infidel maiden into one of the most religious and remarkable women of the time. But that, of course, was long before my mother joined in the silent worship of the Friends. She has given her early impressions of the Meeting in an article she wrote on Amelia Opie in the *Woman's World* (a now defunct magazine), and as it contains many autobiographic touches, all too rare among her writings, it may be quoted from here:

"The covering of silence," as Charles Lamb

* 'The Gurneys of Earlham,' by Augustus Hare.

expresses it, wrapped the dear Norwich Quakers like a mantle of peace in their palmy days as they gathered in their Meeting-houses for worship, in the Goat Lane in winter, in summer under the square lichen-tiled roof of the Gilden-Croft at the extreme end of the city on its western side. The Gilden-Croft had always a saddening atmosphere about it, for the burial-ground of the Friends lay near, and many of those silent worshippers possessed grassy graves in the secluded God's Acre—graves unmarked by marble stone or granite monument,* whereon is inscribed the day of birth and death, followed by words of loving praise and tender regret for careless eyes to read. But the Friends keep the memory of their departed ones written in their hearts in characters which while life lasts can never be effaced.

‘In both these Meeting-houses in my very early childhood I sat week by week with my mother. To this day I can recall with vivid distinctness the aspect of the Friends as they came in with noiseless footsteps and took their seats, some in the minister's gallery, some on the “cross-forms,” some on the side-seats.

‘It was on one of those raised seats I sat, a

* Later, stones were erected over some of the graves.

quaint, small figure in a dove-coloured pelisse and cape. I wore a bonnet with white ribbon strings, which I had some difficulty in keeping on my close-cropped hair. My feet rested on a high hassock, and my hand was clasped in my mother's to insure stillness. From this vantage-ground I could survey everyone who came in with deep interest, for my mother was always in her place very early, and avoided the little gossip of the women's cloak-room, where bulletins of health and information about births, deaths, and marriages were given and received. I used to watch the Friends glide to their places and settle themselves to their devotions, their heads bent, their hands folded above the corners of their shawls upon their knees. One figure had always a peculiar fascination for me. This Friend did not glide so noiselessly, nor did she walk with bent head and a meek demeanour; instead, the train of her gown made a "swish" upon the matting as she passed. And as week by week I watched for her advent, which was generally soon after the wheels of the Earlham and Keswick carriages had grated on the gravel drive before the Gilden-Croft Meeting-house, I never failed to recognise in this stately Friend something which distinguished her from the rest. Tall and now somewhat

stout, with her head thrown back, and her bearing that of one who knew she was a personage of importance in that sedate assembly, Amelia Opie would pass to a seat of honour below the minister's gallery, and compose herself to her devotions, not so quickly as those about her. I have caught her eye wandering many a time, and I can recall the abstracted "upward gaze" which is related of her as characteristic when she rehearsed the experience of her past life to her friends. Sometimes I now think the meditations of Amelia Opie might be upon the brilliant scenes and gay company from which she had separated herself for ever. For it was a marvellous change, when one comes to think of it, from the "feathers and finery" of a fashionable lady in the early part of the century to the stiff Quaker bonnet (hers, by the way, was small, and perched somewhat coquettishly on her head) and the silk gowns of gray and fawn, which were the only permissible colours for the garments of the "plain Friends." Dear souls! there are but few of them left. The Friends of to-day are no longer "plain," and I confess to a thrill of pleasure when I come unawares upon the real Quaker bonnet and the spotless cap tied under the chin.'

Besides seeing her at the Meeting, my mother

paid a visit to the widow of the great portrait-painter, the 'inspired peasant,' as someone called him, in her own house.

'One of my earliest memories is calling on Amelia Opie in Lady's Lane, where she lived at that time. She never lost her love of bright colours. On a screen in her drawing-room were hung a number of prisms, which were suspended from chandeliers before bell-shaped globes came into fashion. I sat on a stool at my mother's feet, wondering what those long bits of glass meant. Presently the brilliant rays of the western sunshine filled the room. "Now," said Mrs. Opie, "thou may'st run over to that screen and give it a shake." I did as I was bid, my mother saying in a warning voice, "Be gentle;" but I gave the screen a vigorous shake, and emerald, ruby, and violet rays danced on the walls and ceiling, and delighted me so intensely that I repeated the process, till my mother, afraid that mischief might be done, came and drew me back to her side, and Mrs. Opie said: "If thou lovest bright colours, thee will never see any more beautiful than the rainbow God sets in the sky."

'From her earliest childhood Amelia loved to frequent the court during the assizes, and when Baron Alderson was on the Bench his Quakeress

cousin was often seen at his side. It was the one dissipation of her later life—a glimpse into the world she had forsaken. She always had a new gown for the occasion, and I remember hearing a dressmaker say to my mother that she must wait for the dress she was making for her, as Mrs. Opie's "court dress" had to be finished by a certain day. My mother laughed, and said: "One would think Mrs. Opie were going to be presented to the King." The High Sheriff's carriage, with Judge and chaplain within, drove up once to Mrs. Opie's door in Lady's Lane, and to the surprise of the spectators who had followed the carriage, out stepped the fair Quakeress, in her soft silk gown of pigeon gray, and Baron Alderson was heard to say affectionately: "Adieu, my dear Cousin Amelia."

Mrs. Opie in her *Memoirs* mentions the fall of a stack of chimneys one stormy Sunday afternoon at the Bank House, that Norwich home where my mother spent most of her happy childhood. It was a fine old house, with handsome chimney-pieces in the dining and drawing rooms, and a wide oak staircase. On the left of the great hall was the Bank Parlour, a sanctum into which even the privileged little Emma dared not penetrate. She dreamed her day-dreams beneath the cherry-trees in the old-



GURNEY'S BANK, NORWICH.

From an old Painting.

fashioned garden, and romped in her nursery with invisible playmates, who accompanied her on her walks; but when her sisters were at school it was feared she might be dull and lonely in the big house, so a real little companion came to share her lessons and to play and ride with her. So soon as my mother was old enough to sit on Betsy's back she had learnt to ride on the sands at Cromer, instructed by the groom, Sumpter, one of those picturesque old servants of a now fast vanishing type.

'He had a drunken wife, and kept a menagerie of animals,' my Aunt Mary writes of Sumpter, 'and as a child I loved him. I used to sing him songs; I would even kiss him, though, truth to say, he was not inviting.' And in that early tale mentioned before,* in which she tells something of the story of her childish days, my mother describes her visits with her father to Sumpter's domain, the stable yard. 'It was across a street running at the back of our house. Here there was Betsy to stroke and admire, and the gray horse (a present to my grandfather from Mrs. Hudson Gurney, who begged that when it was too old to work it might be returned to her, and not killed), and a pony called Taffy. Then there was Ranger,

* 'The Dawn of Life.' Jarrold and Co.

a dear brown dog with long curly ears and soft, loving eyes, and his great enemy, a reddish cat, with only a short knob where his tail ought to be, called Solomon. At different times Sumpter had different pets, sometimes rabbits, who came trooping out of a place under the stable in whole families into a strip of garden; but they became so numerous and troublesome Sumpter got rid of them, and had cocks and hens instead, but the hens did not lay. Then he would have a blackbird or a thrush hanging by his window in a wicker cage. In fact, Sumpter's pets were "as many as the days of the year," as my nurse, Anne Grey, would say scornfully, for Anne rather disapproved of my going to see Sumpter; I so often returned with a torn frock, or a battered bonnet, or dirty socks, "which had been white as snow" when I set out with papa.'

I have a picture in my mind of my mother starting on her daily ride through the city streets beside Sumpter on the old gray horse, sitting her pony easily and erect, in the blue riding-habit which had belonged to the dead Emma, also a daring little horsewoman. I see her, too, roaming along the vast breezy sweep of Cromer shore alone, but not a lonely child, for she could always summon those dream play-fellows to bear her company on her rambles.



NORTHPREPS HILL HOUSE, NEAR CROMER.



The Cromer of those days was very different from the Cromer of these, the 'Poppyland,' which has become a happy hunting-ground for hundreds of trippers, cyclists, and golfers. There were no great red brick hotels and lodging-houses then. Gurneys and Buxtons ruled the roost undisputed, from Overstrand to the parish church, whose grand old tower rose as a beacon to 'those in peril on the sea' above the cobble-stones and crooked, winding lanes of the old fishing village. The glorious expanse of sea and sky on which her eyes opened in earliest infancy may have fostered in my mother her keen and life-long love of Nature. I have known her almost cry aloud with rapture at the sight of a beautiful view, a sunset sky, a field of daffodils, or a bank of primroses. With her delight in flowers was mingled a tender sympathy for their fragile loveliness, which made it positive pain to her to see them wither and die.

It was on Cromer beach that she first experienced a sense of danger, when driving with her mother on the hard silvery sands, close to the waves. The horse plunged suddenly into a quicksand, and only the strenuous efforts of old Sumpter got it out again, and saved their lives.

In Norwich, the great excitement of my mother's and aunt's childhood was an election-day. They

were very proud of their blue-and-white cockades, and supported the Whig candidate, the Earl of Leicester, a friend of my grandfather's, who once took them in turn on his knee, expressing himself particularly charmed with bright-eyed Aunt Hannah. When elected, the Earl was 'chaired,' according to custom, by the Norwich populace, and his two little sons stood by him on the chair—a pretty and novel spectacle, which my mother remembered seeing from her nursery-window.

Another exciting event of the Norwich life was the Eve of St. Valentine, for in East Anglia the episcopal patron of Cupid, 'venerable arch-flamen of Hymen,' as Elia whimsically calls him, was more highly-honoured than elsewhere, even when the now long-exploded fashion of commemorating him in tinsel hearts, mottoes, and lace paper was at its height. Norfolk valentines were no flimsy affairs in cardboard boxes, but substantial presents, laid on the doorstep of the recipient with a double knock and pull of the bell, the donor hastily decamping, to preserve the mystery of anonymity. Everyone gave everyone else valentines, accompanied by lines of original poetry, and thus the art of occasional versifying was cultivated among the young people of Norwich. Year after year, in memory of the happy St. Valentines of

their youth, my mother and aunt never failed to exchange rhymed greetings on the fourteenth of February.

‘Dear old St. Valentine!’ she writes, in the story containing childish reminiscences, ‘as long as I live I shall always feel, when I hear his name, a sense of gladness and merriment—a faint echo of my childhood’s joy.’

It was not long after one of these joyous St. Valentine’s Eves, when little ten-year-old Emma had been loaded with presents, some of them hoaxes played off on her by her brothers, that sorrow cast a cloud for the first time on her young life. The father, who idolized his youngest daughter, and of whom she retained always a vivid and loving memory, died after a short illness.

‘One evening he left his chair suddenly at tea, and said he would go to bed, he felt “so tired.” My mother followed him from the room, and he never sat with us any more at that long table—never rose from his bed again. There was a hush in the house, people went about softly, and the carriages of several doctors were often at the door. A cold Sunday dawned. With fear and awe, that seemed to freeze my tears, I heard them say that my father was dying.’

Simon Martin was mourned by a large circle of friends, both rich and poor, and his loss was an irreparable one to the bank he had served so faithfully. The *Bankers' Circular*, in an obituary article, bore testimony to his great business capabilities: ' . . . He understood more about public and private credit, possessed a more thorough knowledge of bills, banks, and all things which influence money and circulation on the large scale of operation than any other individual now living. . . . None surpassed him in the extent of his range, the clearness of his judgment, and the promptitude with which, in trying and difficult cases, he brought his powers to bear with prompt efficacy for the advantage of all who had the benefit of his co-operation. . . . There are few men whose loss will be more felt by the many who resorted to him for counsel in their private affairs, and by the still greater number who had recourse to his kindness in the hour of their distress.'

But my grandfather was not entirely absorbed in business and banking. He loved flowers, and in his hours of relaxation cultivated many rare specimens in his greenhouse in the town garden, which took prizes at the horticultural shows of the neighbourhood. He had a collection, too, of fine old china, and was an art-connoisseur, covering his walls with

choice engravings and oil-paintings, which he had commissioned his artist-son to purchase for him in Italy. Many of these were sold when his widow left the Bank House and removed to a smaller residence outside the town, on the pretty Thorpe road; and my mother, young as she was, wept when a certain 'Holy Family,' which she had loved to gaze on, was pronounced too large for the new home.

At that time 'Thorpe Hamlet' was almost as idyllic as it sounds, and from the new house, beyond its trim lawn, belted with laurels, there was an uninterrupted view across the Dutch landscape (now built over) to the Yare; and the tops of the tall, picturesque wherries could be seen through the trees. Here my grandmother had not long been settled with her three daughters when Hannah, the eldest, married Mr. Thomas Geldart, a widower, years older than herself. A charming and clever girl, though only nineteen, she had seen more of the world than most of her girl-contemporaries, having, on account of her delicacy, been removed early from the strict Stoke-Newington boarding-school, and sent on trips, in search of health, to Scotland, the Isle of Wight, and Switzerland. Wherever she went, her admirers were numerous; but she preferred to give her hand to her elderly lover, who had known her from her baby-

hood, and the marriage proved a happy one. The Geldarts were another of those old Norwich Quaker families, highly esteemed and respected, whose ancestors lie under the nameless stones in the peaceful Gilden-Croft burial-ground. Previous to their marriage both my Aunt Hannah and her husband left the Friends and became Baptists, and she was afterwards received into the Church of England. They went to live in a suburb of Manchester, where Mr. Geldart practised as a lawyer.

Many years before my mother discovered that she possessed a gift for story-writing, her sister developed literary talent. Her books, such as 'A Memoir of Samuel Gurney,' 'The Pathway of Light,' and 'Strength in Weakness,' were mostly of a religious and devotional character; but she also wrote, in a lighter vein, tales, one of which—'Emily the Peacemaker'—attained a fair share of popularity, and was translated into French and German. Mr. Augustus Hare, in answer to a letter of my mother's after the publication of his 'Gurneys of Earham,' in 1898, says: 'In the enormous mass of materials sent to me, and the vast library of already printed biographies of Gurneys and Buxtons, I always found anything written by Mrs. Geldart an oasis of charm and interest in the Sahara.' Had she lived, doubtless



PULL'S FERRY, NORWICH.

her pen would have been as active as my mother's afterwards became; but she died in 1861, leaving behind her six young children and two unfinished works—'The Second Mother' and 'Cathedral Cities of England,' both of which were completed by my mother. Her eldest son, the Rev. Martin Geldart, was a Balliol Scholar, and distinguished himself in the study of Modern Greek; while his son, also a Balliol Scholar, has achieved an almost unparalleled series of academic triumphs, still among quite recent memories of the University.

From the Thorpe Road my mother went to school, first as a weekly boarder, and then to a regular boarding-school, where there were as many as fifty pupils, and where she received a sound education of the old-fashioned kind. Unlike her sisters', it was not conducted on strictly Quaker principles, and she learnt music. When she left school she took lessons from the well-known organist of Norwich Cathedral, Dr. Zacariah Buck, and to a Memoir of him, published a few years ago, she contributed a pleasant reminiscence of her first lesson with the venerable musician, showing how much his method of teaching the piano was in advance of the time. In acknowledgment of some small farewell gift my mother sent to him on leaving Norwich, he wrote :

'UPPER CLOSE,
'NORWICH.

'MY DEAR PUPIL,

'In answer to your proposal, "Will you oblige me by accepting?" etc., I beg to say that he would be more of a philosopher than I am who could refuse a *proposal* from a lady, and that lady Miss Martin! Next you say that the glasses will remind me of my old pupil. Now, be sure I do not require "glasses" nor anything else to bring to my remembrance a pupil for whom I have so great a regard, both in and out of music, as yourself. But I will acknowledge that I am not a little pleased to find that the feelings of master and pupil are reciprocal. Both Mrs. Buck and myself may probably be going to Clifton, and the pleasure we anticipate in going there will be greatly enhanced by seeing your happy smiling face occasionally.

'Ever yours sincerely,
'Z. BUCK.'

When she left school, the dreamy, imaginative child of the Cromer beach had grown into a bright and lively girl, full of zest and energy and glowing health, bringing sunshine wherever she went. Yet life in the little house at Thorpe, with its scrupulous,

dainty refinement and simple Quaker elegance, was exceedingly quiet and uneventful, and many girls of a less contented and joyous disposition would have found it dull. There were no coming-out dances and parties, but long evenings devoted to fancy work, and reading aloud Scott's novels. Those were the days when Dickens and Thackeray appeared in monthly parts, in thin green paper covers, and nowhere were they hailed with more eager excitement than in my grandmother's drawing-room by herself and young daughters. Thus my mother gained an intimate knowledge and love of the best English fiction. Cowper's letters and poems, and Victor Hugo's 'Les Miserables' were also favourites among the books read aloud; but in poetry, my mother as a girl felt her soul thrill most to the wild rhythm of 'Hiawatha,' and her sentiment of romance stirred by the hexameters of 'Evangeline,' a taste that would no doubt excite the pitying wonder of the young of the present generation.

Till her mother resolved to leave Norfolk altogether and migrated to Clifton, Emma Martin had seen little of what is called 'society.' She was very intimate with a young married pair next door, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Geldart, and the former recalls her bounding over the hedge that divided their gardens

two or three times a day, 'as playful as a kitten,' while her more sedate elder sister went round by the gate. An attachment sprang up between Emma and one of the younger Geldart brothers, and his early death made a deep impression on her, which cast a shadow for some time over her bright horizon.

Leaving Norwich was also a grief to her, for with her characteristic loyalty for places and friends endeared by long association, she declared she could never be happy anywhere else, as she looked back on the cathedral spire and many towers of the old city through a mist of farewell tears.

But in Clifton new friendships and happy days were in store for her. She soon became popular and admired in the best society there—and those were the palmy days of Clifton society, when it had a centre in the personality of the scholarly, cultivated, and genial physician, Dr. J. Addington Symonds, whose house (Clifton Hill House), a palace built by one of the old Bristol merchant princes, was the resort of all that was most intellectual in the place, and a storehouse of curios and art treasures. Dr. Symonds was a gentleman of the old school, of exquisite courtesy, vast reading, and unbounded charity. On his professional rounds he read the classics in his carriage, as well as absorbing a great



EMMA MARTIN.

From a Portrait taken at the age of 18.

amount of miscellaneous and current literature. Acquaintance with him was the passport into many a delightful circle, and it was fortunate that my grandmother came to live in Victoria Square, Clifton, fortified with introductions to one who took the lead there socially in so conspicuous a manner ; still more fortunate, perhaps, that he should be specially attracted and interested by her youngest daughter's freshness, girlish enthusiasm, and awakening intellect. His influence quickened in my mother her love of art and literature ; he sent her concert tickets and new books, directed her reading, and became to her, in fact, a sort of intellectual godfather and mentor, to whom she looked up with adoring reverence. At his side she first heard the majestic choruses of Mendelssohn's 'Elijah,' which remained with her for life one of the most uplifting and moving things in music. There is something charming, almost touching, in this friendship of the girl on the threshold of life, innocent of the world, with the great doctor so far her senior in years and experience. Among cherished relics of the past I find some dried flowers carefully folded in paper, with the inscription, '*Worn by me the night I heard Jenny Lind,*' and they seem to bring before me the crowded concert-hall, the brilliant audience, and a picture of

the ardent, enthusiastic young girl in white muslin, with these flowers, now crumbling dust, fresh and fair on her breast, as she listened enthralled to the rich, clear notes of the marvellous voice that had flooded all Europe with its sweetness.

At the time they arrived in Clifton my grandmother and her two unmarried daughters were still Quakeresses, but they had not been there long before they were baptized at Christ Church, by the Vicar, the Rev. James Marshall, who himself had left the Scotch ministry to be received into the Church of England. He had married one of the loveliest of the handsome daughters of the well-known divine, Legh Richmond, author of 'The Young Cottager,' and 'Domestic Portraiture,' and of his six children living my father was the eldest. My grandfather was much beloved and respected by his congregation, and it was as their pastoral adviser that he first became acquainted with the new-comers in Victoria Square. His saintly character and winning manners soon gained my grandmother's warm regard, and an intimacy sprang up between the two families. It was only her admiration and affection for the father that made it at all palatable to her that the son, a clerk in the West of England Bank, with then but remote prospects of promotion,

should pay attention to her precious daughter Emma. My mother had been brought up in ease and comfort, if not luxury, and on the ground that she was not suited to become the wife of a man of limited means, her engagement to my father met for a long time with opposition.

My father's youngest sister, Miss Henrietta Marshall, writes :

‘My first recollections of your mother are of a pretty and attractive girl living with her mother, to whom she was devoted, and an elder sister in Clifton. They were first in lodgings, and then took a house in Victoria Square (No. 2); I was a child then. She petted and made much of me, and I worshipped her with childish fervour. I remember how delighted I was to hear that she was likely to become my sister-in-law, and how charmed I felt at being allowed to accompany her and your father on their almost daily walks before breakfast. She was sprightly and gay, full of vivacity and sparkle, yet even in those days her sympathies were too keen and her feelings too sensitive to allow of her being altogether light-hearted. She had her grave, sad hours, which gave her usually bright face a pensive expression at times. She often spent evenings at our house, which were merry occasions. She kept

the ball of conversation rolling, and was clever at games and full of animation. She had a pretty voice at that time, which she did not cultivate in after-years, and sang simple songs very charmingly. When we had charade parties she was the life of them, and I have a specially vivid remembrance of her as a barrister, in wig and gown, pleading with eloquence and ready wit, to the great delight of my father and others present. She was very fond of letter-writing, and had a facile pen even then, as her correspondence with Longfellow testified. Not till later years did she publish anything, though she often wrote verses. . . .'

The correspondence with Longfellow began by my mother, in the flush of her youthful enthusiasm, writing to the poet to express her appreciation of his poetry and to beg for his autograph. She hardly expected an answer, and great was her delight when she received the following letter in his beautiful handwriting :

'CAMBRIDGE,

'*May 5, 1851.*

'DEAR MISS MARTIN,

'I thank you very cordially for your letter, and hasten to tell you how very precious to me such an expression of sympathy and regard is. Truly, the hearts of men are as stars, whose rays go

journeying on, through space and darkness, towards objects near and far, sometimes attaining, oftener unattaining, but when they *do*, lighting them up with a very pleasant illumination, as your kindly feelings have my rather distant orb.

‘Two days after I received your letter I happened to be at a bookseller’s, and the first volume I laid my hand on was a small quarto with a red arabesque cover, and on opening it I found it to be “The Maxims of Fr. Guicciardini,” translated by Emma Martin. Of course I bought it for your sake, and a delightful book I find it, written alike with great taste and learning.

‘But how into the dark am I speaking! Would I knew more of you and of your writings, and that I could persuade you to answer this brief note by a longer one than your first. I do not like that there should be but one word and “all the rest be mystery.”

‘My wife is likewise much charmed with your letter and the little square book, which shape and style are her predilection among all forms of binding, and are indeed but a meet ornament for the excellent inner self of the work.

‘With great regard,

‘Sincerely your friend,

‘HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.’

It is strange that so long before she entered on the path of authorship my mother should have thus been taken for an author. Of course she hastened to undeceive her correspondent about 'The Maxims of Fr. Guicciardini,' and he replied :

'CAMBRIDGE,
'MASSACHUSETTS,
'*July 4.*

'DEAR MISS MARTIN,

'What will you say to me when I tell you that I was glad to hear you disclaim the authorship of the little "red quarto with arabesque covers"? Not that I have any prejudices on the subject of ladies writing books, but because that was such a hard little book that I could not make it rhyme with the image I had of you in my mind. In the month of October, 1842, I was in Bristol, and the last spot of English earth I touched was the pier from which the steamer sailed. I remember well the bright morning when with Dickens I walked up the valley of the Avon, across the hill, and down Clifton Terrace, perhaps in front of your house. Where were you then? and shall we ever again be so near to each other?

'Many thanks to you for your last letter and for the volume of your sister's poetry. I have read it

with very great pleasure. It is very true and very tender, very charming poetry. Do not forget to thank her from me, and to tell her how much gratification it has given me. Pardon me for not thanking you sooner. When I look at the date of your note, I am quite ashamed of myself for leaving it so long unanswered; but I have been very busy with many things, and when the mind is much occupied you know full well time steals on and on, and though at intervals we are haunted with a vague feeling that we are neglecting many things which should not be neglected, yet the main current of our thoughts is too strong for us, and we are swept away, till, finally landing somewhere, we find how many months have gone. Have you never been caught so? I am sorry to say it happens to me very often.

‘During the last year I have been engaged on a poem of some length, which will probably be published soon, and I hope to send you a copy.

‘My wife joins me in kind regards to you. She takes much interest in your letters and in you, who have been so interested in her husband’s books.

‘Your very sincere friend,

‘HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.’

In January, 1852, Longfellow wrote :

‘The box came safely by the steamer, which takes back to you my sincere thanks for your kind remembrance and your beautiful New Year’s present. One of the pretty mats I seized upon, and have appropriated to my own use; it now adorns my study table. The other has the post of honour in the drawing-room, and both will be most charming mementoes of the donor; still more so the splendid writing-case, with its views of the scenery around you. You could not have chosen anything more beautiful and acceptable than this. Give our kind regards and thanks to your mother for the tale of “Emily the Peacemaker.” We have been reading it to our children—our two impetuous boys—to their and our own great delight, and I trust its good lessons will make a deep impression on their tender but turbulent hearts.

‘Your note of Nov. 29th has also reached me, and I am glad to know that you find something to like in “The Golden Legend.” I have endeavoured to show in it, among other things, that through the darkness and corruption of the Middle Ages ran a bright, deep stream of faith, strong enough for all the exigencies of life and death. In order to do this, I had to introduce some portion of the darkness and corruption as a background. You will be glad

to know that the Monk's sermon is not entirely my own invention. The worst passage in it is from a sermon of Fra Gabrielli Barletta, an Italian preacher of the 15th century. The Miracle-play is founded on the Apocryphal Gospels of James and the infancy of Christ. Both this and the sermon show how sacred themes were handled in the "days of long ago."

'How much you must have enjoyed your excursions in Westmoreland! We have just been reading De Quincey's *Reminiscences of the Lakes*, and the "Lakers" as he calls them—Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge. . . .'

Here the letter leaves off abruptly, a second sheet being missing. The next is to congratulate my mother on her marriage:

'CAMBRIDGE,

'*September 26, 1854.*

'DEAR MISS EMMA,

'It is then for the last time that I am to write these words, and even before this reaches you, they will be no longer true, and you will be somebody else! I make haste, therefore, to write them, for they are very pleasant to my ear, and fraught with friendly memories. I hasten still more to send

you my very earnest and sincere congratulations on your marriage. In these my wife (I wish you knew her) joins most heartily. The beautiful spirit that shines through all your letters will make your husband's life a happy one, and your own serene and tranquil, I am sure. I wish you had said more of him, and told me where your new home is to be.

'One of these days, but I know not when, and it may not be very soon, I mean to make my appearance at your door. I shall find you out, though you conceal your nest from me so carefully.

'Meanwhile I beg leave to send you as a wedding present, not being able to send you anything else, a new edition of my poems, which Mr. Routledge, the London publisher, promises shall be handsomer than any other. He will send it as soon as published, and you must not think the less of it for being a little late. And now once more, my dear Miss Emma, I give you "the right hand of my heart," as our American-Indians say, and once more wish you all happiness and a beautiful life, and what perhaps makes life more beautiful than anything else—patience.

'I could say a great many things more, but I am not an apostle writing to the seven churches, nor an

owl to be hooting wise sayings through your honeymoon.

‘I beg you to present my kind regards to your mother and to your husband.

‘I shall not forget the fifth of October: it goes hand-in-hand with the sixth, which is my wife’s birthday, and is, of course, marked with a rubric in my calendar, as by Nature in her red leaves.

‘When the wedding guests are gone, and the wedding tour is over, and you are sitting quietly by your own fireside, and that uninvited and rather intrusive company of friends, commonly called the cares of life (friends, let us call them, since they will come), has not yet begun to knock at your door, I pray you to find time to tell me how happy you are, and to be always sure of the sympathy of

‘Your friend,

‘HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.’

During her long engagement my mother had, I think, already learnt to exercise something of that virtue which the poet assured her perhaps more than anything else made life beautiful. Four years of waiting and lovers’ quarrels tried even her then brilliant health and spirits, but when the time ended she started on married life in her usual sunshiny

way, and with a naturally sweet temper quite unsoured, though she felt keenly the parting from mother and home. A year before her marriage she had been one of a merry party, consisting of her sister Hannah and several of the Geldarts, in Switzerland. The blue Lake of Geneva and the pure snowy peak of the Dent du Midi had fully realized all her romantic dreams of their beauty, and she very much desired to gaze on the Alps again, in company with her husband. But the time for their tour was limited, and the October weather so unusually bleak and sunless, that they confined themselves to going up the Rhine, through Belgium, and home by Paris.

‘Still at Dover,’ she wrote to her sister Mary the day after her wedding. ‘Last evening, when I wrote to dear mamma, the winds and waves rose tremendously. Hugh and I were doubtful as to going on board, and at ten o’clock we decided not to risk it. . . . The Lord Warden was crammed, and not a bed to be had there, so we were sent across to this dirty little inn; but we were so extremely tired that a bed of any sort seemed better than a steamboat on such a night of wind and rain. This morning we hear that the Ostend boat left at eleven last night, and

after tossing about for eight hours, was obliged to put back again into Dover this morning. . . . Dear darlings! I so often think of you both. The last three days seem like a dream, but I am glad the trying day is over. How bitter the parting from mamma was I can never tell. It was like the wrenching away of a limb. . . . Hugh is very kind, quite like an old woman in some things, and I feel as though I had been married *years*. . . . Now I must say good-bye, my dear old duck. Let the Marshalls know of our being kept here by the stormy weather.'

The following extracts from other letters written on that fleeting honeymoon will show how keen was her enjoyment and appreciation of all she saw :

'We were delighted with the Square at Calais by moonlight, the lighthouse at one end and the towers of the Hôtel de Ville and Palais de Justice at the other.

'This morning at eight o'clock we left for Ghent, where we arrived at four this afternoon. Ghent is very interesting, and I have a pretty view from my window of the square market-place, with the towers of the Cathedral and St. Nicholas rising beyond. We have been to hear the Beguine nuns chant

vespers, and this is a wonderful sight. The convent is very extensive : there are many separate houses in which the elder nuns live, two or three together ; there is the school, the hospital, and the church, and all surrounded by a moat, or canal, so that there is but one entrance—through an old archway. We were admitted to see one of the nuns' houses. The old woman who asked us in had a number of knick-knacks for sale, and I bought a rosary. We walked round a square formed by the little detached dwellings to the church. On entering, the feeling was that of indescribable astonishment and awe. Hundreds of nuns in white veils kneeling on each side of the aisle, in the chancel, and transepts. The dim candles of the altar cast an unearthly light on the motionless kneeling figures. . . . In a few minutes, distant voices began the low evening chant, and from time to time the priests at the altar broke forth in a rich monotone. This lasted about half an hour, and then all the nuns left the church, their veils folded up and laid on the head. I felt sorrowful as well as enchanted at what I had seen. The idea of those hundreds of women, many of them in the bloom of womanhood, shutting themselves up within the barriers of form and ceremonial, apart from the active duties of a woman's peculiar sphere

assigned her by God, *must* be melancholy to reflect on* . . .

‘We have enjoyed the place extremely. It is such a fine old town, and the pictures lovely. Tell Dr. Symonds how struck I am with that picture of Van Eyck’s. My best love to him. . . . Dearest Beauty, I am quite well. Farewell.’

‘Beauty’ was her pet name for my grandmother, and though neither of them now belonged to the Society of Friends, they still often addressed each other with the pretty ‘thee’ and ‘thou’ of Quakerism.

‘We shall be at Clifton on Saturday evening in next week. I suppose our little house will be ready, and great will be my delight at seeing thee and dear Molly again. Still, I feel a dread of the first settling—the servants, etc. In the letter I expect to find awaiting me in Paris I hope to hear all about the house, and whether it is ready. . . . To resume the thread of my travels. We left Coblenz at six o’clock on Wednesday morning, intending to pass the day at St. Goar. Beautiful as the scenery was,

* This is, of course, not true of the Beguines. They are Sisters of Charity, take no vow of celibacy, and can marry if they like.

when we came near that place, we thought it too cold and cheerless for an excursion up the valley, and decided to go on to Mayence, and from there at once to Heidelberg. The weather was clear, but oh, so cold! The Rhine did not disappoint me. In its own way it is unrivalled, and the autumnal tints were glorious. The old castles are legion. At every turn of the green river there is one frowning on the summit of a rock. The whole way from Coblenz to Mayence is a succession of beautiful rocks, pine-covered hills, and ruined castles. It is just the style of scenery which would please thee, my Beauty. There are table d'hôtes on the dear little steamers, and it is a pleasant way of travelling, this gliding along without noise or bustle. We took train from Mayence to Mannheim, passing Worms, whose magnificent old church we saw from the railway. We arrived at the Prinz Carl Hotel, Heidelberg, at about half-past eight, a long's day's travelling. When we went into our room the waiter said: "It is Heidelberg fair," and indeed there was a commotion in the square below—drums beating and bands of different little shows all playing at once. "Well," thought I, "if this goes on all night, a pretty chance we have of sleep!" But by half-past ten all was quiet, no shouting and drunken yells as

would have been the case in England. I cannot say how charmed I was with Heidelberg. It is certainly the most delightful place I was ever in. The splendid old castle, the beautiful river, the near pine-clad hills, and the distant Hartz mountains, combine to make it perfect in its way. We went all over the castle, and of course saw the famous tun and the picture-gallery. After early *table d'hôte* we walked over the Neckar and climbed some hills, whence we saw the sun setting over the Hartz Mountains. We came down through vineyards where purple grapes were hanging in profusion. I did not scold Hugh for plucking one now and again, for it was like taking an ear of corn from our own fields at home.

‘The next morning was one of those radiant days, without a cloud, rare at this time of year. Immediately after breakfast we started, I on a horrid donkey, to the Kaiser Stuhl. The ascent took nearly two hours, and the view from the top was a panorama of exceeding beauty. The gorgeousness of the autumn tints certainly enhances the loveliness of such a day. The descent (not on donkeys) was very steep, and ended in the castle grounds. . . . We left Heidelberg to-day for this place (Baden-Baden). In summer it must be charming. It reminds me of Matlock through a magnifying-glass.

Pines and firs clothe every hill, and are most beautiful. We have looked into the celebrated gaming-house. A sad sight it is, but so novel to English eyes that it cannot but amuse. A great proportion of the gamblers seemed to be English. One poor youth we saw lose everything in his purse, about £50, and his wild look of despair I shan't soon forget. A nice-looking young Englishwoman sat there, with a child of nine or ten, making the child mark for her. The stolid expression of the men who keep the bank is most curious. You may judge what they make, for £20,000 is paid for lease of the place yearly to the Government. . . .

‘I am delighted at the thought of finding Longfellow’s letter and present on our arrival. How kind of him! I feel his friendship is real, and not profession only.’

The ‘little house’ (in Hampton Park, Cotham) was ready for my father and mother on their return from abroad. It was very small indeed, and the Broadwood grand piano, one of their wedding presents, filled up half the drawing-room. To this, the first home of her married life, my mother’s poet-correspondent on the other side of the Atlantic wrote as follows :

‘I have been thinking much of you lately, and wondering how all things are going on with you and around you. I have always a charming picture of you before my mind as a young wife, busy with your household, or looking up from your book at the sound of an opening door and a well-known foot-step, or putting on your shawl and walking over to your mother’s when some grand problem, difficult of solution, presents itself in the “celestial mechanics” of housekeeping.

‘Then I think of Schiller’s beautiful description of the wife in his “Song of the Bell,” and how the German women beautify and dignify their household cares, and how the American women do not, but rather despise them, which is a great pity and a great mistake, for life is very much what we make it, and if we call duty by the name of drudgery we degrade it. Is it not so? or are you on the other side, taking part with our rebel American angels? Pray write to me and tell me about all this, and anything else that interests and occupies you, only not of the dread war; our hearts are too heavy about that already. . . .’

After a year in that first small home in the heart of Bristolian villadom, my father was appointed

manager of the West of England Bank at Wells, the cathedral village that nestles so charmingly and peacefully among the emerald hills of Somerset. Here my mother lived for the next twelve years of her life—years of more unalloyed happiness than any that had gone before or were to come after. Here seven of her nine children were born and her first stories written, and here in after days centred all her fondest memories of the past.

II

W E L L S

1856—1869

*FIRST YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE AND
MOTHERHOOD*

‘The friendships old and the early loves
Come back with a sabbath sound as of doves,
In quiet neighbourhoods.’

LONGFELLOW.

‘Deep as first love, and wild with all regret,
O death in life, the days that are no more.’

TENNYSON.

II

W E L L S

1856—1869

*FIRST YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE AND
MOTHERHOOD*

WELLS, the city of warm springs, running waters, and quiet history, is perhaps the most ideal cathedral town in England, a 'haunt of ancient peace,' where the atmosphere seems pervaded with a calm belonging to other days, where the perfume of old-worldness is deliciously preserved, and where everyone, instead of making flurried efforts to keep pace with the times, is drowsily content to lag a century behind them. So far is it removed from the wear and tear of modern life that people seem to have the knack of living for ever there; at any rate, people who were old when my mother went to Wells as a young wife are living still, and scarcely seem to have changed a hair. There is no other city in the kingdom where slums, dirt, and noise are so conspicuous

by their absence; and even the railway approaches Wells through the Somersetshire country, 'deep meadowed, fair with orchard lawns,' so sleepily and deprecatingly that it is possible to ignore its existence altogether except when one wants to make use of it.

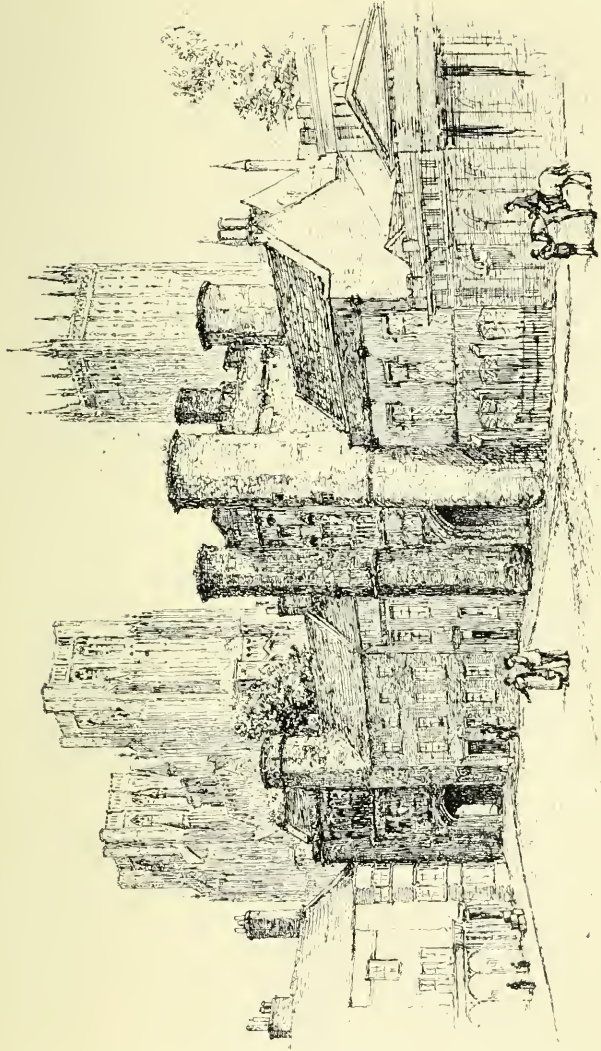
I can imagine my mother's ecstasy when she took her first walk in Wells, with the glad certainty that the quiet old city, instead of the Bristol suburb, was now to be her home. How admiringly she must have raised her eyes to the sculptured west front of the cathedral, with its galaxy of kings, queens, saints, apostles, martyrs, aptly described by Dean Plumtre as 'a *Te Deum* in stone'! Then her light footsteps would have danced over the smooth velvet turf, on which lay the shadows of pinnacle and buttress, through the Vicar's Close, that gem of domestic architecture, into the Liberty, a reposeful ecclesiastical paradise of Elizabethan and Georgian canonical dwellings, of dear old-fashioned gardens, venerable elms and cedars, and gray, moss-grown walls. From the Liberty along the moat surrounding the battlemented Palace, with its drawbridge and portcullis, remnant of a feudal age, when prelates in coats of mail encountered the lay enemy in person, she probably roamed back

again to that very old house overlooking the market-place, with the triple towers of the cathedral rising behind it ; and as she entered by the door under the ancient archway, called Penniless Porch, and climbed the wide staircase with its carved oak banisters to the low-ceilinged, picturesque-shaped drawing-room, she must have felt that the delight of these first impressions was not transient, but was destined to deepen into the lasting sanctity of tender associations. Into the tiny teacup of cathedral society she was received with open arms, her prettiness and genial charm of manner, her freedom from all affected airs and graces, making her a welcome guest at both Palace and Deanery.

As I relate the story of my mother's life, I seem to catch a glimpse of her now and again at different corners of this road before I was born in particularly clear-cut relief. At this stage I see her with fair ringlets, a transparent complexion, eyes of azure, and small waist, in a high muslin gown over a low silk slip, with narrow black velvet run through the tuckers, being carried in a sedan-chair to her first dinner-party at the Deanery. It makes you feel a little ancient to think that your father and mother in their young days really went to dinner-parties in sedan-chairs, till you remember that Wells is a

hundred years behind the rest of the world in means of locomotion as in everything else. And even now, though there is a station, there are no cabs, and the visitor who is not met must either walk to his destination, or confide his limbs to the most antediluvian and bone-shaking of omnibuses.

Throughout her life my mother possessed a genius for making friends and keeping them, for, as she herself expressed it, she 'grappled them to her soul with hoops of steel,' and rarely, as years went on, did any of her youthful friendships cool before death annulled them. In Clifton she had left behind her many friends, chiefly girls, with whom she had read poetry, taken long rides on the Downs and primrosing excursions into the Leigh Woods, and who in intellectual attainments and culture seem to have been in advance of the average young women of that period, and not behind those who have enjoyed the superior educational advantages of the present day. They came often in merry detachments to be entertained in the old-world Wells house, and were charmed with everything—the low-ceilinged rooms with quaint oak beams, the long rambling passages, and, crowning attraction, the hypothetical ghost that was said to make itself heard constantly, though it was never met face to face. But perhaps



THE MARKET PLACE, WELLS.

the friend most closely connected with those happy days was the lovely and fascinating wife of the Dean of Wells, Lucy Johnson, between whom and my mother a warm and romantic attachment sprang up almost at first sight. Though only separated by the cathedral green, they must have exchanged notes daily, judging by the stack of small missives, in dainty feminine penmanship, preserved all these years in an inlaid desk sacred to these alone. Though they deal mainly but humorously with babies and baby-clothes and other domestic subjects of vital interest to young mothers, here and there a flash of brilliant description and poetically expressed fancy reveals that the personality of the writer was no ordinary one. In a brief sketch of Mrs. Johnson, written in 1893, soon after her death, by my mother, in compliance with a wish of the former's sons, she recalls touchingly the years spent in ties of closest intimacy with this dearly-loved friend:

‘I go back to summer days in Wells, when the dear cathedral village was wrapt in a golden haze, when the air was sweet with the fragrance of the lime-tree blossoms, the “home of murmurous bees,” when the chime of the bells and the tinkling of many waters alone broke the profound stillness of

that blissful home of other years. How often have I sat with her under the shadow of the tulip-tree in the Deanery garden, or in the pleasant boudoir opening out from the long panelled drawing-room, and listened to her vivid stories of her girlhood! . . . I might say much of the happiness she brought into my own life and that of my husband in those years; of the delight it was to see her from the window cross the Cathedral Green on her way to tend me when I was ill, and charm away weary hours by her ever-flowing fund of stories grave and gay. She was my eldest child's godmother, who bears her name, and by this a friendship was sealed and a tie formed which bound me to her with undying gratitude—a gratitude and love which no lapse of time and no advancing age has ever weakened or been suffered to pass into forgetfulness. The Dean had by a distinguished career at Oxford gathered round him an unusual number of men who have made their mark in their day and generation. At this time the Deanery doors opened to receive many whose names are famous: Dr. Tait, the Archbishop of Canterbury, with his charming wife, were frequent guests; Jowett, the late Master of Balliol; Stanley, the Dean of Westminster; Wilberforce, then Bishop of Oxford; Goldwin Smith;

Dr. Jacobson, Bishop of Chester ; and many others were hospitably entertained at the Deanery, and we were always invited to meet such guests in the early days of our Wells life. The Dean was an excellent host, and used to bring out of his treasure-house things new and old for the amusement and information of those gathered round his table. I need not say that his wife shone as a hostess, and I remember sitting near her when Bishop Wilberforce was on her right hand, and everyone within hearing stopped their commonplace remarks about the weather and the crops to listen to the brilliant exchange of repartee between their hostess and her old friend. . . .'

Of the ' men of light and leading ' with whom my mother thus came into contact now and again at the Deanery of Wells she often expressed a wish to record her memories ; but her pen was too busy till the last in fulfilling its strenuous engagements to allow her to indulge in any such literary recreation as writing reminiscences, consequently much that might be of interest belonging to this chapter of her life must remain untold. Repeatedly has she spoken of the almost magic charm the mellifluous tones of the celebrated Wilberforce voice exercised on her, both when heard in the pulpit and in conversation. Once my mother was putting on

her wrap in the hall, and a very beautiful girl in white flitted down the Deanery stairs. The Bishop of Oxford, who was standing near, looked up at her, and then remarked to his host, 'Mr. Dean, your staircase rivals Jacob's ladder.'

On another occasion she found herself by some chance alone in the big drawing-room with Mr. Goldwin Smith, and as he volunteered no remark she ventured to break the ice by saying she had been reading Tennyson's 'Idylls,' which she thought most lovely. Had he read them? 'No,' was the short reply; 'not being a young lady, I have no time to waste on sugary romance!' and there was silence again, while the Tennyson enthusiast in white muslin and blue ribbons, duly crushed, retired into her shell once more.

These are but poor fragmentary crumbs of the wealth of anecdote my mother could have doubtless poured out, had the leisure which would have enabled her to do so, and for which she craved, ever come. But for her rest only came with death, and the dear past, of which she retained a thousand fond memories, had to yield to the inexorable demands of a present increasingly full of work, care, and sorrow.

'It is a great pleasure to recall those long past days, which are still fresh in my recollection, when

I first knew your mother at Wells, in the later fifties,' writes Canon Church, brother of the great Dean of St. Paul's. 'She was so bright and sparkling, full of the poetry of life. Her house was the meeting-place of many of her Clifton friends—your Uncle Henry, Miss Alleyne, the Closes, Knowles, and your Aunt Henrietta. . . . I remember well her faculty of telling a story, though I do not think any of her stories were written until after she had left Wells [several had been published before then]; but she was the life and soul of the talk and intellectuality and games, at parties in the little house in Wells. Then was the time when Tennyson's "Idylls" were first coming out, and there were frequent readings and quotations, and with the graver thoughts which grew up in the midst of our sombre and antique surroundings, there was always an interest and cheerful and playful humour in her conversation. Life here was simple, and there is not much incident that I have to record, but the image of your mother blends with some of the happy memories of that time.'

And Mrs. Church, who came to Wells an ethereally fair young bride two or three years after my mother, thus supplements her husband's impression :

‘ I can remember, as if it were yesterday, standing on the wooded bank overlooking the Dart, watching my husband and a merry little lady struggling up the path on a hot July day, thirty-eight years ago. They were old friends. She had been very kind to him in his bachelor days, and now she was come over from Torquay to be introduced to me. I was a shy girl then, but it was impossible to be shy when one was met with such warm-hearted friendliness, and during the years that she remained at Wells we became very intimate. She was so amusing and so willing to be amused. Her talk was so fresh, so bubbling over with fun, yet always so good-natured, always making the best of people, though clever at taking off their oddities and weaknesses. One laughed, but one never thought the worse of the people one had criticised and laughed at. Never was there a kinder soul.

‘ She and your father came over to see us in our little home, or we went to them in that old-fashioned house overlooking the market-place—very often, indeed; and what merry, simple days they were! with the children always about, with talk and fun, sometimes serious discussions, sometimes readings of poetry—you know how well she read—sometimes telling of stories: she was a capital story-teller.

How I used to laugh at her little superstitions, and how good-humouredly she would join in laughing at herself! and what discussions and arguments went on, on subjects grave and gay, but always pleasant. She was one of those people from whom one could always differ. We often did differ; we differed on several subjects. For one, I accused her of spoiling her children. But the dispute ended invariably with friendliness and laughter. Her sympathy was unflinching and universal. It was part of her nature to throw herself into other people's interests, joys, and sorrows, and it was no effort to her. If any pleasant people were staying with her, it added to her pleasure to introduce them to her friends, to draw them out, and show to each the pleasantest side of the other. . . . I have often wondered at her courage when the bank failure came, because naturally she loved pleasure, ease, prosperity, yet she turned to hard, steady work at once, without a grumble. It was for the sake of those she loved, and that would carry her through anything. Her affectionateness, kindness, faithfulness to old friends, her sunshiny good-humour, could always be depended upon. And now it is all gone!

The birth of her first child developed in my mother's character its most striking side—her almost

passionate maternity. From that time, whatever else she may have been, she was pre-eminently a mother—a mother blindly devoted, heroically self-sacrificing, absolutely loyal to her children.

On the advent of a little daughter, Longfellow wrote to felicitate her :

‘ . . . Very sincerely, and from the bottom of my heart. The life and light of a household is a baby, and I can well understand what a joyous and happy spring you have passed in yours. Mine has been a sad one, and that is the reason I have not written to you. Soon after receiving your last letter, an accident happened to my elder boy Charley, a brave little fellow of twelve. By the bursting of a gun he had his left hand shockingly mutilated, and the thumb entirely taken off. This gave us many weeks of extreme anxiety. Then we made up our minds to go to England; our passage was engaged, and as I was going to engage our state-rooms in the steamer, I struck my knee so severely that the physician pronounced the voyage impossible, and here we are by the seaside, I still limping about as best I may. The whole mirage of my visit to England has vanished into thin air! So this time I shall not see you, nor have the pleasure of being

introduced to your friend at the Deanery. Yesterday was near being a tragic day to us. Alice, our oldest girl, narrowly escaped being drowned while bathing, and was just saved by her maid, who rushed in to her rescue; and an hour after, a sudden squall coming on, a fishing-boat in which was our Charley was driven in among the rocks, under our very windows, and almost wrecked. We saw it all; and you may imagine what a half-hour of agony that was. But what a gloomy letter I am writing about children, to a young mother! Pardon me: I have written what came uppermost. With every blessing on you and yours,

‘ Ever sincerely,

‘ HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.’

It may be mentioned that when the poet did cross the Atlantic and find his way to Wells, he gave no warning of his coming, and my mother was absent from home, thus missing a long-looked-for delight. To the lasting regret of both they never met, though the correspondence continued at intervals up to the time of his death, in 1881. Of the troop of gay young visitors to my mother's Wells house, some of whose names Canon Church mentions, nearly all are dead, many of them dying young

or in middle age. But my father's youngest sister, Miss Henrietta Marshall, gives a living picture of her sister-in-law in those days, as hostess and mother, in the following recollections of her visits to Wells :

‘ Among my happiest memories are my yearly visits to Wells. The merry household within the Bank House, the quiet beauty and restfulness without, the friendly society and general unconventional modes of life, were all attractive. It was a joy to find myself at the door under the ancient archway, knowing when it opened what warm greetings awaited me. I can remember all the old rooms. The front window looked out upon the market-place, which, except on market days, was as quiet and deserted as a village street. At the back rose the cathedral in all its beauty, from brilliant green, smooth-shaven turf. Round its gray towers rooks cawed and circled, no other sound breaking the stillness but the booming of the old clock as it struck the hours, half-hours, and quarters. But if all was stillness outside the house, there was plenty of stir within, and no lack of gaiety and laughter. I can picture your mother in many places and under various circumstances both at home and out of doors. She was popular both as a hostess and

guest, and was fond of society. But I think her most precious hours were in her nursery, where she spent much of her time. The joy of motherhood was her deepest well-spring of happiness, and she often said she could never have too many babies, nor could she ever do enough for her children. She looked the picture of a fond, proud mother, with a baby in her arms, and children of different ages and sizes romping about the room. Their high spirits were never too much for her, but if she wanted to keep them quiet, she read to them or told them stories, to which they listened eagerly with wide-open eyes. At night, however tired, she never missed going the round of the little beds, kissing and caressing each child till it bid her a sleepy good-night without waking from its slumbers. Not only in her own house, and in society, do visions of her rise up before me, but in the cathedral, which was to her a second home. She attended the services on week-days as well as Sundays, her stall in the choir seldom being vacant of an afternoon. Here she found peace and rest amidst life's distractions, and in the nave all her children born in Wells were baptized.'

There were often quiet hours after the little beds had been visited, when, sitting alone, she would

take up her pen and express her thoughts in verse, as she had been wont to do before her marriage. Even in these days a certain pensive, almost melancholy, vein runs through her retrospective reflections, made at the hour when the old year was departing and a new one dawning—an hour whose solemnity always profoundly impressed her :

‘ I am sitting here alone to-night,
And the outer world is still,
Save a gentle moaning of the wind
As it wanders from the hill.
A whispering voice which seems to say
How soon the year will pass away.

‘ I am sitting here alone to-night,
For the busy day is o’er,
And the pattering of little feet
Is hushed on nursery floor.
Safe in each cradle-bed the baby sleepers lie,
In the soft untroubled sleep of infancy.

‘ I am sitting here alone, and while around
A hushed deep silence falleth over all,
Within I seem to hear familiar tones
Of soft and gentle voices as they call.
And forth from memory’s treasure-house they come,
The loved and lost ones of a distant home.

‘ I am sitting here alone to-night,
A wife and mother blest,
Yet a tear comes springing to my eyes
Like an unbidden guest,
As on the last night of the parting year,
I think and dream of those who are not here.

' Dear is the mother left me yet on earth,
Dear is her sympathy and changeless love ;
And far more prized and valued is her worth,
Than when my girlish heart too wayward used to rove.
And seeking often for the sweetest flower,
Forgot the duty of the present hour.

' Ah, mother, well I know the faithful love
Which beats within thy tender heart for me,
And children of my own now share it too,
And gather trustingly around thy knee.
The children of thy youngest born are ever near
Thy heart of hearts, and thou dost count them dear.

' Jewels they are to me of priceless worth,
My first-born darling with her thoughtful eyes,
My boys, so radiant in their infant mirth,
A threefold chord of sweetest harmonies.
Sweet children of my early married life,
God keep you safe from worldly storm and strife.

' Ten years have passed, my husband, since I made
A full surrender of my heart to thee ;
E'en now I seem to hear the rippling wave
And gentle murmur of the western sea,
Which came like heavenly music o'er my ear,
The night when first I knew that thou wert dear.

' Clouds may have come since then, and daily care,
The lot of all who tread life's toilsome way,
But faith in thee within my soul is fresh,
And true and strong as in our love's young day.
So as the year fades from me silently,
I register anew my vows to thee.'

I think it was shortly before the ' threefold chord ' of small sleepers had increased to four, that my

mother announced one night to my father her intention of trying to write a story. My father seemed amused at the notion, for the *cacoethes scribendi* was not then such a prevalent disease as it is now. He told her to begin her story by all means, hazard- ing the prophecy that she would never finish it. 'But F. A. and F. S. [two of her intellectual Clifton friends] finished theirs,' replied my mother, laughing, 'and got twenty pounds for them. Why shouldn't I finish my story, and get twenty pounds for it?' So light-heartedly she embarked on her tale, with no portentously serious ambition or determination to succeed. Little did she foresee that it would be the first of nearly two hundred volumes that before the 'night cometh in which no man can work' were to issue from her pen.

'The Happy Days at Fernbank' was a pretty, fresh little story, and there was no difficulty in finding a publisher for it. When the presentation copies arrived, my father was as proud and pleased as the author herself, and this time he encouraged her when she sat down at once to begin a second book while the little ones slept upstairs. During the Wells days this was the only time my mother set apart for writing. In the mornings she was engaged with household duties and teaching her children,

whose education began at a very early age. She enjoyed taking them through 'Little Arthur's History' when three years old, and teaching them to repeat Mrs. Alexander's hymns, and not for the world would she have sacrificed this pleasure by entrusting their lessons to a governess.

In 1861 my mother sent a story to Messrs. Seeley and Co., and this was the beginning of a connection between author and publisher which continued without a break down to the time of her death. As years went on, Mr. Richmond Seeley became something more than a publisher to my mother, an adviser and friend, whose stimulating interest in her work she always spoke of in terms of warmest appreciation. Even by 1866 he had already published four of her one-volume stories, and in that year she wrote to him, apropos of 'Millicent Legh,' a forthcoming tale :

'I get so many kind words about my books from so many different people, that I wonder they do not sell better ; but as I have the fullest confidence that you do your best for them, I must be content to wait patiently. "Brook Silvertone" has been much admired for its inward self and outward adornment, and I did hope that it would have gone off more quickly. Did you see that the *Athenæum* said few

authors had such helps from their publishers in the way of printing, illustrating, and binding? It also condescended to call me a writer of some merit. "Millicent Legh" shall have another title, if I can think of a good one. The last four chapters have been written since a great sorrow which came upon us in the early part of December, the death in our house of a very sweet young cousin, Ada Close; her mother was Katharine Richmond (daughter of Legh Richmond). Perhaps my very sad feelings may have tinged my story a little. No imaginary character that I could draw could be more pure, lovely, and unworldly than her with whom I was so unexpectedly called to go down to the brink of the river, or rather, I should say, to the threshold of the Golden City—my first experience of a like kind. I had intended from the first chapter of the tale to let my Millicent go early to her rest, as I wanted to show how often the death of those like her is blessed more than their lives to survivors. But I little thought I should feel the truth of this so forcibly before the last word of the tale was written.'

A hush had fallen on the old house, and the laughter and prattle of its childish inmates had been silenced by the grave faces and warning fingers

of their elders while that fair young cousin lay dying in the quaint panelled guest-chamber. The same children that had danced round her in delight, admiring her cloudy-white dress and rose-coloured sash, the night that Cousin Ada went to a party with mamma and caught cold, a few days later stole in one by one on tip-toe to look at her dead, with her long hair rippling over her shoulders and flowers clasped in her marble hands. It was a picture of death the loveliness of which was unmingled with any terrors, and made a deep impression on even the baby mind. Shortly before or after the sad event my mother heard the mysterious knockings and supernatural sounds in the house which led her to the conviction that it was haunted. They recurred at long intervals, generally on the eve of the death of some friend or acquaintance, and were audible to no ears but my mother's and the under-nurse's, though to them the knocks seemed to resound through the passages, and were so loud as to be almost deafening. From that time my mother became a firm believer in ghosts. I do not think, however, she ever introduced the supernatural element into her stories.

Meanwhile, my grandmother and aunt had left Clifton, and gone to live at Torquay; but there were still my father's relatives to be visited there, and my

mother was often a guest at Clifton Hill House, where her host, Dr. Symonds, ever welcomed her with cordial affection. In answer to a request that he would be godfather to one of her boys, he wrote characteristically :

‘ I assure you that I feel deeply gratified by your request, and by the terms in which you make it. I shall like very much to look upon your son as in some way connected with me through the confidence and affection of his mother ; but, alas ! I cannot be his sponsor, having declined to bear that office to two of my grandchildren on conscientious grounds. The fact is, that the sponsorial office has long appeared to me so absurd a farce that I could not pretend to take part in it, even by proxy. I am a good Churchman, but I would cut those ridiculous vows out of the Book of Common Prayer, all the same. So you see that, in consistency, I am bound to say “ No ” where I should so much like to say “ Yes ” to any request of yours ; but I shall not feel the less interest in your little scion. Of course, you will have to give him the name of someone not encumbered with such scruples as mine ; and, after all, Symonds is not euphonious. I hope it will not be long before we shall endeavour to persuade you

to pay us a visit. How many things we shall have to talk of, except things ecclesiastic !

In an obituary of her friend's distinguished son, John Addington Symonds, the author of 'The Italian Renaissance,' which she wrote for the *Bristol Times and Mirror*, in April, 1893, one of the delightful visits to Clifton Hill House, paid from Wells, is recalled, it being specially notable for my mother as the occasion on which her eyes were first opened to the beauties of Browning's poetry:

' I remember Mr. Symonds coming into the drawing-room after luncheon with a roll in his hand, which he sealed for the post. He held it out and said, laughing, "A venture for the *Cornhill* about St. Catharine of Siena," and then, probably divining that St. Catharine was scarcely more than a name to me, he told me her story in a few words, describing the old Italian town so that when I read the paper in the *Cornhill* afterwards, I felt already to have known St. Catharine and the place where she lived and died. It was on that day, too, that a walk was proposed to the Leigh Woods, then a secluded retreat ; and though the Suspension Bridge spanned the gulf between Somersetshire and Gloucestershire,

it was hard to believe we were near the populous city lying in the valley to our right. We were a party of four, and we encamped under the shadow of the silver birches close to Nightingale Valley, where, outstretched on the cool green turf, so delicious on the hot July afternoon, Mr. Symonds left upon my mind a never-to-be-forgotten impression of the versatility of his gifts as a linguist, and of his astonishing memory. While one of the party with skilful, rapid fingers sketched the effects of the sunset sky seen through the branches of the trees towards the Channel, the others sat idle, listening as poem after poem was poured forth in a singularly musical voice, with no effort and no straining after effect, by Mr. Symonds. "A Toccata of Galuppi," a lyric of Heine's, an Italian sonnet, a French chanson, were all repeated with an ease and as perfect intonation as if each language were his own. That evening was memorable to me, for on our return, inspired by enthusiasm for "A Toccata of Galuppi," I asked Mr. Symonds to lend me a volume of Robert Browning's poetry, of which I had never hitherto read a line—I had always thought he was beyond my comprehension, too difficult to understand, too rugged to charm. But interpreted by Mr. Symonds, who read to me "The Flight of the Duchess" before

he put the book into my hands, I soon changed my opinion, and I have loved Robert Browning from that hour to this.'

It seems hardly credible now that there ever could have been a time when my mother did not love Robert Browning, for as long as I remember anything, I remember her voice reading us 'Beautiful Evelyn Hope' and 'Oh to be in England, now that April's there!' and quoting for her own enjoyment 'Rabbi Ben Ezra,' 'Abt Vogler,' and 'Andrea del Sarto.' Although she loved teaching her children, she had no cut-and-dried theories with regard to their education. She allowed the young idea to shoot very much where it listed, only taking care that the soil from whence it sprang should be imbued with all things lovely and of good report. The exact sciences, represented by 'sums,' would have been sadly neglected had not my father himself stepped into the breach and undertaken the arithmetic of the elder children. But of poetry there was no neglect, a great quantity being learnt by heart and recited, not in a parrot-like fashion, but with taste and intelligence. No matter what my mother read aloud, whether it was the Bible, 'Pilgrim's Progress,' or 'Enoch Arden,' she was sure of an enthralled little

audience. The last-named poem she read over and over again with such dramatic pathos that each time the child-listeners would break their hearts in sympathy with Enoch, and fall into passionate weeping. Her old favourite, Longfellow, was never forgotten or superseded by new idols, and often did she quote his 'Weariness,' the loveliest lines perhaps ever addressed to children, while she watched her own at play or asleep. To this day I can hear my mother's voice, moving and caressing, as it sounded to me in my childhood, when she read :

'Still stands the forest primeval, but far away from its shadows,
Side by side in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping.
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them ;
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest for
ever ;
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy ;
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from
their labours ;
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their
journey.'

The author of these lines wrote to my mother after the tragic fate that had befallen his first wife :

'MY DEAR MRS. MARSHALL,

'If I have not written to you all these many months you may be sure it has been from no want of will, but from utter powerlessness and prostration

of mind and body. I cannot rally from the effects of the awful tragedy. As the day draws near, I feel as if it were to be acted over again, and shudder in every nerve. Her wedding and her funeral were on the same day, the 13th of July. But I will not sadden you with these thoughts. Let me rather tell you that my boys are strong and well, and my darling girls grow lovelier every day, and are a great consolation in all this misery. Ah, if we could only fix our thoughts on what we have, and not on what we have lost! A young brother-in-law of mine, Mr. Appleton, sails in the steamer for England, where he will pass the summer holiday. Should he visit Wells, I have charged him to call and see you, and if he is fortunate enough to find you I shall be very glad, for he can tell you all that I cannot write.

‘I send you a photograph, and beg for yours in return. I shall be so happy to have it among my other friends.

‘With kind regards to your husband,

‘I remain, ever yours most truly,

‘HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

‘P.S.—Many thanks for your letter from Torquay; your words of sympathy touched and consoled me.’

The close of the sixties saw also the close of this bright chapter in my mother's life. My father accepted the post of manager of the Exeter branch of the bank, and so removal from the quaint old home, and parting from scenes and friends that had grown so infinitely dear, became inevitable. The prospect of a slight increase of income was not likely to console my mother for all she had to leave behind. In later life, looking back on the days at Wells, they were to her essentially 'the days that are no more,' the memory of which was saddened by tender regrets, for 'sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.'

'It was a sore trial when duty called her to leave Wells,' writes her sister-in-law, 'and make her home in Exeter. There she had to live in a noisy street in the heart of the town, and she found it hard to settle down contentedly. Life became more difficult, more of a battle in many different ways, and cares and troubles multiplied. But here, as elsewhere, she was beloved, and gathered new friends around her, as she did wherever she went, without losing touch with the old ones. Being near the cathedral was a solace to her, and many a time its services comforted her heart and uplifted her soul.'

So, in spite of the bitterness of wrenching herself from the charming spot where her heart had taken such deep root, a time came when she acknowledged she would not have chosen to pass the rest of her life there. Changes were painful to her because of her intensely loyal, and in some respects conservative, nature; but they widened her views of life, and lent depth to her thought, so in the end she accepted them as part of the unseen agencies that work together for good.

III

EXETER

1869—1872

BEGINNING OF STRUGGLE

‘ If we have souls, know how to see and use,
One place performs, like any other place,
The proper service ; every place on earth
Was framed to furnish man with scenes alike,
To give him note that through the place he sees
A place is signified he never saw,
But if he lack not soul, may learn to know.’

R. BROWNING.

III

EXETER

1869—1872

BEGINNING OF STRUGGLE

FROM Wells to Exeter my mother removed with seven young children, the youngest an extremely delicate baby in long clothes, whose critical state of health caused her great anxiety. During the removal the children ran wild in one of the remote villages on the slopes of the Mendips, but before the hot July was over the new house was ready, and they found themselves transported into what to them must have seemed a busy and exciting metropolis after the drowsy stillness of their birthplace.

My mother regarded it as an anachronism to be within sound of cathedral bells and yet to live in a house not gray and venerable and steeped in association with the past, but commonplace and modern, looking out on the High Street, with no pretty old-

world garden behind—in fact, no garden at all, only an uninspiring back-yard, shut in by blank white-washed walls. The children probably were too fascinated at first with all they saw from the windows of the new nursery—the lively street, with its cabs and omnibuses and smartly-dressed shoppers—to miss the silent market-place and the old moat round the corner at Wells, where it had been their daily habit to feed the ducks and swans, and the pastoral green fields beyond, called the Bishop's Fields, in which they had picked buttercups and made daisy-chains.

In Wells they had seen nothing of the military except their own toy soldiers, but here were real soldiers, dashing on horseback to and from the barracks, and they had not been long in Exeter before they witnessed the solemn pageant of an officer's funeral procession pass along the streets to the strains of the Dead March in 'Saul.' 'Oh, I do wish another General would die' was the constant refrain (in spite of his nurse's rebuke that it was wrong to wish it) of one of the small boys, as he sat with his nose pressed against the window-pane, looking out by the hour together.

It was the same little fellow who in the Mendip village had caused a scare by straying away one

tropical Sunday morning, hatless and in his pinafore, so that everyone, including the Vicar, when church-time came, instead of going to church, started to look for him, and there was no service that day. I can see my mother, in a mauve and white cotton dress, hot and anguished, sinking down in despair by the dusty roadside after three hours' fruitless search; and then, when the runaway was found entertaining a party of navvies with most un-Sunday-like singing and whistling, I can remember how she laughed and cried from relief; for she had pictured her golden-haired little Cyril lying somewhere lifeless from sun-stroke, or drowned at the bottom of one of the many deep ponds of the district.

In a short story for children, 'Three Little Brothers,' written at Exeter, this incident is described, and also an accident which happened to one of the other little brothers, who was run over on the way to a flower show, and brought home with his white serge sailor suit covered with alarming blood-stains. 'I'm not hurt, mother,' he explained, faintly but reassuringly. 'No bones broken; it was only a baker's cart.' My mother often said that in writing her stories for boys and girls she was well supplied with what is called 'copy' within her own family circle, and certainly in those days her

children, with regard to accidents, exhibited a great deal of ingenuity in swallowing curtain-hooks and threepenny bits, falling out of windows and into the fire, without apparently being much the worse.

On coming to Exeter the elder children were sent to day schools, and, the number of her pupils being thus diminished, my mother now devoted some of the morning as well as the evening to writing. Besides short tales, published for the most part by the S.P.C.K. and Nisbet and Co., in those quiet evening hours at Wells no less than eight volumes, on the borderland between the story-book and the domestic novel, the *genre* in which my mother excelled, had been accomplished and published by Messrs. Seeley: 'Lessons of Love,' 'Brothers and Sisters,' 'Helen's Diary,' 'Brook Silvertone and the Lost Lilies,' 'Millicent Legh,' 'The Old Gateway,' 'Violet Douglas,' and 'Christabel Kingscote.' Most of these are still in print, and applications for permission to translate them into German, French, Italian, and Swedish have been made even in recent years.

In a letter which contains a piece of very appreciative private criticism of one of these stories, Miss Eden, a daughter of Lord Auckland, who was Bishop of Bath and Wells at the time my mother lived in Wells, wrote:

‘I am delighted with “Helen’s Diary.” I like it better than any of yours I have read. It is really almost a novel, and very useful and good. I think it quite as good as some of Miss Sewell’s, and I like it far better than many, I may say most, of Miss Yonge’s. I like particularly the descriptions of scenery, which are generally so tiresome in books. I think the Kingstons’ must be meant for the Lovels’ house, and Bishop’s Height for Dulcot Hill. I fancy the places like these ; at least, the cathedral is very like Wells. One quite sees it all. Altogether, I have thoroughly enjoyed my reading of the book. . . . I highly approve of the moral that cousins never ought to marry, and I am very glad you have inculcated it, as novelists are so fond of making cousins marry. I always think that marrying a wife’s sister is much more proper and harmless and justifiable than marrying a first cousin.’

The country immediately round Exeter, Devonshire though it be, is not particularly attractive, and from the heart of the city difficult of access. Both my mother and father must have pined for the beautiful Wells walks through cool ferny lanes and shady copses to the bracing crests of the Mendips, whence the gray cathedral is seen rising

from its bower of foliage like a building not made by hands, and beyond, the distant line of the 'summer sea.' There were now no more delightful primrosing and blackberrying expeditions, but instead, occasional afternoon outings by train, with spades and buckets, to Dawlish or Exmouth, from which the little ones returned weary and cross.

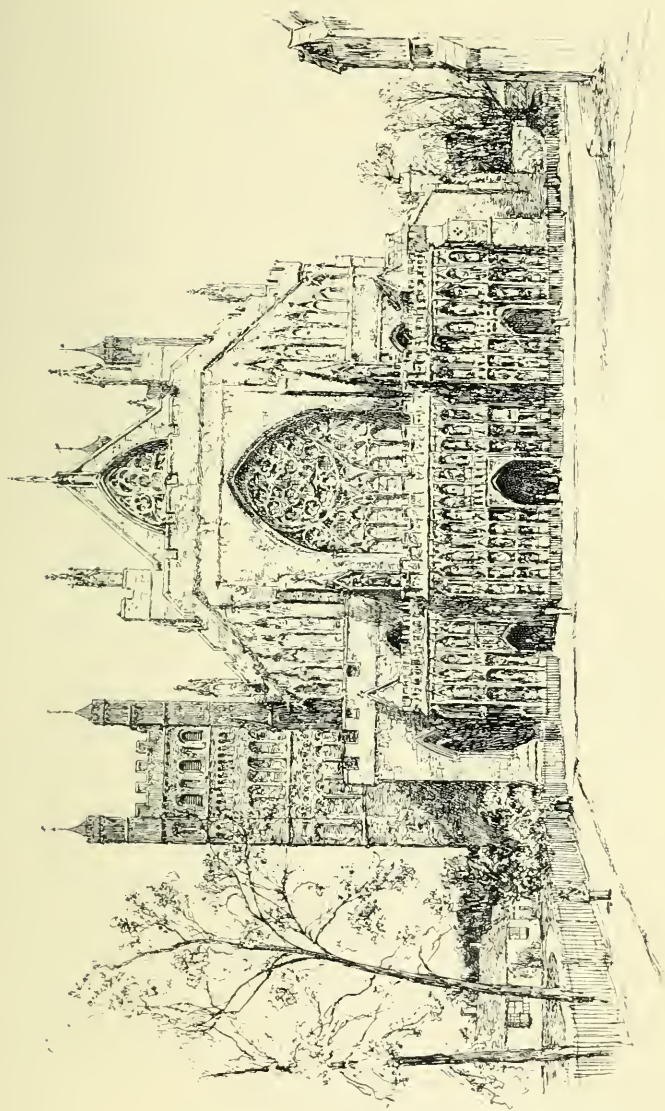
The relaxing heat of the Exeter climate made a month's change to the seaside almost a necessity, and my mother, devoted child-lover that she was, found these holidays, spent with the whole of her flock in lodgings, trying times, especially when, as not seldom was the case, the weather was bad, and the rain as incessant as the landlady's complaints of her juvenile lodgers' muddy boots and 'rampageous' conduct. But nothing would have induced my mother to let the children go away without her; had she been separated from them, she would have lived in a perpetual nightmare, tortured by visions of her darlings in capsizing boats, or sliding down precipices. 'To-day and Yesterday' is a little tale graphically relating the experiences of one of these dismally damp holidays at the sea. Yet even then she managed to find intellectual compensations, for it was during that wet summer in the little South Devon seaport Budleigh Salterton that she made

acquaintance with Frances Bunnett, the able translator of Gervinus's 'Commentaries,' and of Hermann Grimm's 'Michael Angelo'—one of three Franceses (the other two being Frances Alleyne and Frances Owen), all highly gifted women, and her intimate and valued friends.

Not only regrets for the Wells home saddened the first part of her life at Exeter, but the death of her mother, so dearly loved, at Torquay, and the constant serious illness of her delicate baby. When the next baby was born my mother fell ill herself with scarlet fever, and all the children were hurried out of the house to escape infection. In spite of such a dislocation of routine her pen did not long remain idle, for to this year belongs 'Heights and Valleys,' the most ambitious story she had as yet produced, and one which was more 'nearly a novel,' to quote Miss Eden, than perhaps any of the others. The plot was suggested by a romance in real life. A junior clerk in the bank at Exeter, to whom my mother had been kind, pitying his extreme poverty, rushed into her drawing-room one day with the announcement that he had unexpectedly come into an enormous fortune and inherited a fine old place in the country, with all the furniture, plate, and pictures. He insisted on taking her there and then

to the house, which was not far from the city, and begged her to accept from him, as a small recognition of her kindness, any of the pictures she liked. To his disappointment my mother would only consent to carry away a few Arundel Society prints, of which there seemed to be a superabundance, and they proved a great decorative addition to her drawing-room walls. The generous youth's head was afterwards unfortunately completely turned by his sudden acquisition of wealth, and he soon plunged through all his money. In her story my mother described the old place exactly as she saw it that bright autumn morning when she was driven there by its new owner, her husband's clerk, then shabby and out at elbows: the hundreds of rooks cawing round its chimneys, the hats and walking-sticks of the dead master still in the hall, the vast, fusty, holland-shrouded drawing-room, and dust lying thick on everything; the whole leaving a melancholy impression of faded grandeur, neglect, and decay.

The story that came after 'Heights and Valleys' was more characteristic of my mother's peculiarly delicate domestic vein. Longfellow wrote of it in the following letter:



EXETER CATHEDRAL.

‘You have written a charming book, this “Mrs. Mainwaring’s Journal.” It is very simple, natural, and touching. My daughter Edith has been reading it aloud to me, and is delighted with it, as I am. You have the applause of youth and age. Moreover, I send you enclosed notice by an unknown hand, in one of our morning papers, on the very day that your book reached me. I was glad I had a photograph to send you in return for yours, which was very welcome. The best ever taken of me was by Elliott and Fry, the head leaning on the hand (which I mention as they took others not so good). . . .

‘How would you like to live in a country without cathedrals? Think of England without hers, if you can. I have read neither “Sara Coleridge’s Life and Letters” nor “Old Kensington”; but Miss Thackeray I knew in Rome, and thought her a very superior woman.’

The American criticism enclosed in the above letter is so good, and seems to apply in part to so many of my mother’s stories generally, that it may, perhaps, be quoted here.

‘The English story by Emma Marshall begins where most novels end—at marriage, and records a

picture of family life with rare vividness and beauty. The joys and the griefs, the struggles and the victories, the love and the anxiety, of an intelligent, true-souled wife and mother are told with singular fidelity. There is nothing sensational about it, but it is very interesting. It is a picture of life in a simple, happy home, where duty is the guiding motive. It is neither a peasant's home, nor a lord's, but that of a busy lawyer, not free from the necessity of constant work. The husband and father, however, is almost the least conspicuous character in the book, and yet he is sketched with admirable distinctness, and the influence of his strong, wise nature is constantly apparent. The interest centres in the mother and in the numerous children. The form of the story gives it the appearance of being a confidential revelation, but in the telling of it there is such well-bred reserve that the reading is always delightful. One quickly learns to respect and admire the young wife, and the development of her character as cares increase, and sorrows come, and joys multiply, wins upon us to the end. In the delineation of the many children the author shows superior skill. They are not stupid dolls, nor intolerable prigs, nor such graceless roisterers as the current fashion of excessive realism in represent-

ing child-life has made us too familiar with. They have their childish follies, and their infirmities of temper, but, like the children of loving and cultivated parents in most well-regulated homes, they are interesting for other qualities than their failings. . . . Good books treating of these phases of life are extremely rare, and it is a great satisfaction to be able to commend one cordially.'

Telling a story in the form of an autobiography or journal was always a favourite method of my mother's, and one she managed with skill and much easy grace of style. The cloistral calm of the Wells atmosphere still pervades 'Mrs. Mainwaring's Journal,' but though her heart clung to the old lost home, it was at the same time going forth in warm response to the kindness and attentions of many new friends in Exeter and its neighbourhood. As time went on these, too, became 'old friends,' to be counted dear while life lasted. Among them were the Kennaways of Escot and the Foster-Alleynes of Kentisbeare, to whom she owed an eternal debt of gratitude for taking in four of her children for six weeks, when she was laid aside with scarlet fever. A day at Kentisbeare, a charming country rectory after her own heart, with its sunny garden, in which gentians grew, never failed to refresh her and send

her back to the uncongenial town house braced up for further effort. For now I know that her life then was already becoming more and more an effort. The increase of income mentioned before, which promotion from Wells to Exeter involved, was soon counterbalanced by increase of expenses, and by certain unlucky investments of my father's. Yet my childhood's memories of her at this time retain no picture of her looking worried and careworn; rather does she come back to me with smiling, animated face, starting for some garden party in festive light attire, or entertaining guests at home with her bright conversation.

She must have been often writing, but I have no recollection of her then as I have of her in later years, seated in the midst of us with her pen gliding rapidly over sheet after sheet of foolscap. Never did a mother who was a writer of books make less fuss about the business of writing them. The children came first, the books second. To the appeal, 'Do read to us,' she never answered, 'I am too tired or too busy,' nor did her voice as she read ever betray weariness, but always an interest in the story as keen as the listeners'. George Macdonald's beautiful and poetic tale, 'The Back of the North Wind,' in which fantasy and realism are so exquisitely

blended, was loved equally by mother and small sons, and in the memory of one her reading of that story still echoes like far-away music.

The Bishop of Exeter during her residence there was Dr. Temple, whose sister did the honours of the Palace before his marriage, a homely lady of strong character and sterling qualities, for whom my mother had the warmest regard and admiration. Over the afternoon tea-table she often heard amusing stories of Rugby school-life, and received some sound advice on domestic matters and the management of boys, for Miss Temple had acted the part of mother to her orphaned brothers and sisters. It was while looking on at a Christmas dance in the low, long dining-hall of the Exeter Palace that my mother first made the acquaintance of Charles Edward Moberly, whose friendship played an important part in her life for some years to come. He was a brother-in-law of the Bishop of Exeter, and a nephew of the late Bishop of Salisbury, and was then a master at Rugby. A number of common literary interests attracted them to each other at once, and between 1874 and 1879 they corresponded regularly and met frequently. He sent her poems and sonnets, and she reproached him for hiding his poetic and other distinguished talents in a napkin, and tried to in-

spire him to bring them forth for the benefit of the world. Hitherto my mother had never read her stories in manuscript to anyone but her own children, but now into the rank of these young critics on the hearth came a formidable rival in the tall, lanky-limbed scholar, with his stupendous forehead and flowing silvery locks. Sixteen months after their first meeting at the Palace, he wrote to her :

“ You took me up, believing in me in a way which nobody else ever did, setting yourself to find out what you supposed me to be capable of, and stimulating me to do it. The result has been that I really have felt since then a striving and confidence which I had not before. You know how it has been with regard to verses; in other things also I have had more trust in myself and in my power of accomplishing work ever since I knew you: add to this, that I have received kindness from everyone who has heard of me through you. Even your friend Mrs. — has, I find, spoken of me, I believe favourably, to the Dean of Durham. Some of your friends have received me with special kindness and attention, especially your sweet and gracious sister-in-law, whom it is a blessing to know. May I say

that she and you and one other of your friends make, as it were, a single image, and if I never see them again, I shall still be thankful that it is so.

‘No one is more sensible than myself that your kindness for me rests far more upon what you imagine me to be than on what I really am. But it is not in human nature to value less the kindness which springs from that kind of mistake; as Hamlet says to the players, if you use me better than I deserve, the more is the honour and credit to you. . . . I hardly apprehend that I shall ever justify your bodings of the big book to be written and admired. Perhaps if I had known you a few years back, and you had then applied the stimulus, something might have come of it. However, I shall go on with my history epoch (1760-1803), and hope you will send me any references to memoirs and the like which may tend to enliven it. The Bishop of Exeter seemed rather surprised at my audacity in attempting it. We left them at Malvern this morning, my sister-in-law well for her, the girls very bright and pretty, the Bishop in great force. We met the Master of Balliol in a drab-coloured suit and wide-awake hat, looking like a gentleman farmer. I found my nice cousin, Mary Moberly—

who wrote the pretty story in the *Monthly Packet*—there too. Do not think there is the least exaggeration in the earlier part of this scrawl.'

The embryo *magnum opus*, however, a work on Shakespeare, on which he was urged to concentrate his genius, never saw the light, and remained unfinished at his death, in 1893. He wrote the preface to my mother's translation of Fleury's 'History of France' for children, and was always ready to put his scholarship and his library at her service. In the pages of 'Life's Aftermath,' the charming tale of Quaker life, which has passed through many editions, he appears as the elderly hero—at least, so said the chorus of 'critics on the hearth'—perhaps in revenge for having their province invaded.

In conjunction with Miss Temple, my mother helped to get up lectures for the higher education of women in Exeter, a cause into which later, at Gloucester, she threw herself heart and soul, and did so much admirable work. Mr. John Addington Symonds acceded readily to her request to give a course on Dante, but the shock of his father's death led to a complete breakdown of his health, and after only two lectures had been delivered the course had to be abandoned, he sending, through my mother,

a copy of his 'Introduction to the Study of Dante' to each of the disappointed Exeter students.

'I must send you a few words of thanks,' Mrs. J. A. Symonds wrote, 'for yours and Miss Temple's great kindness in arranging about the stopping of my husband's lectures. He knows well what a trouble and vexation it must have been to you, and feels that instead of being a help, he has been a terrible hindrance to your scheme of education. But he has, indeed, not given it up without being in a measure forced to, for every bit of work he does now (and there is so much that is unavoidable) is done at the expense of actual pain in head and spine. . . . The breaking of a tie like the one which existed between him and his father, the most pure and perfect friendship that ever was, must be a strain, long as we had been accustoming ourselves to expect it; and then all the horrid business comes, breaking off its sacredness bit by bit with all that once made home to him. Forgive all this. I only meant to say "Thank you," and to speak of *you*, and now have gone off into egotism.'

Her zealous activity in helping to promote the then new movement for improving women's minds

showed that, in spite of her devotion to her children, she was as far from being selfishly absorbed in them as in the children of her brain. All the time she lived in Exeter she never failed week by week, when not prevented by illness, to visit the penitentiary, where the charm of her earnest voice, reading a simple story, held fallen girls and women spellbound. In this way she came into contact with some of the city's human wreckage, a contact which saddened her, but from which she never shrank; for with indignation at wrong, and hatred at the ugliness of sin, she united unbounded pity and mercifulness for the sinner. 'I do so little, I wish I could do more,' was a constant exclamation of hers. Yet, surely, it was not little, when time was precious, to use her pen in writing appeals for charities in need of support, as she did on countless occasions in later years, always readily, always putting her heart into what she wrote.

Miss Janette Russell, an artist, who came to Exeter to paint some of the children, has sent the following reminiscences of her visit:

'No one knew better than Emma Marshall how to make her guests happy and at home, and many enjoyable walks and talks we had together in the old

city, with its beautiful cathedral, which I had not seen before. As I look through a small note and sketch book of that date, it brings back pleasing thoughts and memories of my friend, one being the wonderfully calm way in which she would go on with her writing, notwithstanding the household disturbances. A child would be crying in the nursery, a visitor suddenly announced, the little boys come rushing in from school, while the elder children had questions and wants requiring attention, or a maid would enter the room about some domestic necessity; yet with all these daily interruptions, she seemed to have the power of attending to everybody and fixing her mind between whiles upon her work, writing on easily, which seemed to me quite marvellous. Her memory also struck me as very unusual. We went one afternoon to Dawlish to see a relation of mine, whose house was full of beautiful white Dresden china. Our hostess related many strange and interesting stories of how the different lovely treasures had come into her possession. The next day I was delighted to hear all these stories once again from Mrs. Marshall's lips, word for word, as she related them to a friend who had come in. Another pleasant remembrance floats in my mind of our going to hear a charming concert and listening to Charles Hallé

and Norman-Néruda's entrancing music. To her it spoke in words, to me in pictures, many of which I jotted down.

'It was my love for drawing that first brought us together, and in her ever sure sympathy and readiness to encourage others she gave me an opportunity of illustrating a few of her books with a frontispiece. During my stay at Exeter I found a use for my pencil in making sketches of the little ones that peopled her house. The youngest boy was a dear wee fellow, delightfully winning and lovable. His mother often called him "Douglas, Douglas, tender and true," as he climbed upon her chair and twined his soft, childish arms around her neck. They were all picturesque children, and the baby-girl looked sweet as she lay asleep on her mother's bed, where I painted her. One night we had a friendly party, at which the children performed and sang in chorus, which was very pretty. I can picture now Mrs. Marshall busy with her pen at a table while I was trying to portray her three youngest sons grouped by the window, and a dear little trio they looked. But, like everything that is delightful, my visit came to an end, though not our friendship, or the affectionate remembrance and admiration I shall ever feel for Emma Marshall.'

Various interests and the kindness of friends had more than reconciled my mother to Exeter, when the summons came to leave it. Of all the cathedrals she lived near in the course of her life, none had to her ears such musically-cadenced bells as Exeter. Their harmonious beauty ringing out daily for morning and evening prayers, and the words they seemed to express, formed the theme of one of her numerous smaller stories, 'Primrose, or the Bells of Old Effingham,' written at this time with so much fluent ease. Those little stories, so tender, so prettily told, teaching goodness and love, were now produced to order; but though she had begun to write for money, which was sorely wanted, it was still a pleasure to write, and never with her became degraded to the dead-level of drudgery.

Educational advantages for boys were almost nil in Exeter, and her elder sons were of an age when a public school would have been an infinitely more wholesome and bracing atmosphere for their young lives than the environment of a home in the midst of a town; but the means that should have provided for their education at Clifton College had been sunk in the bottomless abyss of an unfortunate investment, and as yet my mother's literary income could not supply the void. This was, indeed, but

the eve of the struggle, and the time of training and preparation, so that when the great blow fell it was to find her already equipped and in harness, eager to wield her pen to the death for the sake of her nearest and dearest.

IV

GLOUCESTER

1874—1880

THE THICK OF THE FIGHT

*‘Wer nie sein Brot mit Thränen ass,
Wer nie die kummervollen Nächte
Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,
Der kennt euch nicht Ihr himmlischen Mächte.’*

GOETHE.

‘One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward ;
Never doubted clouds would break ;
Never dreamed, though right was worsted, wrong would
triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.’

R. BROWNING.

IV

GLOUCESTER

1874 - 1880

THE THICK OF THE FIGHT

THE house at Gloucester where were the offices of the West of England Bank was an improvement on the Exeter one. Though standing in a narrow and rather squalid-looking street, it had a garden and fine old elm-trees at the back. The rooms were large and lofty, and there were long corridors and wide staircases. The children at any rate regarded the change with satisfaction, for they had soon become *blasé* of watching the traffic from the Exeter windows, and thought gooseberry-bushes and fowl-houses, which opened up a prospect of keeping pets, superior attractions. My mother was pleased, too, with the new house ; but even in her last home, unpromising as it had seemed at first, her affections had become rooted, and if Gloucester before very long

was more congenial to her than Exeter had ever been, the removal there tried her in several ways, and she was chilled by the new faces and surroundings. Her feelings are expressed in a letter to an Exeter lady, Miss Templer, cousin of her lifelong friend Sir John Kennaway, whose father had then just died :

‘ MY DEAREST GEORGIE,

‘ I think I must write a line to-night before I go to bed, as it is a quiet time. Thanks for your note, which I was so glad to receive, for I have been constantly thinking of Escot in the glory of azaleas last May, when, after you and Gussie had gone in, I turned back with Sir John to look at a pink may-tree he was so anxious I should see in its full beauty. Then I remember thinking how your cousin Ella was in the land of eternal flowers and spring loveliness, and how the place that would know her no more was like an earthly reflection of that heavenly glory. Now father and daughter are together in that very far-off country, filled with beauty and never-fading flowers. Tell me as much as you can of her illness. Was there pain, or a gentle passing away? I have been so engrossed with the last volume of “*Memorials of a Quiet Life*,” the records

of the Hare family. Do get it when you can. At first one thinks there is rather too much of it, and then, after getting to the end, one wants more. The love they all bear each other is wonderful. I only feel jealous that an adopted son should be so devoted. It is a book which would just suit you now, and your dear mother would enjoy it. I think often of her, and wish I were near to come every day to ask for her. Letters are so unsatisfactory. Somehow I miss Exeter more and more. People were so kind there, and I want to come back to them. So many seemed to care for me and mine. *Here* I feel as if I were nothing to anybody and doing nothing for anyone. New people crop up and call every week; and I go off with a tired sort of feeling and go through the empty form of returning it, and there it ends. I went to see Mrs. T—— a fortnight ago. She was very agreeable, but she has never come here. It is Gloucester fashion—a cold fashion, as cold as those great, chilly Norman pillars in the cathedral! I feel certain I should like the Gambier Parrys. His face is so good, and he *is* good; but I expect I shall never see them.'

This expectation was not realized, for afterwards she saw a great deal of the Gambier Parrys, who

lived at Highnam, near Gloucester; and Mr. Parry, an artist, whose achievements were far above the average amateur, and a man of wide culture, father of Sir Hubert Parry, became one of those many friends to whose gifts her pen paid a tribute at their death.

A little later she wrote to Miss Templer and her sister on their mother's death:

'I have heard to-day the end has come. I think much and lovingly of you, and I know how sad your hearts are on this dreary day. But there is light beyond, and the life everlasting is a beacon to point us to hope and comfort from lowest depths of sorrow. I can never forget your dear mother's kindness to me when I was a stranger in Exeter. She first made me feel at home there, and her appreciation of my husband was always so pleasant to me. I am sure you know he sends you a very real message of sympathy and affection. I will enclose the lines I promised, written a month ago. They have a ring of hope at the close. May God be with you and bless you.'

About this time she dedicated from Gloucester her new story, 'A Lily Among Thorns,' to Exeter,

‘The Ever Faithful City, in grateful and affectionate remembrance of many true and loyal hearts.’

‘Exeter and the seaside resorts of Devon figure in the story,’ says a local review, and quotes the description of the cathedral bell tolling forth the hours :

‘Just as she was closing her eyes the cathedral clock struck out twelve with its deep sonorous voice. The very essence of music seems to lie in the sound of the bell as it strikes in slow and solemn measure the hours of the dying day. Even above the busy tumult of noontide it is heard like a voice from a better world, but in the stillness of the night it comes with a depth and pathos to which those who live within reach alone can testify.’

The Triennial Musical Festivals at Gloucester were among the keenest pleasures of her life there. In September, 1874, she filled her house and took rooms near for a whole tribe of Exeter and other friends, and heard with them her beloved ‘Elijah,’ the ‘Messiah,’ Bach’s ‘Passion’ music, and the ‘Hymn of Praise,’ which inspired her to write the lines beginning :

‘He gathered up in one majestic strain
All sounds which palpitate in earth’s great heart,
And poured them forth to listening ears again.
Each one performed its mission and its part,
And all in blessed harmony proclaim
The glory of the Lord’s eternal name.’

This and other of her verses were published later in a little white volume on behalf of St. Lucy's Children's Hospital in Gloucester, an institution, founded by Mr. Gambier Parry, in which she never lost her interest. She was particularly drawn to the beautiful sister-in-charge, who, with her blue eyes, and angelically pure face, equalled in goodness some of the ideal women she loved to depict in her stories.

A habit of copying passages from books and poems that impressed her was very frequent at this period, and in the commonplace books devoted to these one finds long extracts from 'Daniel Deronda,' 'Life and Letters of Sara Coleridge,' and now and again a fragmentary diary, fitful entries recording mainly a pleasant journey or a family event. Latterly, when her life became more and more occupied, and she worked at high pressure, she reserved the last hours of the fading year alone wherein to pause and look back on the road. These little yearly retrospects were made regularly during the eighties and nineties, the last decades of her earthly pilgrimage, and so the closing chapters of her life's work and anxieties can be told to some extent in her own words. In the early seventies the journal is attempted oftener, but tells less. It begins with a few brief

impressions of a trip to the English lakes and Scotland in 1874 :

‘*Scout’s Scar*.—A great panorama of eternal hills—Coniston Old Man, Fairfield, Langdale Pikes—the blue shadows floating over the mountains near and afar ; they wore a purple robe of majesty. I was last on Scout’s Scar in October, 1851 ; all golden glory then, and the morning glow unclouded. Now the journey is getting near the end—a rough journey, but always with compensation. Even God’s beautiful earth seems more beautiful, more as a revelation of His love ; for this let me thank Him.’

‘*Helm End, June 12*.—All more distant and dream-like to-day. A tender blue veil over Coniston and Langdale. The floating shadows from the white clouds wonderfully beautiful. Distant church bells in the valley made sweet melody. Heaven and earth in glad accord. Dull indeed must have been the human heart that could not respond ; such sights and sounds are as a perpetual *Te Deum Laudamus*.

‘*Hawes Bridge, June 13*.—A rushing stream overhung with trees reflected in the water, all ending at last in the quiet of a deeper bed where mysterious stillness brooded, broken by the drippings of a ceaseless rivulet that falls drop by drop over a mossy block

of gray stone. Such colours, brown and living green and tender blue, as sky and trees looked down. So things from above can colour the darkest stream of life.

‘*Benson Knott, June 15.*—1,000 feet above the sea-level. A view of great extent, not only of the lake mountains, but of Morecambe in one direction, and Whinfell and Harter Fell in the other. These last were veiled in the most lovely tender mist, which heightened their beauty, and the colour of the violet shadows on their sloping shoulders was indescribable. The summit of Benson Knott is jagged rock covered with rich brown heather; the fells are behind this foreground in majesty. . . . My thoughts to-day lay too deep for words. “All Thy works praise Thee.” Shall not Thy saints magnify Thee as they lift their eyes to the everlasting hills?

‘*Windermere, June 16.*—A succession of lovely sunset views of the mountains and lakes. The glory of sky and earth wonderful and dazzling. . . . By Windermere and Ambleside we went to Langdale. The day one golden glory throughout. The mountains shone through a haze of delicate violet. . . . We returned by High Close, and the backward view of the mountains piled up at the head by Langdale—the grandest I can imagine. We passed the seat

known as "Rest and be thankful," and then came to Red Bank, whence we looked down on Grasmere and Rydal smiling in the sunshine of the June afternoon. We stood by the graves of the Wordsworths in the quiet churchyard, and then went on to Rydal Mount. Here we had tea with the present occupants, who kindly took us to the terrace where the poet so often walked and meditated. The little wild flowers he had loved as friends grow there luxuriantly—purple and white foxgloves, heart's-ease, and the tiny white geranium; the scene one never to be forgotten—a spirit of poetry everywhere. I thought how often his eyes had rested on Loughrigg Fell and the grand distant hills, and yet how he saw the same beauty in the tiny flowers at his feet, recognising the hand of peace and love infinite, and "thoughts too deep for tears" in the humblest as in the highest things.

June 20.—A drive to-day at 6 o'clock p.m. past Windermere, Grasmere, and Rydal, over Dunmail Raise, past Thirlmere, and then under Helvellyn. The morning was dark and cloudy, but every view was grand and distinct. There were gleams of brightness at Derwentwater, and we rowed round the lake. The mountains were very striking in their sombre majesty, and so I bid them farewell. The

remembrance of them in sunshine and beauty and in clouded grandeur will never pass away.

‘I thought much of Sara Coleridge in beautiful Keswick Vale. I can well understand how she loved it, and how it was to her in her declining days a joy for ever.’

My mother felt a strong affinity with Sara Coleridge after reading her letters. Elsewhere she writes of them :

‘They present an unusual picture of a woman’s mind. In her affections how pure and strong she is! Husband, children, mother, towards these natural ties her whole heart goes forth—even when Death hid them from her eyes, not with any extravagant expressions, but with a deep, abiding, ever-present love. . . . With many of her opinions I feel the most keen sympathy, so that I could almost long to find her, and exchange thoughts and feelings. She was, of course, infinitely above me in talents and attainments, but there are few pages in the book where I do not find expressed well what I have often expressed feebly. The song of the birds in the hush before the dawn; the scent of wild hyacinths in woods that seemed to my childish eyes boundless, though in reality covering but a few

acres ; the shadows of trees upon a dewy lawn ; the slow, lazy river winding onward to the sea, with countless other sights and sounds, come back to me as Keswick and all its associations came back to her, fragrant with the soft breath of the days of my childhood and early youth. "I wonder," she says in almost her last letter, "whether the feathery fern I planted from the carding-mill field is still living, and the beech-tree which I used to climb, with its copper foliage, at the foot of which in spring a few crocuses grew;" and "My mind is ever going back to my brighter times of youth and all its dear people, and things of other days." Well, the other days may be remembered still in the land where days—as we count them here on earth—*are not*. Oh, blessed fruition of life, and love which is the essence of life! May God bring us all to it in His great mercy!

After that pleasant tour in the Lake District, my mother went to Edinburgh to stay with an old Scotch aunt of my father's.

'*June 21.*—The magnificent rock on which the castle stands is before our windows and the slopes in front of Princes Street are seen to our left. Edinburgh is the queen of cities, both for natural beauties and public buildings.

'*June 22.*—Spent the day at Calton Terrace, close to Arthur's Seat and Holyrood. We went through the old home of the Scotch Kings, and gathered gowans from the grass-grown floor of the chapel. Under the east window Mary stood a bride, and her spirit seems to haunt the place. The 300 years since the night of terror when Rizzio was murdered by ruthless hands seemed to me but as yesterday. And how many dark, tragic stories followed that told in the Queen's supper-room on that March evening! And how all earthly stories whether of weal or woe pass away and the actors lie forgotten and still beneath the gowans! But traces are left on the sands of time, and some memories are fragrant as the scent of flowers from which outward beauty has faded.

'*June 24, St. John's day.*—From Edinburgh to Cul-loden, passing the castles of Stirling and Linlithgow, to the head of Loch Katrine through the Trossachs. Sunshine, with heavy black thunder-clouds rolling about and rain falling not far off. Up Loch Lomond to Ardlui, all the mountains clear in outline, with the shadow of departing clouds floating over them. The Alps of Arrochar very beautiful. A walk of a mile took us to the fall. A stream comes down from heights so great that it looks like a thread of silver on the mountain side and falls at last, a great foaming

torrent, over big boulders. The scent of bracken and heather and the music of the waters ever to be remembered. Down the lake to Balloch. Ben Lomond sharply defined against a clear sky. The Cobbler Mountain above Loch Long also distinct and grand. We returned to Edinburgh by Dumbarton and Falkirk. What a day of beauty!

‘In the eternal glory of the hills there seems no count of time, only the spring of that immortal part within which knows no touch of age. How can it, having its birth where love and life have their source? “Surely He hath loved with an everlasting love. His earth doth worship Him.”’

On June 30 she gathered gowans from the turf under the sycamore where Ben Jonson sat with Drummond of Hawthornden; and, after a visit to the Moberlys at Rugby her six weeks’ journeyings ended.

‘1874 has been a marked year in the calendar,’ is her entry at its close, ‘some days with blacker letters than ever before in my life, and some with red that will be slow to fade, so manifold are the compensations which God giveth. September 10 was one of these — the day of the *Lobgesang* (commemorated elsewhere) in Gloucester Cathedral. It goes hand in hand with June 10, when the

splendour of the mountains spoke peace and power and beauty. What is it in us that neither time nor age nor circumstances can silence? What is this subtle, nameless sympathy with other souls but the assertion of the immortal and undying life within us? . . . The deeper the pathos and suffering of life, the deeper its joys. Shall we not hold to the faith that a golden thread runs through our lives, however dark the woof may be? I have my nine children all well; no vacant place by the fireside as yet. Is not that the key-note of a *Lobgesang*?

In 1875 Longfellow wrote :

‘MY DEAR MRS. MARSHALL,

‘I hasten to thank you for your kind letter and the beautiful photographs of mother and daughters. I am delighted with them. This one of yourself is much better than the one you sent me before. Many, many thanks. With these I shall begin a new album. I am sorry that I cannot send you my three girls in return, but only one of them. The others are away and I know not where to find their photographs. Dear Mrs. Burrowes! How pleasant her visit was to us all, and how delighted we were with her! I pray you to put her mind at rest. She said nothing that gave anyone a moment’s pain. For the dedication

of "Rachel" I thank you cordially in advance. It is to me a great gratification to be so remembered. I am very anxious to see how you have treated the Quaker heroine—tenderly I am sure, and sympathetically. I am sorry to say that the book-trade is very dull in this part of the world, but I shall have the pleasure of sending you a new volume of poems before Christmas.

‘Always with kindest remembrances,

‘Yours most faithfully,

‘HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.’

The book dedicated to ‘Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, in grateful remembrance of all I owe to him as Poet and Friend,’ was not called ‘Rachel,’ but ‘Life’s Aftermath,’ a title suggested by his lines :

‘When the summer fields are mown,
When the birds are fledged and flown,
And the dry leaves strew the path,
With the falling of the snow,
With the cawing of the crow—
Once again the fields we mow,
And gather in the aftermath.’

Mrs. Burrowes, mentioned in the letter, was one of those many sweet and charming girls whose admiration and love my mother possessed the power of attracting in no common degree. She was the flower of a large family of brothers and sisters in Exeter,

and when she married my mother gave her an introduction to the poet, whom she visited at Cambridge, Mass., on her honeymoon. She had a literary gift which promised much for the future, but died at five-and-twenty, before she had achieved more than one very pretty and clever story for children. How much the news of her early death affected Longfellow the following will testify :

‘ DEAR MRS. MARSHALL,

‘ I have this moment received your letter, and break off in the middle of a poem to answer it, so keenly does it touch me. The news you send is so very, very sad. Beautiful Rose Burrowes! So fair, so young, so lovely! Most sincerely do I mourn with you for the loss of such a friend. But I cannot speak of it. Words are poor comforters, silence is best.

‘ Pardon me if I have not written often of late. Neuralgia still torments me. Though hardly credible, it is nevertheless true, that for the last three years I have not been a single moment without pain.

‘ How strangely on one side of the Atlantic these Doctors of Divinity behave themselves! They seem to rely on some plenary indulgence, and sail like privateers under celestial letters of marque. At

least your Doctor does, for his proceedings are certainly very high-handed and inexcusable.

‘ I have all your novels ranged together in a book-case in my bedroom, so that I can see them every day, and now and then read a page or two in them and refresh my memory with something pleasant coming from you. I hope soon to add to them your volume of poems. These I can read oftener, and at shorter intervals. That is the advantage that verse has over prose, or one of the advantages.

‘ So then you know my old friend Professor Nichol of Glasgow. He also is one of my neglected correspondents, and a pang seizes me when I think of it. Well, there are more than a hundred unanswered letters on my table at this moment. It is pitiful, but cannot be helped.

‘ Her Majesty’s faithful subjects in the Dominion of Canada are in a state of frenzied loyalty just now, as you will see by the enclosed. And now I will resume my poem, which I am sure will not suffer by this brief pause.

‘ Always faithfully yours,

‘ H. W. LONGFELLOW.’

The allusion to a Doctor of Divinity refers to an incident connected with the lectures for higher edu-

cation for women which, in the face of a considerable amount of provincial prejudice and Philistinism, my mother succeeded not only in starting but in keeping going for several years. When she left Gloucester, it is true, the enterprise collapsed, but in recognition of her services in stirring up the intellectual dead bones of their city the ladies of the committee presented her with an *édition de luxe* of the works of Wordsworth and Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, with a gratifying inscription.

In these days of University Extension lectures and lectures of all sorts it is difficult to realize the opposition the scheme encountered in influential quarters, though it is only fair to say my mother received at the same time much encouragement and support. Among the lecturers were Mr. Humphry Ward, then Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford; Mr. Robert Laing, of Corpus Christi; Mr. Franck Bright, Mr. W. T. Arnold, grandson of Dr. Arnold, till recently sub-editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, and the brilliant Professor John Nichol, of Glasgow University. Weekly the lecturers were entertained at my mother's house, and one and all, I think, were drawn to their hostess and struck by what Mr. W. T. Arnold so aptly expresses as her 'fragile force' of character.

With him especially, and with Professor Nichol, sprang up a delightful friendship of the kind she had always time to cultivate, and which remained true and lasting. Professor Nichol was a masterly raconteur, and his stock of good stories inexhaustible. We children rejoiced when he came to give a second course of lectures, not because of the lectures themselves, but because he was our special favourite, with his leonine head and great flashing gray eyes, which he rolled at us so good-humouredly. We sat enchanted at the luncheon-table, as he arranged, according to a funny habit of his, the salt-cellars, table-spoons and wine-glasses in a circle round his plate, and discharged one anecdote after another over the barricade in a Scotch accent, with absolute gravity, till he reached the point of his story, when his frame shook with guffaws so infectious that even the youngest of us laughed till we cried without quite understanding the joke.

One night, between eleven and twelve, when no lectures were going on, Professor Nichol arrived at the house unexpectedly. My mother was just retiring to bed, but she welcomed him with a warmth which betrayed not the slightest surprise at his appearing at so late an hour. He had been suffering from brain-fag and overwork, and it was clear he was

temporarily haunted by a delusion. My mother soothed him by reading and talking to him till the morning. He never forgot her gentleness and tact on that occasion, and it sealed their friendship.

It is easy to conceive the indignation of a man with such wide views and of so fiery a spirit as Professor Nichol at a letter which appeared in the local press from the ex-Dean of Truro, who lived (since he resigned his post, from ill health) in the neighbourhood of Gloucester, objecting to his lectures on the ground that one of the books recommended on the prospectus was 'Gulliver's Travels.' The standpoint from which the letter was written was rather narrow-minded, and seemed like a veiled attack on my mother's efforts generally on behalf of the cause of higher education. Professor Nichol replied to it from Aix-la-Chapelle.

'DEAN SWIFT AND EX-DEAN T——.

'To the Editor of the "Gloucestershire Chronicle."

'SIR,

'I have been favoured with your paper of September 12, containing a letter from a clergyman, so discourteous, that I only reply to inform him that I am wholly responsible for the list of books in connection with my lectures. I have no apology to

offer for including in that list one of the master-pieces of English satire, a copy of which is to be found in almost every nursery throughout the country.

‘Yours, etc.,

‘J. NICHOL.’

Another time the services of Professor Sylvanus Thompson were engaged by the committee to give a series of lectures on Modern Science, when to my mother’s amazement and discomfiture the use of the room where all the lectures had hitherto been held was at the last minute curtly refused, the reason given being that a local man had intended lecturing on the same subject. My mother was accused of desiring to take the bread out of a fellow-citizen’s mouth to put it into an outsider’s.

In spite of these drawbacks, she could review the results of her labours in this field with satisfaction. Not only spinsters of the cathedral close, whose interests in life had before been centred almost exclusively on tea-parties and gossip, but the hunting and dancing maidens of the county, rubbed up their history and literature, and found writing papers for Oxford professors an absorbing occupation. The lectures brought my mother numerous new correspondents and acquaintances; meanwhile her attachment to Gloucester and its grand old cathedral was

growing stronger and stronger, and she knew the history of almost every stone of the building by heart. She delighted to take her friends over it, pointing out the features she most loved—the flying arch in the north transept, the fine east window, with its glory of ancient glass, casting a thousand gem-like colours on the pale stone-work of the reredos, and the noble bog-wood effigy of Robert, Duke of Normandy. She attended seven o'clock matins regularly throughout the spring and summer months, and took walks even earlier in the beautiful gardens surrounding the cathedral.

On one of these early summer mornings her uplifted eyes were arrested by the outline of a rugged crucifix carved on the exterior of the chancel. Few seemed to have known of its existence before, and she commemorated her discovery in verse :

‘ Creep on, faint dawn, and wrap the minster tower
 In thy pale light ;
 Creep on, and soon the eastern heaven is flushed
 With rosy radiance bright.

* * * * *

‘ Then when the chancel roof is shining clear
 In the first golden rays,
 See how the rough-hewn image of the Christ
 Looks down with pitying gaze.



GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL.

- ' Long has that crucifix defied the power
Of stormy wind and rain,
Silently watching from its lofty place
O'er change and grief and pain.
- ' The strife of leaguered troops, the din of war,
Raged in the city street,
While swift on messages of life and death
Sped many hurrying feet.
- ' Beacon fires blazed aloft, and reddened all
The night with fiercest glare,
And as in mute reproach the King of Peace
Hung lifted in mid-air.
- ' And I have seen it in the morning glow,
Thus calm and high,
While all my spirit's depths with sudden flow
Stirred in strange sympathy.'

And on the floor of the old gray cloisters was engraved the single name 'Constantia.' Other feet might pass over it heedlessly, but hers lingered while she imagined a story of the woman who had borne that name lying beneath the uneven stones :

- ' She was laid to rest in the cloisters dim
A hundred years ago and more,
Where the silent shadows come and go,
And the sunshine lies upon the floor.
Constantia in her quiet bed,
Loved, wept for in her summer prime—
How many eyes her name have read
Since thro' a mist of blinding tears
His saw it there for the first time.

‘Constantia, with her sunlit name
 Carved deep beneath my wonted tread,
 Sleeping so quietly all the while
 As I pass slowly overheard ;
 And the organ sends a distant roll,
 And the slow choir voices rise and swell,
 And the great bell, with its measured toll,
 Strikes out the old familiar knell.

‘I am tired, Constantia, let me lie
 Where you are lying so calm and still,
 Have lain so long and silently,
 Waiting the hour of God’s sweet will.

* * * * *

‘How is it, Constantia, I think of you
 On this April morning of sun and shower,
 Why do I picture your eyes of blue,
 And your gold-bright hair and your winning power?’

Adjoining the cathedral was the Deanery, a very beautiful old house, with oak-wainscoted rooms, and the traditions of eight hundred years hanging about them, where my mother was a constant and ever welcome guest. Her acquaintance with Dean Law and his niece, Mrs. Robert Bathurst, who kept house for him till her husband went to live at Norwich, was an old one, having begun in Wells. At Gloucester it ripened into an affectionate intimacy. The Dean from some delicacy of health never attended the services at the cathedral, though residing nearly under its roof; but he drove out every afternoon in a hired fly. His luncheon and

dinner parties, at which my father and mother were always present, were *recherché* and delightful. When, however, Gladstone happened to halt at Gloucester one day to see the cathedral, with his friend Mrs. Thistlethwaite, the Dean, instead of offering him hospitality, ordered his fly two hours earlier than usual, and, taking sandwiches with him, drove about outside the city till the illustrious visitor had departed. Had it been Disraeli, he told my mother afterwards, he would have entertained him royally, and asked her to meet him at luncheon. She was so great a favourite of his that he actually forgave her when she said she would rather have met Gladstone than Disraeli. Of the Dean's gifts to my mother, the most appreciated by her children was a handsome mastiff pup of a celebrated stock bred in the Deanery yard. Dogs almost rivalled babies in her affections, and this was by no means the first of a succession of canine pets, a history of whose characteristics and adventures, and sometimes tragic deaths, would fill a volume.

When her friends the Robert Bathursts went to Norwich from Gloucester, she revisited the scenes of her childhood and early youth for the first time since she had bid them farewell as a girl; but in more recent years she paid several visits to her native

county. In her fragmentary diary for the year 1876 she records: 'Fourteen happy, peaceful days, passing like a restful dream. April 5, Norwich; April 17, Northrepps; April 24, Windsor; April 25, Richmond. The loveliest of spring afternoons.' In May of the same year she stayed at Oxford with the Master of University College, and was charmed with her introduction to colleges, quads, and gardens, and the brilliant crowd of boats and barges on the Isis, all of which became afterwards more familiar sights when she had a son and then a daughter at the 'Varsity.

In October, 1876, she wrote:

'One of the last ties to a happy past broken. My children's grandmother (Mary, eldest daughter of the Rev. Legh Richmond) has passed to her rest, having survived their most dear grandfather twenty-one years. . . . The Master came and called for her in haste, and, like the Mary of old, she rose to meet Him. Her last days were brightened by love, and her last walk was to church to receive the Holy Sacrament with her who is now left to live her daily life alone. *Her* comfort lies in having ministered to her mother in that short half-hour when all earthly help was vain. She must have blessed memories, and she has a brave heart within a frail and tender

body. Bound up in the bundle of life with H—— from early youth, I have loved her through many a conflict and many a trial. From the day when, a little girl of nine years old, she put her hand lovingly into mine to that sad day, in the chill of the October morning, when I went out with her as her mother was carried for ever from the earthly home, our love has had no break, and no rough hand will ever part us. There are many who love her, and many to whom her life is precious, but scarcely one, no *not* one, who could so ill spare as I her love and ever-ready sympathy.'

The love and sympathy of the sister-in-law referred to here were hers to the end. How warmly she reciprocated my mother's affection her recollections, already quoted, abundantly show. An invalid for years, her life often hanging on a thread, she was and still is the sharer of the joys and sorrows of those dear to her, the stimulator and encourager of her nephews and nieces in all their undertakings. I see her now, lying on a couch surrounded by flowers and books, never absorbed in her own sufferings, but full of unflagging interest in the world outside her sick-room, her striking face sometimes brightening, sometimes saddening, as she scanned the little

confidential notes my mother scribbled her nearly every day when we lived near her in Clifton.

This year is also marked by the birth of one of those enthusiasms so characteristic of my mother's impressionable and responsive nature. She speaks of it thus:

'*December 27, 1876.*—The old year is dying out fast, a troubled year in many ways; but like a dark, gloomy day that brightens towards evening, so a glow from a setting sun has come to warm and cheer its close. Kingsley's *Life* has struck a responsive chord. A beautiful, vivid picture of a true, loyal-hearted, chivalrous man is set before a world in which we are sometimes prone to think all chivalry is dead. It is not so, and the life of Charles Kingsley proves the contrary. Oh happy wife to be *his!*—his, as she says, in time and in eternity.

'*January 19, 1877.*—A letter from Mrs. Kingsley in answer to one written by me to thank her for her beautiful picture of her noble-hearted husband's pure and chivalrous life.'

The letter from Mrs. Kingsley, which began a correspondence destined to prove a source of much spiritual comfort and help, was the following:

‘BYFLEET,
‘WEYBRIDGE.

‘DEAR MADAM,

‘Your letter to-day was a great pleasure to me, for though many letters pour in upon me almost daily, yet there was something about yours which touched me deeply, and made me long to know you. If you ever come into this neighbourhood, and I am still alive, will you come and see me? Such letters as yours seem to repay the agony of writing that dear book. I always felt it would be a voice from the grave, which would speak more sweetly and yet more loudly than any of his published works, if only I did not spoil it by my poor feeble thread. His most intimate friends write to me to say that they thought they knew him, but find they did not half or a hundredth part. Even to many of my near family it is a revelation, for he was not a man to speak of his inner life to the outside world, which made it a terrible question to me whether I should dare to draw the veil aside. . . .

‘I never expected to do more than arrange the materials, from constant attacks of heart disease, or to survive the strain when it was over; but God saw that more waiting and discipline were needed, and in the waiting-time it is sweet to get such a letter as

yours, and to know you use those blessed words which seemed like inspiration as he said them in the little church at Eversley. Yes, he is at rest, or at fresh work which will not weary or fret his great spirit; and I am thankful, and could never wish him back. I wish you had seen him. Will you tell me if you are a mother, a wife, or a maiden, and if you would care for his autograph?

‘Believe me, most truly and gratefully yours,

‘FANNY KINGSLEY.’

Interest in her unknown correspondent deepened on learning that she was not a maiden, but a wife, and mother of nine children. The opportunity of a meeting was not long in coming, for that spring my mother, on a round of visits that were always such a refreshment and enjoyment to her, stayed at Foxholes, Weybridge, with Mrs. M—— S—— and spent an afternoon with Mrs. Kingsley. ‘I talked with her,’ she says in her diary, ‘of him who, being dead, yet speaketh, and more strongly than ever felt the reality of his beautiful and chivalrous life.’ Letters after that, containing sweet and beautifully expressed though practical counsel on the sacred vocation of motherhood, came very frequently from Mrs. Kingsley. Before my mother had returned home from that holiday she wrote:

‘ . . . The highest unselfishness for a mother and wife is to cherish the life which is so important, to be in the highest sense *not her own*, to feel that she does not belong to herself from the moment the baby first stirs within her—not to dare to wear herself out unnecessarily, that is a strong temptation, especially to the noblest natures, but one that must be resisted as if one was trifling with someone else’s property. And so I think it wise and unselfish and noble of you to stay hungering away from your darlings if they are in safe hands, that you may go back to them fresher and stronger. And the battle will be over some day when the dawn of true life comes. . . . God bless you, dear Mrs. Marshall. I shall often think of you with deep sympathy and interest, and it will be a true pleasure when you have time to write me a line.

‘ Your letters always touch me so deeply, and the thought of you in the very thick of the battle, which I know so well from past experience, makes me almost ashamed of the season of rest and calm waiting that God is giving me. But you are still young compared with me, and I trust the season of rest is still to be yours before the great rest. . . . I like to think of you at the seaside with the children. Those used to be such happy intervals in one’s life—the regular home routine a little stopped, and the intense

joy of the children over everything, and the mere sensation of the sea-breeze and great horizon giving one a feeling of freedom which nothing but the sea or a great plain does. . . .

‘I think so much of you and your boys. Oh, dear friend, do not hurry them, and do not hurry God. It is so difficult to wait the time with one’s boys. I am not surprised at their religious childish feelings passing away. They will come back—but it may take the long experience of life to do it. I feel so strongly we must not press them about religion. . . . I should be more anxious to press physical exercise on them than even church-going. Let the religion wait. Think of bodily health and chivalry to women first. God meant them here to be *men*, not saints. The question we have to ask ourselves is: How can I help my boy to be a *man*—a man of *honour*, which will prepare him to be a man of God?’

To my mother at this troubled time of her life all the wonderful wisdom and loving advice thus lavished on her by one for whom she entertained such a reverent regard and love were of unspeakable value and consolation. Those precious letters from her who was so pre-eminently a splendid example of the Christian wife and mother, sustaining her in

her struggle, and helping her to 'fight better,' were often written from a bed of pain and sickness, in faint pencil, after the writer had returned from the gates of death. When she passed through the gates altogether, her daughter, Mrs. Harrison, who has inherited the Kingsley imaginative genius, and is known to fame as the able novelist Lucas Malet, continued to correspond with my mother, and her letters, full of brilliancy and trenchant comments on men and books, were always looked forward to with intense pleasure.

On St. Crispin's Day, October 25, 1877, my mother wrote in her diary :

'The Dean of Westminster, Stanley, preached in our cathedral from the words, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"' A very striking sermon on individual influence, presenting a beautiful and clear picture of Henry V.'s character, the day being the anniversary of the Battle of Agincourt. I thought much of Charles Kingsley; to him as to Henry the brave it was impossible to perform a mean and base act, and at the call of duty he, too, said, "*It must be done*"—Kingsley the true and loyal knight of our *own day*. At a time when so many commonplaces are de-

livered from the high places of the Church it was a refreshment to listen to this finely thought-out discourse, and to hear the bell-like voice of Stanley quote Shakespeare's celebrated speech.'

And on the following Christmas Day another sermon impressed her :

'Stainer's service in the cathedral and choral communion. A very beautiful day. The east window illuminated by floods of bright sunshine. The Bishop's sermon a remarkable one. He dwelt on the unfolding of the holy life of the Lord from helpless infancy, so gentle, silent, and perfect. So He does all things with beautiful progression, not with sudden shocks of earthquake. *His voice is a still small voice.*

'December 31.—Another year gone, with all its pains and griefs, its joys and pleasures. So swift, so sure, is the flight of time. No, not time! Time stays; it is *we* go. A year full of lessons hard to learn, but Divine love knows where and how we fail, and is infinitely patient and pitiful. So let us push on bravely, and say with Rabbi Ben Ezra, "The best is yet to come." . . .

'*Then* and *now* are parts of God's great whole. Are not some of us taught to take wider and grander

views of life and death and immortality by being made to see the failure of the small things of the earth earthy? When we reach a mountain-top and look back over the way we have climbed with weary feet, we cease to think of the thorns that have torn us, and the rough places. We do not remember the painful details; they are lost in the great consummation.

‘So will it be when we are steeped through and through with the Divine love—lifted by it above the pains and the sorrows and the bitter disappointments of our pilgrimage . . . we shall think of them no more. They were all part of the “great whole.” . . . Yet the pain that is present sometimes seems greater than the joy that is future.’

Early in the next year, which was to end with the breaking of a dark cloud, she was plunged into tortures of anxiety by the dangerous and mysterious illness of her youngest little son, the boy who in babyhood had so often nearly died:

‘*February 26.*—My darling Douglas left me for Clifton, where his uncle (Dr. Marshall) will examine him.

‘*Sunday, March 3.*—The first intimation of my child’s serious condition came to me from H——.

But it is well with the child—my loving, my tender, my true.

‘*Clifton, Ash Wednesday.*—A time of darkness and sadness inexpressible. “The flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.”’

‘The thought of that dear child’s suffering and yours in watching it,’ wrote Mrs. Kingsley, ‘seems too dreadful to me. All other trials seem to pale and dwindle in size before that of a child’s suffering, and I can hardly fancy how mothers bear it. They could not but for God. It must be the worst martyrdom, except to see a child commit a crime. And then one’s helplessness to do anything for friends so afflicted and the precious child himself is so painful. Is there anything, however trifling, I could do to give him pleasure—any book of my husband’s I could send him? You will tell me if there is. The mystery of life is greater than the mystery of death, truly.’

‘Yours with tenderest sympathy,

‘F. K.’

She sent the boy ‘The Greek Heroes,’ with a charming letter, which he treasures, now that he is a man, perhaps more dearly than he did in childhood. The agonizing attacks of ear-ache from which

he suffered became rarer, and on April 5 his mother sent up pæans of thanksgiving.

‘The words of the psalm for the fifth evening never seemed before so full of praise. “The Lord sitteth upon the water-floods. The Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace.”’

‘*April 6.*—Good news still of my darling. Fairest of spring days.

‘*May 20.*—My darling child Douglas came home after three months’ absence apparently well. “Out of darkness and the shadow of death.” Shall I not praise Him for His goodness ?

‘*Ascension Day.*—An expedition by steamboat to Sharpness Point with three of the children—Beatrice, Cyril, and Douglas. We gathered armfuls of flowers. I was rejoiced to have my boy, so nearly taken from me, with me there again.’

Devoted as my mother was to all her boys, there existed a specially lovely and sacred relationship between her and this her youngest son, her Benjamin as she sometimes called him. It may have been because he had hovered so often between life and death, and had borne pain with a fortitude and resignation unusual in so small and weak a being,

that he had become, if possible, dearer than the rest. He outgrew his childish delicacy, but never his passionate, clinging, childish love for the mother who had watched him in his sufferings with such anguished solicitude. The sight of this mother and son together, when the latter had entered manhood, their joy in each other's society, the perfect sympathy and *bonne camaraderie* existing between them, has, I believe, often struck casual observers as something quite out of the ordinary, a picture of maternal and filial friendship that lives in the memory.

In briefest words, without any reflection on all it signified to her, my mother mentions in her diary the great disaster :

' *December 9, 1878.*—A dark day. The doors of the bank were closed. Mourning and ruin. An unforgettable day.

' *December 12.*—Wesley's glorious anthem—"The Wilderness and the Solitary Place"—heard in the dim shadowy dusk of evensong.

' *December 19.*—Princess Alice of Hesse Darmstadt died on the 17th. Anniversary of the death of Albert the Good. A wave of sorrow and depression is sweeping over the country. Many heads are

brought low, but we know that He will make the storm to cease in His own good time. He will give His people the blessing of peace.'

'*December 31.*—The last night of this old sad year. A year full of tears. Wailing goes up to God from desolate hearths and breaking hearts. A dark cloud hangs over all, but with the silver lining of love. So let us be thankful still, for His mercy endureth for ever.'

Thus my mother with unflinching faith and courage faced a future from which the closing of those bank doors had for the present shut out the light. It meant that, with young children (with one or two exceptions all in the throes of being educated), she was now to bear the whole heat and burden of the day. My father had served the West of England Bank from his boyhood. Its failure not only swept away his position and income, and the roof over the head of himself and his family, but left him, as one of the shareholders in the late bank, encumbered with debt. To clear him from this was now the object of my mother's unwearying literary endeavours. Most gallantly, most nobly, did she fulfil her purpose, parting from the household goods endeared and sanctified by the associations of nearly

twenty-five years of married life, and making her home first in lodgings at Weston-super-Mare, then in furnished houses at Clifton till she had accomplished it. How rich she was in friends was proved by the number who were eager to help her at this emergency. To Mrs. Owen, whose husband was a master at Cheltenham College, she wrote in answer to an offer to take one of the boys into their house and defray the cost of his education at Cheltenham :

‘ December 15, 1878.

‘ Your letter made me cry as I read it, so that Graham said, “ What *is* it now ? ” Indeed—indeed, my dear friend, I could not thank you if I tried. Of all help this is the greatest. For all last week I was ever recurring to *this*: Hughie and Cyril’s school—*what* shall I do about it? On Saturday came an offer from one of the Gurney family to keep Hughie at King William’s College (Isle of Man) for a year, till we could turn round. This was a gleam of light, but little did I dream of what to-day would bring, and the words in which you make the proposal. People say words don’t go for much, but somehow yours, so loving and true, speak volumes. . . . They come straight from a loyal, tender heart, and fall on my sad and heavy one like dew. Please

let your husband know all I feel. My poor husband is in Bristol ; he will be so thankful about this.

‘ Cyril is a dear good child, never giving trouble— not made of Hughie’s stuff exactly, and more easily led, but doing his little best honestly. He wants to be a doctor. He is clever at drawing, and has done well at the School of Art. Oh, it does seem too good almost to be true. God bless you, as He will. You say I would do it for you, but, alas ! I feel as if I should never do anything for anyone again.

‘ Yours most gratefully and lovingly,

‘ E. M.’

One of the girls, too, was sent to school in Germany through the kindness of the daughter of a friend of my grandfather’s in Norwich, a lady of great wealth whom my mother did not even know personally. So, as far as education went, greater advantages offered themselves than would have been the case had there been no bank disaster. Great as the strain of that year of misfortune, uncertainty and supreme effort must have been, her brave, buoyant spirit rose on the crest of the wave of trouble instead of being swamped by it. For weeks together she wrote at a white heat, and then laid down her pen for a breathing space in the spring as usual. We

see her at Bournemouth, lamenting the destruction of the pine-woods she remembered there in youth; in the Norwich Close, once more with her dear Mrs. Robert Bathurst; and at Northrepps, gathering snow-drops in the copses round her birthplace.

‘In Norwich Cathedral,’ she says in her diary, in which her jottings are more frequent this year than in any other, ‘was sung to-day Mendelssohn’s beautiful anthem, “If with all your hearts ye truly seek Me.” Oh that I knew where I might find Him! He is not far from any one of us. For He is Love, and His presence is ever with us, though in our blindness we see Him not. One day the veil will fall, and we shall see.’

On a cold and snowy Easter she was at home again, and says:

‘The Hallelujah Chorus in the nave at evensong, very fine. My last Easter in this grand old church. Shall I ever forget the choir, with its dim mysterious light, the reredos standing out in white high relief, the roof looking so far, far away, undefined and shadowy?’

‘*May 18.*—Summer seems further off than ever. I never recollect so cheerless and bleak a Maytime. Douglas again tormented by pain in his ear. Same

symptoms, but less severe than before. Our dear mastiff, Nellie, a beautiful devoted creature, died in great agony from poisoning. We all loved her, and mourned greatly for her. A sad day.

'June 13.—My beloved boy still in pain. Hugh made inspector of the —, and gone to Manchester, where we may follow him. This seems like a prospect for the future.'

But it was not, for my father threw up the appointment, not being satisfied that the business was conducted on sound principles. This step was afterwards more than justified by events, and so on July 8 she speaks again of the future being 'hazy and indefinite. The weather cold and dreary, and the very name of summer irony. Douglas well again, and free from all pain. *Gloria tibi Domine*. Graham left me for Norwich, my early home, where he has gone into the bank of his ancestors.'

Mrs. Kingsley about this time wrote :

'You have been continually on my mind and on my heart, and I have been longing to hear of you, and yet did not like asking questions. Also I have had a bad winter from the intense cold. I do grieve with you over these heavy sorrows which you meet so bravely, but am glad to hear of Graham in

Gurney's Bank. And oh, the whooping-cough at such a moment ! what an aggravation ! I do not wonder you are tired. It is so difficult not to long to go away out of sheer tiredness ; and yet that is cowardly, but the battle is hard to the last, and it has its own peculiar hardness when the children are still young, like yours. My baby, the " Water Baby " boy, was twenty-one on Saturday. I felt so thankful he had arrived at that, and that there were none younger ; but you are in the very thick of the fight just now. God give you fresh courage day by day. It is daily bread we pray for, but how difficult not to plunge into the future, over which God hangs so thick a veil. I mean the future of this state as well as the great future.'

On December 31st, 1879, she takes devotional leave of the dying year in her diary, as was her habit :

'Seven years ago, and Gloucester was a new home ; now it is old, and I am parting from it in a few short weeks for ever. A year of doubt and uncertainties, of conflict and sorrow, has closed, and I cannot see a step of the way before me. A dark hedge of cloud seems to hem me in, but in the cloud I can yet discern the bow of Hope with its pure,

bright rainbow colours of Faith, Charity, and Patience ; for He will make the storm to cease, and I shall be glad because I have rest when He bringeth me to the haven where I would be. All my nine well, and less anxious thoughts as to their earthly life than for many years. So let me sing *Te Deum Laudamus* as the cathedral clock strikes twelve and the chimes ring in the New Year.'

'February 8, 1880.—My last Sunday in Gloucester, a day of fitful sunshine. As I went into the cathedral at three o'clock there was a perfect burst of radiance. The pillars of the south aisle and of the transept were lighted with marvellous colours, jasper and amethyst, ruby and emerald, as if the gates of the city were reflected there ; and then my beloved anthem, that never fails to fill the soul with visions of green glades and cool waters, "Sorrow and sighing shall flee away." So with that promise echoing in my heart I shall say farewell to the church which has been as the very haven of my spirit for seven years. None but those who know it as I know it can tell what it becomes to the eye which feasts on its beauty, and to the soul which sees in it the foreshadowing of the Temple not made with hands, to which may God in His mercy bring me and my dear ones, to go out no more for ever.

'*February 10.*—My last morning prayer beneath the cathedral's majestic roof. My last walk in the fair gardens, which to me are filled with sacred memories. I picked one small daisy as a last memento.

'*February 13.*—My Lucy's birthday, and we have come to Weston to abide till a way is made clear. How long or how short that abiding may be who shall say?'

She was much missed by many in Gloucester and its neighbourhood. Her old friend Dean Law expressed his regret at her departure thus :

'Your letter gave me a sad welcome on my return home. How little did I think that I was not to see you again as my resident neighbour. Your cheerful and intelligent converse was always as a sunbeam to the Deanery. . . . I am pleased to hear that the Bishop showed so much feeling when he called to say farewell. I glean that he is about to introduce Mr. Marshall to the influential Mr. H——. I was in hopes that Mrs. Johnson, through Lambeth, would obtain some work for your husband. . . . Wherever you are placed, forget not

'Your most sincere and affectionate friend,

'H. LAW.'

In her diaries my mother chronicles her comings and goings, her hopes and fears, the illnesses of her children, the deaths of friends and family pets, the changes in the weather (to which her temperament was remarkably sensitive); but not till a much later date than this does she make any mention of her books. Soon after the removal to Weston lodgings she completed her first historical romance for Mr. Seeley, 'Memories of Troublous Times,' which she had been encouraged to undertake by the success of a tale founded on incidents in the life of the reformer William Tyndale, written serially for the *Fireside*. The idea of writing a story of the siege of Gloucester had come to her one spring afternoon, when she went primrosing with her children in the moss-floored woods round charming old Matson House, a few miles out of the town, the residence of the six unmarried daughters of Lord Dynevor; dear, picturesque old ladies, who loved to show the 'King's Room,' where the unhappy Stuart monarch had slept during the siege, and the attic above, on the oak walls of which the boys Charles and James, restive at being kept indoors, had carved their names and grotesque faces to kill time.

The story was passing through the press when she received an invitation to be the guest of Mrs. M. S——

in the Riviera. Since her wedding tour she had not crossed the Channel, and the prospect of so thorough and refreshing a holiday was very tempting. When she had got over qualms at leaving her children, especially her delicate boy, for so long in lodgings, she started in almost childlike glee and gay spirits, for her ability to detach herself from domestic cares and worries was one of the most wonderful things about her. Whatever the burden on her, she always took a bright face into the world, never that of the harassed and careworn mother; and those who wished to give her pleasure were rewarded by the zest with which she could enjoy herself, her amazing energy, and vivacity. She was an excellent traveller, not knowing what it was to be sea-sick, and soothed and rested by a long railway journey rather than tired and knocked up.

She wrote from the Hôtel Belle Vue, Cannes, on April 6, 1880:

‘DEAREST L——,

‘As yet I have had no letters, but hope I may have one to acknowledge before closing this. The weather is simply superb; a pure, fresh breeze and such skies and sunshine as we scarcely know on our best summer days in England. . . . To stay in this perfect hotel is in itself a delight. My bedroom

is so pretty and beautifully furnished. I catch a glimpse of the sea, and a point of the Estrelles ; but I really look on the garden with its palms and aloes. Mrs. M. S—— has a lovely sitting-room with two big windows opening on to a little balcony. Her bedroom, the governess's, and Mabel's open from it, and they are all shut off by a glass door. I am on the floor above. All is quiet as possible. I go out every morning at eight. This morning I walked down to the sea. Oh ! the blue beauty of the Mediterranean, skirted by the magnificent range of Estrelles mountains. It is indescribable. I come back at about nine and go into the *salle* for breakfast. I sit alone at a little table, for Mrs. S—— does not appear till ten. There are some hundred and fifty people in the hotel. Everything is done luxuriously. The girls here are numerous, and their days are spent in picnics, teas, and tennis. I sit next at *table d'hôte* to a nice little Miss D——, a niece of old Lady Middleton's. We talk about the Brodricks (Wells friends). St. John Brodrick is standing for Mid Surrey. Yesterday we went a delightful drive to Cap d'Antibes. The long range of mountains with snow-peaks beyond filled me with ecstasy. We lunched at the little inn, and then, coming back, drove through the town. It is fortified and shut in

by a drawbridge built in 1690. Most old-world and strange it was, the little *place* and *hôtel de ville*, and the street so narrow that it would be possible to reach across from one house to the other. The Cap d'Antibes is a low headland of rock against which the sapphire sea washes.

'I went down to the point and found a nice old woman in the lonely cottage surrounded by huge *trees* of double geranium and great masses of stocks, the air heavy with their scent. It was tremendously hot work toiling back over the rocks to Mrs. S——, and my face must have been as red as the geraniums. About two miles on the homeward road our coachman, Rudolf, stopped at a house and told us to walk on to the terrace to see the view. And it *was* a view. Would I could show it to you. The mountains purple with the floating shadows of the massive white clouds, Nice lying below, and beyond a great snow-peak in Savoy, and many mountains of a lower range, also snow-capped. I thought of you when the prettiest and most charming boy, who said his name was Paul, with dark liquid eyes and such pencilled brows, came to hold a big black dog Mrs. S—— was afraid to pass. He was, we think, the gardener's son. He showed us his master's carriage, and gathered

for us heaps of white iris, marguerites, and Judas-tree branches. There was a house in the garden with several families of tame rabbits, which he told us his master fed every day. The said master was Captain of the troops at Antibes, and had another house at Toulon. We wondered what he would say if he met us with our hands full of his lovely flowers. Mrs. S—— talks of going to Mentone for a fortnight and showing me S. Remo and Monaco. To-day we are going to drive to Vallerie, where all the lovely china is made. Tell the chicks I am expecting a post-card, as they promised. This must be a very expensive hotel, and it is so strange to me to have no anxiety about money, even to forget it for a time. I shall like to see the coast, but I would as soon stay in this lovely place the whole time. Mrs. S—— may change her mind, but she talks of going to Biarritz before she comes home. That will be quite a new scene.'

'I take walks here with Mabel S——,' she wrote to a daughter at school in Germany, 'and her German governess, whose home is in Hanover. I try to speak German to her, but can't, and cannot understand it either. We have had one week of most lovely weather—calm, golden sunshine; now

for forty-eight hours a storm of wind has raged fiercely, and to-day it is raining. I feel so much better and fresher in mind. But, alas! your father has heard of no work, and it is so hard for him. We go to Mentone to-morrow. I shall find fresh beauty there, I don't doubt. But the views here are charming enough. From the terrace of the G—— Hotel on Sunday I could but think of Goethe's lines, *Auf allen Gipfeln*. The dear Estrelles lay in perfect peace round the exquisite sapphire sea, which they embrace lovingly. Between us and the sea sloped lovely groves of olives and pines, and just below the terrace were orange-trees laden with fruit, which shone like burnished gold in the sun's western glow. . . .'

To R. Seeley, Esq.

'HÔTEL BELLE VUE,
'SAN REMO,
'May 10.

'I shall be here till the 20th, and hope to see my book for the first time in Italy. I am greatly enjoying San Remo. I prowl about the old town through every narrow street, and into all the churches. Every girl I meet with a baby is like Raphael's dark-eyed Madonna. Then here the women walk with the stately tread of princesses, with loads on

their heads. The scenery, too, is lovely. I have just been a donkey-ride of three hours, and from the shrine of Madonna della Guardia have seen mountain upon mountain, and the Italian towns set on the crest of terraced hills. I went up to La Colla, one of those isolated towns, only reached by a mule-track, last week. Imagine finding there a lovely collection of old pictures, and a library of rare books—a Genoese Bible of 1490, a Dante edition of an early date, etc., all collected by a poor priest, Stefano Ramboldi, who lived on bread and water to achieve his purpose.’

During the two months she was abroad my mother made longer and more regular entries in her journal than was her usual custom. Every drive, walk, and sunset is described there with the freshness and enthusiasm of a girl. When one thinks of the hundreds of blasé Continental habitués to whom the Riviera is the Riviera and nothing more, there is something pathetic in the thought of all it was to my mother and her ravenous appreciation of the Sunny South. Her impressions lasted her as material for numerous stories, long and short, for the next eight years; for she did not go abroad again till 1888.

Soon after her return to Weston she had the

pleasant news to record of her youngest boy being elected to a foundation scholarship at Fettes College, Edinburgh, a joy counterbalanced by the failure of her husband to obtain an appointment at Exeter. The journal at this time is full of the boys :

‘ *July 25.*—Hughie came home from King William’s College with Fifth Form prize.

‘ *July 29.*—Cyril home from Cheltenham, looking so pretty. He ought to have been a girl.

‘ *July 30.*—My dear Graham’s birthday. It is like a dream when one awaketh to think of the July morning at Wells when I had my first-born son. So the years roll on.

‘ *Sunday, August 1.*—My dear Hughie with me at 8 o’clock Holy Communion. A very happy morning.

‘ *September 1, 2, 3.*—Unusually glorious weather. Cloudless skies and radiant sunshine. Memorable days after so much cloud and chilliness.

‘ *September 7.*—Went off in the early morning for Gloucester Festival cathedral service at 10.30. The east window all aglow, and I sat in my old place once more. “Elijah” at 1.30. Perfect from first note to last. “If with all your hearts” brought its old message.

‘ *September 8.*—“St. Paul” at 7.30. The lighted

nave very beautiful, and I was never more struck by the grandeur of the giant Norman pillars.

'September 9.—Beethoven's great "Missa Solennis." This is beyond all words. *Von Herzen—möge es zu Herzen gehen*, so said the master when he finished it. The cry of a thousand thousand souls goes up to God in the *Miserere*. The tender pathos, the gentle entreaty, of the violin solo in the *Benedictus* most lovely and moving. And when the last words fall with the blessing of the immortal strain, *Dona nobis pacem*, it is as if the white-winged mystic Dove was called down upon the soul. This magnificent work is surely unrivalled, and stands alone in its grandeur and beauty. . . . I was introduced to James Russell Lowell, the poet and American Ambassador—a great honour and pleasure. He was most pleasant, and we talked of Longfellow.'

To R. Seeley, Esq.

'WESTON-SUPER-MARE.

'DEAR MR. SEELEY,

'I suppose you are letting "Dorothy's Daughters" stand over till January. I should be glad if you would kindly order the book I mention to go to Fräulein Morgenstern, Göttingen, Hanover.

I met the American poet Lowell at Gloucester,

where I was invited for the musical festival, and had my tickets given me. I took him round the cathedral gardens, and showed him my crucifix. . . . We hear we have no chance of B. U. C. secretaryship, and times are very hard for me. Is there any news of American royalties?

‘Yours very truly,

‘EMMA MARSHALL.’

Fräulein Morgenstern was one of the German translators of her books, who constantly wrote her letters full of gratitude for the brightness and comfort she had brought into her life—a dreary life of poverty and suffering, for this poor translator was a helpless and incurable invalid, confined to an attic at the top of a tall old house in a back street at Göttingen, from which she had not been able to stir for ten years. For it was in such out-of-the-way corners as these all over the world that my mother’s gentle art of story-telling awoke echoes and a thrill of delight.

The following extracts from her journal will show how, even in the unsettled life of seaside lodgings, and with no society to speak of, her love of Nature gave her snatches of happiness when her mother’s heart was not too torn with anxiety :

'*October 11.*—A lovely autumn day. Went to Worle by train with Beatrice, Edith, and Christabel to get blackberries. A long walk home in the fading light of evening. Jupiter rising with extraordinary beauty and brilliance. The moon hanging in a daffodil sky, with the softest, grayish purple clouds hovering near.

'*October 13.*—My dear Cyril had a severe accident at football. The news reached me on Thursday. A day of darkness and fear to me.

'*October 15.*—Cheered by a better account.

'*October 18.*—Cyril better.

'*October 20.*—A letter from darling Cyril which filled me with thankfulness.

'*October 24.*—My dear little Christabel's birthday. A day of such perfect loveliness that it deserves to be recorded. More like Cannes at her sunniest than England. Radiantly beautiful from dawn till sunset.

'*October 25.*—Dull and gloomy most of to-day; but eventide light on the hills. It is an immense gain to me to see sky and country as now. I feel the sunsets alone are a compensation for many privations.'

To R. Seeley, Esq.

‘WESTON-SUPER-MARE,

‘October 20.

‘DEAR MR. SEELEY,

‘Baron Tauchnitz wishes to make a beginning with “Mrs. Mainwaring.” . . . I suppose the book is really yours and not mine . . . but I feel sure you will be glad that I should have a little extra dropping in in these hard times. . . . I have had a terrible anxiety about my boy at Cheltenham College, who won his colours at football and much honour and glory at the expense of a gashed head and serious injury. Why do not the mothers of England unite to protest against that savage game of brute force? I hope the child is going on well; but it is a critical case.’

Thus began relations with the Tauchnitzes, father and son, of whose friendly courtesy and liberality my mother could never speak too highly. From this time till her death her books appeared regularly in the Tauchnitz series of British authors. Though the recovery of the boy who had the football accident was supposed to be complete, my mother always fancied he was never quite the same bright, quick-witted little fellow again. No sooner was she re-

lieved from anxiety about him than one of her little girls fell ill, and had to undergo an operation. The young doctor who performed it was added to the now long roll of my mother's friendships.

'A charming note from Dr. R——,' she writes in her diary, when her child was convalescent. 'I hope he will prosper as he deserves, and find a deep fountain of the human sympathy of which he speaks.'

On the last night of 1880 :

'All things so changed, it is hard to realize the time and the season. No cathedral chimes, no dear old bells. The earthly home broken up, but the household chain still unbroken. All the nine with me. Two have been dangerously ill this year—dear Cyril and Edith ; for their safety let me praise God. Christmas and New Year will soon be but names to me in the eternal kingdom, where God counts not by days and seasons. Are not a thousand years in His sight but as a watch in the night? George Eliot passed away on December 22nd.'

In the early spring she was again visiting Gloucester and its neighbourhood, and receiving everywhere warmest welcomes.

'*March 14.*—Luncheon with the Dean. At the afternoon service voluntary played specially for me by Mr. Lloyd.

'*March 19.*—Most charming day at Prinknash Park, the seat of the old abbots of St. Peter's, Gloucester. Henry VIII. and Jane Seymour slept here when the abbot delivered up the keys to the King.

'*March 22.*—In my old place at eight o'clock, and walked round the gardens. In the afternoon went to Bowdon Hall to meet the Humphry Wards.'

On her return to Weston she wrote to her publisher :

'How glad I should be if I could take a stride forwards and hit some popular subject. I was staying in the house lately with the Wards. Mrs. Ward is a grandchild of Dr. Arnold. She writes in the *Saturday*, and showed me the proofs of a story for children, written for Macmillan, called "Milly and Olly." The little book I speak of was scarcely 300 square pages, and the fee the same as I have for my 5s. books.'

Weston days were now coming to an end, as my father had found some small employment in Bristol as secretary to an insurance company.

'*May 5.*—A long delightful walk with my two small boys, B——, and pretty Barry B——. We came on a green slope broken into little dells covered with loveliest primroses. We picked an immense number and came home by Worle. I was tired but refreshed, forgetting for the time being the pressure upon me. Cyril and Douglas gone back to Edinburgh and Cheltenham after happy Easter holidays. All the children have acted a great deal these holidays, and shown they have some histrionic powers.

'*May 17.*—My dear Graham came for his short holiday, and I had a delightful walk with him on bracing Bream Down, which was a mass of flowers, especially beautiful being the white rock cistus. Graham is very dear and good.

'*July 25.*—Last night at Weston - super - Mare. Another chapter to be opened to-morrow—another step on the journey. Very tired and sad, and all this change and uprooting tries me sorely ; but

“Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on ;
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.”

V

BRISTOL

1882—1887

THE HISTORICAL TALES

‘If all were good and fair we met,
This earth would be the Paradise
It never looked to mortal eyes
Since Adam left the garden yet.’

TENNYSON: *In Memoriam*,
1st edition (altered in later editions).

V

BRISTOL

1882—1887

THE HISTORICAL TALES

THE new chapter opened at Westbury Park, a district of Bristol, where she took a furnished house for a year; it was only new as regarded change of residence; in hard work and struggle, cares and anxieties as to the welfare of her children, it was but a continuation of the last chapter. Her correspondence at this time shows too clearly how great and unrelaxed the strain was.

To W. T. Arnold, Esq.

'9, WESTBURY PARK,
' BRISTOL.

' MY DEAR MR. ARNOLD,

' May I ask you kindly to insert this advertisement in the *Manchester Guardian*? . . . My "J" pen, though incessantly driven, will not put me at ease. The boys come on one by one. Cyril is

going up for his prelim., and leaves Cheltenham College next term. I shall have him on hand for four years. I need not say moré; only those who have tried know what the pull of boys' needs is. Hugh left King William's College last term. He was high in the Sixth, and would, I believe, have got a scholarship, but this appointment turned up, and I dare not refuse it. In a year he may be sent to some foreign station, and the salary will be a good one. But I look on him as my one scholar thrown away. . . . My heart is heavy and my hands full. My books sell steadily, and are in the Tauchnitz edition. I have, too, a regular German publisher for them at Stuttgart. But I am always pursued by a big wave, and I sometimes think it will catch me up. . . .

'This is a beautiful situation, pretty views and good air. I hope you and Mrs. Arnold are well; I should like to see you again. I have been this spring in my old Gloucester haunts. I was at Bowdon Hall twice. You will laugh when you hear I am still hon. secretary to Gloucester lectures. I organized a course on "Greek Poets" from the Venerable C. E. Moberly. They answered very well. I am willing to help where I am wanted. I find this a very barren land; but my husband

having the little insurance office in Bristol keeps me here. I thought of you and old times when I sat in the Gloucester lecture-room. You were often mentioned as one of our best lecturers. The daffodils were glorious across a stream at one place where I was staying. They were the true asphodel, so transparent in their outer leaves. Please send me the bill of advertisement, and I hope you won't think me a bore.

‘ Ever yours sincerely,

‘ EMMA MARSHALL.’

In her diary she refers to the same daffodils as ‘ a sheet of glory, like Wordsworth's vision ’; and to a drive from Gloucester to Painswick, to see the widow of Sydney Dobell, the poet, whom her friend Professor Nichol held in such high esteem : ‘ The Malvern Hills, standing out blue-black against a silver-gray sky.’

Several more letters passed between her and Mr. Arnold about the son mentioned just launched on a career uncongenial to him, and a scheme of his throwing it up and going to Oxford instead as an unattached student ; but this came to nothing.

‘ MY DEAR MR. ARNOLD,

‘ While I have been anxiously considering your kind offer, the whole aspect of things is changed. On Friday Hughie telegraphed to me that

he had been appointed unexpectedly to Singapore, with £175 a year for the first year. To-day he writes, though it is not the profession for which he is cut out, he should not think it honourable to accept your offer and cost me £30 a year when he could be independent. The letter made me cry, as mothers are apt to be foolish. I dread the separation from the boy, who has from his birth to this hour been a joy and comfort to me; but I see the noble nature which dictated this resolve, and you will see it also. Only the other day I was going over it all with Miss Temple. She was strongly of opinion that I should accept your offer, and was so pleased you had made it. I can never forget it or Mrs. Arnold's dear little note. I cannot say more now. I am not a bit pleased or glad at this appointment, but I should do wrong to advise the boy not to accept it under the circumstances.

'Believe me, most sincerely and gratefully yours,
'EMMA MARSHALL.'

To R. Seeley, Esq.

'9, WESTBURY PARK,
'BRISTOL.

'DEAR MR. SEELEY,

'I am sending several titles, as I thought you did not care for "Constantia Carew." . . . I shall

send a good part of the MS. by the end of August. My dear boy's appointment to Singapore is now filling my heart with mingled pain and pleasure, for the boy was my one scholar, and gave up Oxford to relieve my burdens. He is only eighteen, and has a good salary, quarters and servant and P. and O. passage. Of course the outfit is a very heavy expense, and I shall have to work doubly hard to meet it; but I am well used to this sort of thing now. . . . What times these are! and what will be the end? A Miss F. Kays wrote to me for a biographical sketch of myself for her book, "Women of our Time." Do you know who will publish it? She says "Men of the Time" has been successful; but I don't know it. I hope "Constantia" will have a pretty cover. That last book of Mrs. Brock's made me jealous; it is so pretty outside.'

Her sister had left Torquay, and now lived in Dunster, one of the loveliest spots in Somersetshire, where, even as late in the year as December, my mother seems to have had some enchanting walks.

'*December 4.*—Service in Dunster Church, which is a beautiful building, with a remarkable rood screen. A delightful view from Grabhurst, in whose shadow the little town nestles. The face of Nature here is

uncommon and charming. The shape of the hills so graceful, and they rise in billows one above the other, and intersect each other in many lovely lines. The rich golden brown of the bracken in its prime at this season.

'December 8.—I gathered in the garden of Dunster Castle to-day a carnation, wallflowers, mignonette, periwinkle, and violets—extraordinary in December. The gorse on the hills is still in bloom.'

Though it was so many years since my mother had renounced Quakerism—indeed, strictly speaking, she can hardly ever have been said to be a Quakeress at all—the Quaker traditions of her bringing up lingered with her till late in life. One of these was a distaste for theatres. My father used to tell us how, the only time he ever induced her to go to a theatre with him, to see Kean in the 'Corsican Brothers,' she had to his chagrin insisted on leaving in the middle of the most exciting scene. So there was some significance in her writing in her diary :

'A new era in my life. Dr. R—— came up from Weston and took me to see Irving in "The Merchant of Venice." I lost myself completely, which has always been my dream of what the power of acting should be. The court scene impressed me

most. In it Shylock is the incarnation of despair, his gesture of hopelessness as he left the court more than pathetic. Dr. R—— shared my rapture.'

The following extracts tell their story of anguished parting, sorrow at the death of a dear friend's son, and another change of abode :

' *August 2.*—This day my dear boy Hugh left me for his long, long journey to Singapore. The sharp pain at my heart when I bid him good-bye is the only pain he has ever caused me. I pray God to bless him and bring him back safely. But five years! —five years! Who dare look on so far, especially now, when with me the sun of life is going down? But time and space are not to Infinite Love, and to that Infinite Love I commend my dear, brave boy as he goes forth Eastward Ho!

' *September 18.*—To-day died the dear and deeply-beloved son of my dear friend of Gloucester days, Lady Wedderburn—Sir David. He had been failing in health for a long time, though bravely struggling against the consumptive illness that has proved fatal to so many of his race. He ruptured a bloodvessel, and was ill just a week, dying at Inveresk Lodge, Musselburgh. He was a man of singular gifts, and had a marvellous power of winning little children.

Mine adored him. He was an exceptional son; the relations between him and his sweet mother were lover-like. Chivalrous, loyal-hearted, tender, and honest, he must be missed and mourned by many. Those who knew his mother thank God she was spared the grief of losing him. She entered into her rest just seven months before her dearly-loved son.

'*October 4.*—I slept at Ferncliffe, Leigh Woods, for the first time. So I go on taking up my tent and moving onward in the gathering shadows. Very tired and sad.

'*October 7.*—My little girls Edith and Christabel came home from Gloucester. A joy to have them again.

'*December 16.*—Gloucester Palace; a very enjoyable visit. Sunday in the cathedral. Atmosphere most extraordinary; temperature like June, succeeding bitter cold.'

Sir David Wedderburn, for some years member for the Haddington Burghs, was a hero of my mother's in more senses than one. He is easily recognised as Lord Maintry in perhaps the prettiest and most successful story for quite young girls she ever wrote—'The Court and the Cottage.' Since 'Memories of Troublous Times,' which had not succeeded so

well as had been hoped, she had returned to tales of modern life and written for Messrs. Seeley 'Dorothy's Daughters,' 'Benvenuta,' and 'Constantia Carew,' besides a serial in the *Fireside*, and other smaller stories for various publishers. The suggestion of her publisher that she should take Edward Colston, the Bristol philanthropist and merchant prince, as the central figure of a romance was the beginning of her adopting a line in fiction which subsequently became her speciality and considerably widened her fame.

Her side of the correspondence that passed on the subject shows how thoroughly and eagerly she threw herself into the new idea.

To R. Seeley, Esq.

'FERNCLIFFE,

'LEIGH WOODS,

'April 14.

'Would you like to take "Mrs. Willoughby's Octave," and let "The Merchant Prince" stand over till the spring? I have been busy collecting material and going over old Bristol, but I think I should like a longer time for putting my story into shape—these historical stories are so much more important than my everyday ones. Still, if you think you would rather have "The Merchant

Prince" first, and will give me till September, I can do it. I am looking for your promised visit, and can myself guide you into the old part of Bristol. There is a magnificent chimneypiece in Edward Colston's house which will delight your eyes. Lady Rogers' home at the bridge-end ought to make a good illustration if we can get hold of a view of the old bridge. The end of May, after my boys' Easter holidays, will suit me best to see you. . . . Perhaps we may hit on a better title than "Merchant Prince." I have tried a few others.'

To the Same.

'I think "Heights and Valleys" has not been translated into French, but it is in German. I have had quite a dozen French letters about "Mrs. Mainwaring." She is also in German. An Italian wrote to me about "Lady Alice," a man who wished to translate and publish it at his own expense. I believe I have hitherto had £10 altogether for translations. I must state a fee of £5, I think, in future.

'Colston's Day is not till November 12, so I can be ready by September 1 with the MS. I am up to my ears in Bristol histories. Can you find a picture of E. Colston's house at Mortlake, where he died?

Cromwell once lived in the same house. I see "Life's Aftermath" is in its seventh thousand. I hope this is to my advantage.'

CLIFTON,

May 15.

DEAR MR. SEELEY,

'When will it suit you to pay your promised visit? Will Friday, the 26th, suit you, to stay over Sunday? We could devote Saturday to old Bristol and on Sunday go to the cathedral and St. Mary Redcliff. Afterwards I shall be in all the miseries of removing again. I have dealt in romance very freely. The salient points in Edward Colston's life do not stand out till he was old. I should like a photograph of the almshouse at Mortlake, and the church. . . .

'The love-story in E. C.'s life is dim and shadowy. I have consulted a Bristol authority, and he says nothing is known. I have, of course, made a love-story with fictitious people. . . . Colston vanishes from all sight for many years, but I have supposed a visit of his to his father and mother in 1657, where I weave his romance for him. I hope the book will succeed.

'Please let me know when you are coming, that I may keep a day free.'

It would appear that Mr. Seeley rather demurred to Colston being made the hero of an imaginary love-story, for my mother wrote on June 1 :

‘ DEAR MR. SEELEY,

‘ My ardour has been a little damped about Edward Colston. But I talked to another great Bristolian the other day, who seemed to think that fiction might well invest those last years of E. C.’s life with romance. He said, “ We have enough dry details with regards to £ s. d., and everyone knows about the charities.” I should utterly destroy my *raison d’être* if I took Damaris Standfast out of the story. The love-affair will only be the suggestion of what is the popular belief. If I come to London in July I shall probably be at Roehampton for a few days. Could I not get to Mortlake easily from there ?

‘ I hope to bring photographs up with me in July. I will let you know when I am in London. The greater part of “ Colston ” will be ready by the first week in September, and I hope will meet with your satisfaction. I shall be leaving this dear little house on July 1. The “ few pounds ” you mention will be very acceptable, as I am much burdened just now. This perpetual moving about with books and papers is most trying and expensive, but as we sold our

furniture I fear it must go on. With what pleasure I should settle down under a cathedral again !

After Mr. Seeley had paid his talked-of visit she wrote :

‘ 10, WORCESTER TERRACE,
‘ CLIFTON.

‘ I hope you are not the worse for that day of rain. The elements were certainly against the story of the Bristol philanthropist. I am really sorry you had so much trouble and expense. I can only hope the story will repay it ; but it is not an easy bit of work to make it attractive and keep the main feature true. Will you design a little cover for my Memories of Mrs. Owen?—something very pretty. Her great mission was to the fallen and distressed, and she said, “ It is woman who must light the candle and seek diligently till she find the lost pieces of silver, and when found she must keep them bright.” ’

One of the three women of remarkable culture and intellect bearing the name Frances, whom I have mentioned before as being counted very dear among my mother’s friends, Mrs. Owen, died in the June of this year. She was the author of several stories, ‘ Edith Vernon’s Life Work,’ ‘ Harry’s Battles,’ etc., besides able studies of John Keats, and François Millet, and a very beautiful poetic allegory, ‘ Across

the Hills,' which those who have heard my mother read aloud will not soon forget. She did much noble work in the slums of gay, fashionable Cheltenham, and founded a home for friendless girls, her influence there among the young, both rich and poor, being quite exceptional.

'She had in the rarest degree,' my mother wrote of her, 'the Divine grace of sympathy; the sympathy which, to use her own words to one towards whom she held out a loving hand in a time of sore need, was absolute pain till the yearning to help was stilled and the longing to comfort by substantial aid satisfied.'

To R. Seeley, Esq.

'10, WORCESTER TERRACE,

'CLIFTON,

'September 9.

'DEAR MR. SEELEY,

'I returned last Friday after a month's holiday wherein I have enjoyed a feast of friends and music. I am now at work on the last part of E. Colston. . . . I have had to give up my idea of publishing the Memories of my beloved friend for the present, so I need not trouble you about the cover. . . . I hope you and Mrs. Seeley enjoyed your holiday. I ought to say I explored Mortlake and went into the lovely grounds of Mr. Wigan's house, who now

owns the place. There is an old stone gateway with two seats which was there in Colston's time. I do not see that I am hard on the Puritans. If the truth must be told, I have but scant sympathy with our friend's narrow Churchmanship, though it was in accord with his nature; but I will erase anything you think too unduly hard. Sometimes I fancy religious people say the most intolerant things. I do not know where to get a dolphin. I think you must concoct one out of your artistic brain. Both dolphin and pineapple were taken down from All Saints' spire in the last century. I am very anxious to see the book finished. It has cost me some labour, as my pen cannot glide through it as in everyday tales. . . . That deed of Colston's is one of those registered in his favour, *only* tradition says he did it for love of the wife of the spendthrift. My only change is love for the *sister* of the wife—one as likely as the other. Again and again it is mentioned that he gave large sums *secretly*, known to none but the receivers. The whole story of his life is like the fabric of a dream, and mine is at least prettier and more likely than half the silly tales told of him. I think, too, it is likely he would grind out a loan to the last penny, but *give* ungrudgingly.

‘I will send Book IV. with last proofs.’

' 10, WORCESTER TERRACE,

' *November 2.*

' DEAR MR. SEELEY,

' I return the last proofs to-day. . . . I am sure infinite pains have been taken to make the book a success, and you have had much trouble with it. . . . I have just been reading Trollope's "Autobiography." It rather discourages me. In a smaller way I think my books ought to do as well financially as his. Is there no possibility of making a better arrangement in America? . . . Baker, a very good bookseller here, asked me if I had seen the list of my books, selling by thousands in the cheap American series. There is too much of piecework in Trollope's history of his writing, but it was very interesting to me. I wish I could rise a little without extra work.'

' *November 27.*

' I think "In Colston's Days" a beautiful book to look at, and I am sure the outside ought to sell it. It is piled up in all the shops here. I have had one very flattering letter from the President of the Anchor. But I think some of the worthy Bristolians might have mentioned it at the dinners. I do hope the book will not be a disappointment, like "Memories of Troublous Times." . . . It is a

pleasure to read such clear type. . . . The illustrations are also charming. I hope you are proud of them. . . . Mr. Symonds writes from his place of exile, Davos, that he is delighted with them, and thinks them beautiful, and he is no mean judge. . . .

‘ Believe me, with thanks for your kindness, now extending over *twenty years*,

‘ Yours very truly,

‘ EMMA MARSHALL.’

Very appropriately my mother had dedicated this story of old Bristol to the memory of the distinguished Bristolian, her revered friend, the late Dr. Symonds. His son wrote in acknowledgment of the book :

‘ DAVOS PLATZ,

‘ *November 24, 1883.*

‘ DEAR MRS. MARSHALL,

‘ How shall I tell you all the feelings with which I read your letter and opened your book, which arrived to-night together !

‘ The dedication took me by surprise, and brought tears of joy into my eyes. I was so stupid as to kiss some of those beautiful illustrations ; especially did I kiss St. Stephen’s Church and the old Norman Gateway.

‘It was a blending of many feelings, the sense most paramount of many dear dead pasts, blossoming up together in this land of exile and disease for me, which touched me to a softness I had hardly dreamed myself yet capable of.

‘All my boyhood and young manhood, and all the noble memories of the best of fathers, came over me in one melodious chime evoked by an honoured woman’s hand. I have always regarded you, if you will permit me at this moment of deeply-stirred sincerity to say the simple truth, as one of the brightest ornaments of literature applied to pure and healthful purpose for the youth of England, applied also to the uses of the home by one who has worked for her loved ones.

‘Forgive me, dear Mrs. Marshall, if I have said too freely what has struck me as peculiarly beautiful and strong in the employment of your distinguished talents.

‘Every afternoon before dinner I am read to, with my daughters round me. The next book we take up will be “In Colston’s Days,” and I shall often interrupt the reading to embroider your web of history and fiction with my own memories for children who were born in Bristol. The eldest of my children is, I fear, not merely delicate, but

seriously ill. The youngest is also touched with the same unpardoning malady, and is now with her mother at San Remo. Thus we have to suffer separation, in addition to exile.

‘Will you not come and see us here? It would give my wife, I am certain, as much pleasure as it would give me to welcome you, and to show the wonders of our snow-world, the details of the peasant life around us, to one whose artist feeling would appreciate these things, and who would gain a tonic for fresh efforts in our thrilling air. Do think of this. The journey is not very long or very difficult, and you would have a friend’s room fit for study and repose.

‘Pray remember me to the friends around you, to the W——s, F——s, Fanny Alleyne, the Cliffords, all, in fact—and there are many whom we are often hungry to see. As for my photograph, you do me too much honour. I will send one in this letter, if I have one, which I am not sure about. But in return I hope you will tell me who it is that has chosen me to be her companion in hours of study. I need not tell you that in the literary life, the pleasantest thing is this occasional formation of friendship through books with people whom it may perhaps never be our privilege to meet.

‘There are people here, but most of them are ill, and as a writer, a thinker, a student, I am absolutely alone.

‘Believe me, with grateful thanks and true messages of friendship, to be,

‘Ever sincerely yours,

‘JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.’

And his sister, Mrs. T. H. Green, wrote in the same charming and appreciative tone :

‘4, BANBURY ROAD,

‘OXFORD,

‘November 30, 1883.

‘MY DEAR MRS. MARSHALL,

‘I must write and tell you how much touched and pleased I am by your remembrance of my dear father and the old Clifton Hill House days. I remember how fond he was of you, and though one does not really *need* such expressions of loving remembrance, it is very cheering to have them. All that old time seems so very far off, and yet sometimes it is as near me as the other happy life that ended for me twenty months ago. Neither, of course, ended in any way—nothing good can end—but the outward part which is so dear to us is put away. . . . I am delighted with the book about Colston, apart

from selfish reasons ; the story seems to me beautifully told, and the pictures bring all Bristol before my eyes. Dear Bristol is above all other places to me. Now, when I hear a great west wind blow, I always see the great view from my old bedroom window : Brandon Hill and the cathedral tower, and the ships here and there, and far away Redcliff tower and the hills beyond, and I hear the great bells come on the wind, and I pass on in thought to Clifton Church Hill, and see the wide view to Dundry and Ashton Chump, and a jackdaw's cry always shows me the observatory and the rocks, till I wonder what is real, this or that. Dear Mrs. Marshall, I hope you are less anxious than sometimes. How much you have in your life ! The battle has been a severe one to you. What a little bit of life this must be to any of us—for it is so disjointed—like a bit of a child's puzzle, which looks so queer, yet helps to make the perfect whole ! I hope " Edward Colston " will be a great success.

‘ Yours affectionately,

‘ CHARLOTTE GREEN.’

Another gratifying letter was from the philanthropist's descendant, one of the members for Bristol :

‘ROUNDWAY PARK,
‘ DEVIZES.

‘ DEAR MADAM,

‘ I have only just returned home, or I should have acknowledged the receipt of your book “In Colston’s Days” sooner. I have not yet had time to read it, but some of my family who have done so tell me that out of somewhat meagre details which have come down to us of my great ancestor’s life, you have been most successful in weaving a very interesting story. Of the truth of your description of the “Table-cloth” I can vouch, as it is one of the few heirlooms which have come down to us from the philanthropist, and (with 24 very large and fine napkins) is now in my possession. We shall hope to possess a second copy of your very interesting work, and will inquire for it at several libraries. Hoping it will meet with the success it so well merits, with many thanks for your kindness in presenting me with a copy, dear madam,

‘ Believe me,

‘ Yours faithfully,

‘ EDWARD COLSTON.’

The success of ‘In Colston’s Days’ was at any rate sufficiently encouraging for my mother to en-

bark on a new story of the same kind almost immediately.

‘I am sorry to hear of your beginning another book so soon,’ Professor Nichol wrote in a letter answering some questions about Sir Thomas Browne. ‘I can’t quite understand why you should have to help others now instead of being kept comfortable by them. But the age is going mad with overwork and restlessly savage competition.’

Writing a story round the figure of the author of ‘*Religio Medici*,’ with Norwich and Norfolk as a background, gave her great delight. Again both author and publisher took an infinite amount of trouble.

To R. Seeley, Esq.

‘10, WORCESTER TERRACE,
‘CLIFTON.

‘. . . I shall be arranging the form of Sir Thomas Browne in a week or two, and will let you know about illustrations. Will a “Light in the East” do for a title, or “In the East Country”? . . . I have got the promise of a photograph of a beautiful chimney-piece which was in the house of Sir Thomas Browne at Norwich, and is now in the hall of Mr. Birkbeck’s house, Stoke Holy Cross, near Norwich.

He is employing a photographer on purpose to take it for me. The more I go into Sir Thomas Browne the more interested I am in him. Mr. Birkbeck asks if I have a portrait. I suppose one can be taken from a book. There is a beautiful one in the 1685 edition of the "Religio Medici." . . . I have been away for ten days on the heights of the Cotswolds, and feel refreshed. There is a grand bazaar coming off at Knightsbridge for the deaf and dumb, to support a school for teaching the deaf to speak. I am asked to write a little historical sketch for it. Do you know anything of the old market and fair there, held up to the end of the eighteenth century?

'Certainly the *Spectator* was kind to "Mrs. Willoughby"; a very good notice for a young story. *Athenæum* also was good.

'I am sorry you are not well. I am too much worried removing again and trying to hire furniture to be well. I am quite thankful to go to my writing and forget house-agents and tradespeople, who are apt to regard empty purses with supreme contempt.

'I have been reading James Payn's "Literary Recollections" in the *Cornhill*. Is there any channel whereby I could get my book in "advanced sheets" into Australia or Canada? You well know the names of publishers, and perhaps might help me to com-

municate with them. Anyhow, I am inclined to make the effort. . . . I am most anxious to increase my profits. I have a boy coming on so well as a scholar at Fettes that I am longing to help him to Oxford, especially as he is good all through as well as clever. . . . Will you think it over ?'

'WOODSIDE, LEIGH WOODS,
'BRISTOL,
'October 2, 1884.

'DEAR MR. SEELEY,

'I hope indeed this address will last for some time. I have had so many changes. Now with a great effort I have furnished a home in a very simple fashion, on the hire system, and we are settled.

'I do not know how I shall be able to change *your* address—54, Fleet Street, has rolled off my pen for twenty years.

'I shall be sending some more MS. soon. I hope you like the first instalment. "Mrs. Willoughby's Octave" ought to sell; so many people seem to like it. I think the good notice in the *Spectator* has helped it.'

The firm of Seeley had moved to Essex Street, Strand, and my mother, at the cost of much toil, had re-established herself in a home of her own, with her family and two little Irish girls, who went to the High School with her children. My father

had been made in the meantime secretary of the Clifton Suspension Bridge.

By November the new book was nearly ready, and she writes to Mr. Seeley :

‘I am longing to see it. I take so much more interest in it than in my modern stories. I shall begin to read for a story of literary Lichfield next. If possible, I shall go to Lichfield for a night next summer. I really have to work so hard that I have only taken a fortnight’s rest all told this year.

‘However, I am going on Saturday to the President of Trinity’s, Dr. Percival, at Oxford, and then for a week to London. I shall come and see you. I have lost my old friend the Dean of Gloucester, and shall attend his funeral on Saturday, staying at Gloucester a night for that purpose. He sent me his last book only a fortnight ago. He was my friend, very faithful and kind to me for twenty-eight years. He was eighty-eight, and the corn ripe for the sickle.’

‘TRINITY COLLEGE,
‘OXFORD.

‘The book (“In the East Country,” illustrated by Herbert Railton) reached me to-day. I think it is really charming to look at, and I feel a pride and pleasure in it, which is not often the case nowadays. The illustrations are beautiful. Many thanks for

getting it out so well. If it *would* only sell like "Called Back"! I can get it well noticed in the *Oxford Magazine* if you will kindly address a copy to F. Warren, Esq., Magdalen College, Oxford. He dined here on Saturday, and told me he had been so pleased with "Colston," and that he had never heard of me till he read it.

'I do admire the look of this book exceedingly.'

My mother had put some of her best work into her story of Sir Thomas Browne, and often said that of her later stories it was the one she had the greatest affection for. So she was naturally pleased at receiving the following lines from Mr. Walter Pater, with whom she was not personally acquainted:

'BRASENOSE COLLEGE.

'DEAR MADAM,

'Accept my sincere thanks for the gift of your charming volume. I think you have succeeded in a remarkable way in uniting the interest of an excellent fiction to a genuine antiquarian study. Coming to me at a time when I greatly needed a volume of thoroughly pleasant reading, "In the East Country" was very welcome.

'Believe me,

'Very truly yours,

'WALTER PATER.'

‘ I have now read through your book with much pleasure and admiration,’ wrote her most pungent and kindly critic, Professor Nichol, ‘ tempered by some lack of sympathy for one of your heroes (for you almost seem to make him a hero), your Puritan Andrew. I don’t believe he would in real life have grown softer, but harder. The longer I live the less I agree with Puritan theology or, with what concerns us more nearly, Puritan views of *this* life, an essential matter to me, who doubt there being any other. They and some of your former people too (I observe that most Friends or Quakers seem to love them that persecuted them) start with the idea that enjoyment is in itself an evil thing ; whereas I hold with Plato, that pleasure, including spiritual exaltation or artistic, mental, and even physical delight, is in itself a good, and only hurtful when in excess, or pursued, as it too often is, to the loss of others or the infringement of justice. You talk of Andrew’s *self-sacrifice*, a noble thing for a noble end, but in *itself*, as is the tendency of George Eliot and many women of genius (accustomed, as Thackeray says, to be pelicans for their young) to exalt it, a mere Western Juggernaut. In your Andrews, and all, male and female, of the same type, it is wholly marred by its indissoluble marriage with self-sufficiency, self-

righteousness, and self-glorification. If there be a future world, I expect to find Aspasia, and even Ninon de l'Enclos, in as good seats as any of the Fifth Monarchy men; but I have always been "Epicuri de grege porcus," a thorough Lucretian. Excuse this outbreak. It is well, I think, at rare intervals to let one's self go, with utter disregard of consequences. Your gleams of Sir Thomas are excellent—I wish we had more of them—and your Amphyllis bright, graceful, and true to life. In this, as in all your books I have read, I seem to see genius hampered by industry—writing too quickly, as if to order, and either a greater sympathy with, or more concession to, the middle-class Evangelicalism of our country than I can join in. But what does it matter what I think? I promised you a criticism, and almost regret it, as in my invalid state it is worth less even than usual. I expect we shall get leave of absence and be abroad next winter. Won't you come to us next month? Of course, if you tell me it is possible, my wife will write to you.

'Ever yours,

'JOHN NICHOL.'

Few mourned the loss of friends, especially friends connected with her past, with so poignant and lasting

a grief as my mother. Her diary for the last day of this year is entirely devoted to a lament for

‘One who never failed me, and in far-off days of youth and hope was my closest and most loving friend. . . . My memories of her go far, far back, where the thoughts of her numerous later friends and admirers cannot follow me. . . . I see her first as a child, and feel the loving grasp of her hand when we met at a children’s party at the house of our friend Dr. Symonds. . . . I see her a few years afterwards in white, with forget-me-nots in her little bonnet—my bridesmaid; then, in my early married life, my frequent guest at Wells, the dear, happy home of love and youthful joy. . . . Here, I think, I first discovered what depth of power and what diversity of gifts were hers. She came to me then with all her joys and sorrows; the last were many for one so young. From the cloud of a great disappointment she emerged gathering strength, and added grace with years. The masses of her dark hair turned gray and increased the beauty of her majestic brow. Her eyes, like brown pools with the sun shining down into their depths, had a wonderful lambent fire when her spirit was stirred within her. Her literary success as a student of Greek philosophy

and translator of German brought her in contact with many distinguished men and scholars. And the leisure of single life, when compared with the perpetual grind and effort of married life like mine, may have *seemed* to drift us a little apart, but it was not really so. . . . "Where wert thou, brother, those four days?" "Where *art* thou?" we cry, and our cry comes back from the silence unanswered, though we dare scarcely venture to say unheard. "The peace out of pain" came to her on August the 16th. "With God be the rest."

To R. Seeley, Esq.

'WOODSIDE, LEIGH WOODS,
'BRISTOL,
'January 10, 1885.

' . . . Heartily do I echo your kind wish. I do believe there are not many people who write more steadily or take greater care to do *good work*, and reap a smaller harvest. I never write even a small tale for a children's magazine without doing *my best*. . . . I suppose the interest in my books may increase for a time at my death. Will it be necessary to make any special arrangements as to who shall receive the benefit then? I also mean to leave behind me a few reminiscences, and *of course* I should

wish you to publish them, being my friend and publisher-in-chief for so many years. Life is so uncertain, and my contemporaries are falling on all sides. It is impossible not to ask, Who next? And what if I am the next?

‘The next three years if I live will be heavy ones, and therefore I must do my utmost. I have had no praise so great since I began to write as I get for the “East Country,” both from private and public sources.

‘My idea for the new story is Hannah More’s time at Cheddar, and I can describe the beauty of Wells, which I know. “The city of the deep springs” and Cheddar rocks will be a change for your sketches.’

‘February 4.

‘I have been thinking about shilling paper-cover books. Would you like to try one? . . . I think we might succeed in this line, perhaps, and it would be a new departure for poor me; for I feel, though I write on and on, that I am at a standstill. This craze for paper-cover literature is doing the other harm. Will you think over it? I have an idea, and could soon work it out, and expenses would be small. . . . Spring sunshine is flooding my paper, half blinding me; but I haven’t the heart to shut it out. It seems

to me doubly precious after this winter of gloom, with its wars and its explosions, too terrible to contemplate.

‘I get so many appreciative letters about the “East Country.” One from Dr. Troutbeck, whom I knew at Wells, was so delightful.’

‘April 24.

‘I should very much like to send a copy of this book (“The Mistress of Tayne Court”) to Princess Christian. She has expressed herself several times pleased with “Mrs. Mainwaring.” I can reach her through my friend Mr. Edgar Shepherd, Dean of the Chapel Royal. He sees her privately often, and so does his wife. . . . I suppose the book will not be long now. You may have noticed the sad and grievous *supposed* end of my nephew Martin Geldart in the daily papers. One may truly thank God his mother was spared this agony.’

‘May 7.

‘I hope you are better, and able to go into London again. I have been refreshed by a short holiday, but I am always hunted by a great wave which sometimes threatens to engulf me; the claims of so many are at times overpowering. I am sending back the proofs. When will the book be out, and will the

new edition of "Memories of Troublous Times" come out with it?

'I shall begin my new story with Hannah More's grand London days, I think, and bring my heroine Joyce into contact with her later in life. I am strongly in favour of action and movement in stories.

'As a matter of literary business I have been carefully reading "Colonel Enderby's Wife," which has made such a great mark. I know who Lucas Malet is.' My mother had admired 'Mrs. Lorrimer' very much, and was a little disappointed with the new novel; but she added: 'I quite agree that few scenes have been more powerfully done in fiction than the closing scene of Colonel Enderby's life. *It is great and wonderfully done.*'

'July 14.

'I have had a suggestion from Canon Church to bring the bull-baiting at Wells into my story. The Dean used to invite guests to watch it from the windows, and it went on to the year 1839. I have not had an agreement for the last book. It is as well to have it as life is so *uncertain*, and I always hope my children may have some little benefit from my work when I am resting from my labours. . . . If I remove Hannah More altogether from my new

story I shall have to recast it. If you really do not wish me to *mention her at all* I must begin all over again. The mention is quite incidental, for I feel she has not the interest for this day and generation she once possessed. I hope the "Mistress of Tayne Court" is doing rather well. These stories of everyday take so little out of me compared with one like "The East Country," and yet they seem more popular. I feel the later books owe much to your illustrations. . . . I want so much to do a little cheap book which would sell by thousands. There is no doubt the shilling literature is swamping the more expensive form just now.'

To make sketches and arrange illustrations for 'Under the Mendips' my mother asked Mr. Seeley to pay another visit to Bristol.

'I do hope you will come. Any day will suit us. The Mendips are before our windows. Dundry Church tower is on the tableland which stretches to Cheddar. Abbot's Leigh is about two miles from here, and the great St. Vincent's Rock within sight in three minutes. I can take you to Goldney House with its beautiful old garden just as it was in Evelina's time, and to the old spa.'

After he had been she wrote :

‘I am so sorry you had a wretched room at the hotel, hardly, I fear, compensated for by St. Peter’s behind. You took the hearts of my young daughters by storm. Edith asked if she might answer your message herself. She is the most simple and child-like of girls. I often watch her and think how her unselfishness and sweetness seem natural to her. Christabel has much to fight against, but has a noble disposition. I hope you will come again, and sleep here, and not in Bristol.’

‘Under the Mendips’ was out before Christmas, and, as usual, my mother expressed herself charmed with her new book’s get-up and illustrations. The spring of youth in her, which the weight of trouble and years and the more pessimistic natures with which she had to live could not quench, was never exhibited more strikingly than when a parcel arrived containing presentation copies from her publisher. The event had become so common that the rest of the household had long since ceased to greet it with any excitement ; but she herself, I think, always felt a thrill of pleasure and satisfaction as she looked for the first time on the printed offspring of her brain.

At the close of 1885 her diary says :

‘A year ago since I wrote in this book. Another year marked by partings and loss. On July 30 my dear boy, Cyril, left me for Ontario. It was hard to see him drift off to a new, untried life; but it was for his good I earnestly hope. His was a very winning and lovely childhood, and he was chosen by dear F. O—— for her especial kindness. Bright and sunny was his spirit in those early school days; and after his nine months under the good influence of my dear, kind friends the Kennaways, at Escot, where he went to learn farming on their estate, all his pleasantness and cheerfulness, which had been clouded while he was a medical student for one year, shone out again. I pray God to bless him and prosper him, and the dear brother of his childhood, who is at Haiphong, Tonquin. Far East and far West these brothers are widely separated, and far from me. But God is good, and to Him I commend them both.

‘My dear boy Douglas went up to Oxford in November to try for a scholarship and failed, but there is every hope for the next time. His reports from Fettes College have been such as to make my heart sing for joy. The shadows are lengthening on my pathway, and the night draws on. But the Dayspring from on high shall in great mercy dispel

the clouds. And so let me go onward and fear not. For even in the dim valley of the shadow the Light which lighteth every man who comes into this weary world shineth.'

Early in the next year my mother completed her shilling story, founded on a Bristol legend. It was designed to be wholesomely sensational and an antidote to the then favourite 'shilling shocker.' But it did not make her fortune.

'The notice of "The Tower on the Cliff" in the *Saturday*,' she wrote to Mr. Seeley, 'makes me think I had better turn my attention to another "weird" story, though I doubt whether I had better risk another shilling volume. The *Saturday* is not often so complimentary. If you can think of any way by which I can make my work more remunerative, please tell me.

'I am just now nearly floored by my boy's entrance at Oxford. I hoped a poor "scholar" would have come off without caution money; but no, alas! and there are so many other fees. But he is a son worthy of any sacrifice and all I can do for him.'

'My poor "Tower" has not proved a tower of

strength to me. But I am hopeful about "In Four Reigns."

So with amazing pluck, allowing no discouragement to daunt her, she hoped and worked on. It was not her way to put her pen down to reflect, when she had finished one story, before starting another. Indeed, she often had as many as three or four tales on the stocks at once. A list of girls' stories filling nearly two pages, written for one publisher alone, to whom she sold the copyright of each, lies before me now. One of these is in its twelfth, many in their fifth, sixth, and seventh thousand, which seems to show that the sum she received thankfully for the MS. has in every case been repaid over and over again.

It was always cheering to her to get such warm-hearted letters as the following, from Mr. J. A. Symonds:

'AM HOF,
'DAVOS PLATZ,
'July 3, 1886.

'DEAR MRS. MARSHALL,

'How kind of you to remember me, and to write me so long and friendly an account of yourself in the midst of your hard work. I was talking a few nights ago to an old friend of mine and yours,

Professor Nichol of Glasgow, and we were unanimous in admiration of your sustained energy and (if I may be permitted to say so) capacity for progress in your art. I hope you won't mind my saying this. I think all good workers ought most to value the power of improvement. I have overworked myself and cannot see. One of my daughters who is writing this letter at my dictation is also reading out to me "The Tower on the Cliff," which interests us both very much indeed. We should have finished it last night but for a garrulous gentleman who came to tell us of his misadventures on a mountain. Remembering every part of the scenes which you describe so well, of course I am able to enjoy the legend of Cook's Folly more than most. I have already localized the Valley Farm at Sneyd Park; whether rightly or wrongly I do not know. I have not seen your story about Sir Thomas Browne. I have just prepared a selection of his works, and written an introduction for the "Camelot Classics." A copy of this I will send you. I have been working much too hard lately: two volumes of the Renaissance in Italy, a Life of Jonson, a Life of Sidney, and one or two minor pieces, all going at the same time. I feel so much uncertainty about the future of things in England and Europe at large

that I should like to make my literature a bread-winning industry. But what I write does not get so well paid as what you do, and you know too well how trying it is to write for money. I, then, being chronically somewhat of an invalid, have fallen flat in my laudable endeavour to scrape together half the income necessary for the support of my family. . . . I am glad you saw Lotta and liked her last summer. I wish I could send her and her sister Madge to England. They are getting to an age when they want more society and opportunities of study than this place offers. But it is difficult to manage. They are too old for me to think of them with regard to your wish for companions for your youngest daughters, otherwise, I really know of no house in England to which I should have sent them with greater confidence.

‘ Believe me to be always,

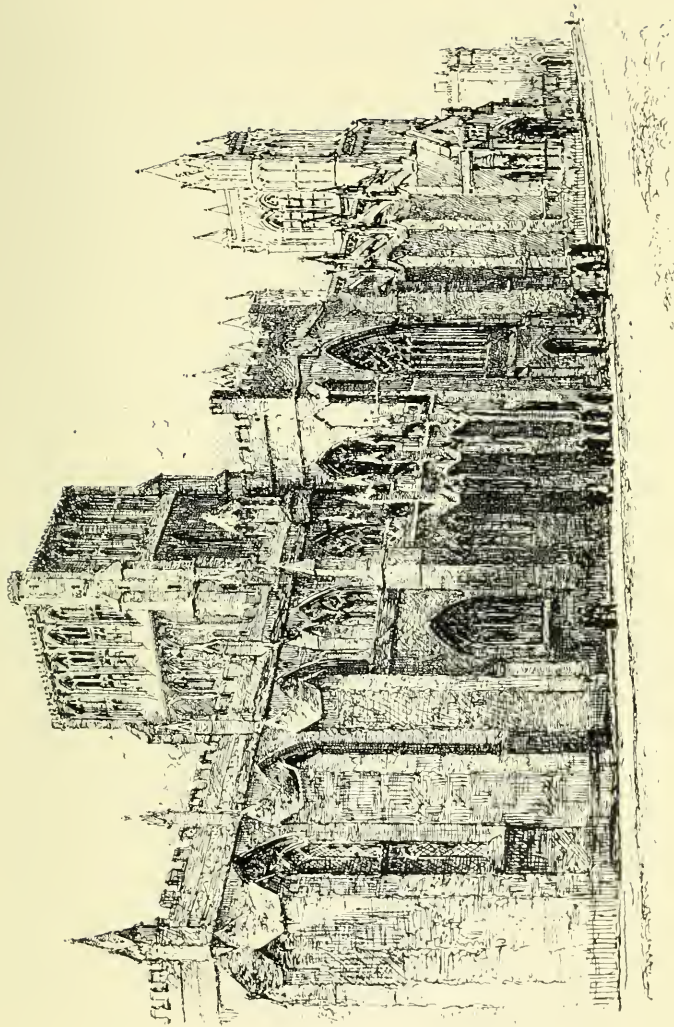
‘ Most sincerely yours,

‘ J. A. SYMONDS.’

‘ Which are the most to be pitied, the overworked or the drones?’ asks my mother in a letter to her publisher, who was ill for a time from overwork. ‘ I suppose I would not really change with one of the last, who swarm here as elsewhere.’

Certainly idleness and Luxurious ease would not have made her happy; but a lessening instead of increase of care as years went on, more opportunities for rest and *leisurely* work, and the enjoyment of God's beautiful world, in which she gloried, was what she sighed for sometimes. Full as her daily life was, the inner spiritual life was not neglected, deepening and developing under various influences in a very remarkable way. On the vigil of St. Michael and All Angels, 1886, she wrote :

‘ Another St. Michael's Day reminds me that I am another year nearer the great mystery of death, and yet is it greater than the mystery of living? I have had many losses and many mercies, much of work and worry, and fear as to how to get through, but so far God has blessed me. I must record here the great, almost untold, help which the sermons of Canon Percival (now Bishop of Hereford) at the cathedral during the past summer have been to me. . . . I cannot go through all the sermons in detail, but the gist of them all, Truth and the working of Love, has left a deep impression on me. I can but compare listening to him when the light is in his face (the “light that never was on land or sea”) to the uplifting on Pisgah in view of the Promised Land.



BRISTOL CATHEDRAL.

I cannot say how others may feel who listened with me, but it seems almost impossible not to be deeply moved by the earnestness with which the great lesson of loving service was impressed on us. He has no great gift of eloquence as the word is understood, but the noble simplicity that is the outcome of the highest gifts; and I verily believe the Spirit of God shines on the face of one who knows what spiritual communion with God in Christ really means. His are no theological dogmas, no hard-and-fast lines of doctrine, but the simple teaching of St. Paul, which he summed up in one most beautiful sermon, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things have passed away, behold all things are become *new*." . . .

'December 31st, eleven o'clock.—Again the last night of the old year. When I wrote the foregoing lines, on the eve of St. Michael's Day, I did not think what changes were at hand. How impenetrable is the veil that hangs between us and the quite near future! We know not what a day may bring forth. Canon Percival's connection with Bristol is severed. He goes at Easter to take up the headmastership of Rugby School. Thus all things pass away but the love of God. . . . This year has been marked by dark shadows, and here and there bright lights.

One of these was my visit to Edinburgh and being present on Founder's Day at Fettes College, a red-letter day for me, for which I thank God. Dear Douglas so much cared for and loved by masters and boys. He got an exhibition at Worcester College in May. . . . It has been a year of great pressure and strain. I have accomplished a great deal of work. In November I caught a cold, which lasted a month, and then suddenly went to my liver. On the day of dear Christabel's confirmation I was in agony, and so could not go with my last child to see her confirmed. May God bless her always! I have had ups and downs since then, often in great pain, which I am ashamed to bear so impatiently. I hope my irritability will be forgiven. The burden of the future lies heavily upon me, but a voice within says, "Leave it with God." I have good news of my two dear, dear absent boys, Hughie and Cyril. For this I thank God. So I say farewell to the old year sitting in my bedroom, where I have been for a month. And I pray that God in His mercy may prepare me for all He has in store for me, whether life or death, sickness or health.'

'I am at last getting well,' she wrote early in the new year to Mr. Seeley, 'and anxious to begin work

and do all I can this year. I have a good idea for a shilling story about the plague in Bristol and the old lane where the stone lay, still called "Pitch and Pay." The money was first put on the stone and the country people pitched the food over it to the city folk; the money was then pitched over in exchange, and had to lie on the ground to be purified before it was picked up.'

So soon as February the MS. was complete. It was called 'The Two Swords,' and published in the same form as 'The Tower on the Cliff.' Then she turned her thoughts to her longer story for the autumn, a story of life at Olney at the end of the last century, in which is pictured the pathetic figure of the poet Cowper, with his 'madness-cloud,' his platonic intimacies, and his friend John Newton. From earliest girlhood my mother had admired and loved Cowper's poetry and the wit, sparkle, and grace of his epistolary art. She had taught all her children when small, one by one, to repeat his lines written to his mother's picture, 'Oh that those lips had language!' So she had no difficulty now in putting herself in touch with the poet and his surroundings. In the preface to her story she says:

'When I spent a few hours in the town and neigh-

bourhood of Olney last summer, I felt that Cowper's house in the market-place, the Lodge at Weston Underwood, and the pencilled lines on the shutter of that room the poet left with such melancholy forebodings of eternal farewell, were all familiar to me. . . . Looking from the windows of John Newton's study upon the garden, it was easy to imagine the poet's figure crossing the turf to receive a cheery welcome from the Vicar with whom he had daily intercourse for so many years. Yes, the old-world country town of past days came back with strange vividness, having also a sadness in it which seemed to tell how soon the *vanishing* would vanish, how soon the life of man passes like a shadow on the hillside.

“With each new spring
New born it wakes, when every forest thing
Unfurling is, and buds are blossoming.
In tones we know
It speaks, that voice of immemorial woe—
Alas! that leaves should come again,
That we should go.”

‘On the Banks of the Ouse’ was dedicated as ‘a token of grateful and affectionate regard’ to Sir John Kennaway, whose guest my mother had been in London that summer, witnessing from the Athenæum Club the Jubilee procession of 1887. The historic

pageant greatly impressed her, especially the splendid appearance of the Emperor Frederick (then Crown Prince) in his white uniform, his bearing erect and soldierly, though the doom of his fatal disease hung over him. As he rode by the Athenæum his ashen features became illumined by a sudden smile, a smile my mother never ceased to congratulate herself on having seen. She was not a politician, being too busy to do more than skim the daily papers and the political as well as the literary articles in the *Spectator*, but certain public events stirred her to the deepest emotion. Such tragedies as the desertion of the young Prince Imperial in the Zulu War, the fate of Gordon, and the heroically-borne sufferings of this Frederick the Noble, she could never speak of without tears in her eyes and a sob in her voice. She detested war, for its sickening horrors were far too real to her to let her dwell with any thrill of excitement or delight on its glory and picturesqueness.

‘On the Banks of the Ouse’ was published in November, with illustrations by Edward Hull, and to her publisher she as usual expressed her pleasure at the beauty of the illustrations, and the ‘colour and tastefulness of the binding.’ Almost directly afterwards she began to pass many hours in communion with George Herbert in preparation for

another historical tale. Meanwhile the smaller stories for children were always going on, and how children appreciated them letters from little strangers everywhere were constantly bearing testimony.

Let the following speak for themselves :

‘I have read the book “Rex and Regina,” and think it one of the prettiest of all the books I have ever read, so I write a letter to ask you to please tell the story farther, as I am very curious to know if Regina opened the two packages on her eighteenth birthday, and what was in them ; if Mrs. Turnbull was kinder than she had been, and if she ever met with Rex again, or went to Barrow Court, and much besides.

‘I am a little American girl, living in Reval, Russia, but in spite of living in Russia, I have very many English books. I have read “Ministering Children,” “The Wide, Wide World,” “The Little Pilgrim,” which is *very* pretty, “Misunderstood,” and heaps of other books. Rex and Regina are my last friends, and I like them best of all, and that is why I would like so much to know more of them, and of Bunchy and Berry.’

‘Indeed I did not think the story of “Ruby and

Pearl" at all babyish, but enjoyed it very much. My aunt has promised to be so kind as to order a book from England for my birthday in July, when I shall be eleven years old; and I have asked for "Dewdrops and Diamonds," as everyone who hears the name says, "Oh, that must be a pretty book!" I cannot tell you how surprised and pleased I was that you should write to me, a little stranger-girl, in a far-away land, and I thank you for it many, many times.

‘ Your loving little friend,

‘ FLORENCE CUSHMAN.’

‘ 36, DOMBERG, REVAL.’

Dear little letters are Florence Cushman's, written in bold round-hand beneath ornate headings, one a pair of cupids on a floral see-saw supporting a medallion of the Republic. And from a school at High Wycombe came a 'round-robin' signed by more than fifty Mauds, Nellies, Ethels, Ediths, etc. :

‘ MY DEAR MRS. MARSHALL,

‘ We, a party of school-girls, have had a very great pleasure in listening to many of your books, and one, entitled "Poppies and Pansies," which has been read to us on our drawing days this term, has specially interested us. Some of the characters

seem almost like real friends, and we should so like to know what their future lot will be. We should be so glad to hear you intended to write a sequel to this very nice book. Should you decide to do so, it will be most joyfully received by your young friends, if we may so call ourselves.'

[Then comes the list of careful signatures.]

To these childish letters of approval may be added a tribute from two adult unknown readers:

'PUTNEY.

'MADAM,

'I hope you will excuse the liberty I take in writing to you, and that you will not think I do so from a craze for collecting autographs. All I want is to thank you very much for the great pleasure I derive from reading your beautifully-written books. I am in a bookseller's shop, where we keep many of them in stock, therefore I can read them all. I have just finished "On the Banks of the Ouse," and have enjoyed it so very much. It seems to give me a greater desire for good things than any book I have yet read, hence my motive in writing this letter, for I often wonder if authors like yourself ever know the power their sweet thoughts may have over their fellow-creatures. Will you please believe that one of

your readers is much happier for what she has read in your books.

‘ Yours respectfully,

‘ A. BIAGGINI.’

‘ CORNWALLIS STREET,
‘ CALCUTTA.

‘ DEAR MRS. MARSHALL,

‘ Will you allow me to introduce myself as a missionary working in Calcutta in connection with the Church Missionary Society? My work is entirely educational, and chiefly in English. We have here a large school for native Christian girls, the daughters of the upper classes. Our hot weather comes in May and June, during which months we are glad to have a period of rest and relaxation from school work. We generally have about six weeks’ holiday. My chief motive now in writing is to thank you warmly, dear Mrs. Marshall, for your historical stories. I have always from childhood been a keen lover of your books. “ In Colston’s Days ” is a very special favourite, and “ Life’s Aftermath ” too. During these holidays just over I have read three more of your books, and have so enjoyed them. The reading of them quite enhanced the enjoyment of the time of rest. I *must* write and thank you for them. . . .

‘ Forgive me for taking up your time. Will you

please accept my love, dear Mrs. Marshall. It is *real*, and not a mere empty form of words. With renewed thanks for your books,

‘Yours very truly,

‘EMILY T. NEELE.’

In spite of the vast amount of correspondence my mother had to get through every morning, letters like these, with the ring of sincerity in them, coming straight from the heart, touched her, and she always felt she could not leave them unnoticed. Thus she cemented the tie of friendship with her readers far and wide.

‘This past year has been full of cares and efforts,’ she writes at the end of 1887, ‘made to meet the needs that are so many. If light is dawning with the birth of 1888, I shall give thanks, for I am conscious that work and worry sometimes make me irritable and unlike the ideal I try to hold up in my books. Cyril came home for a holiday from Canada, looking well and bright and wonderfully little changed. Hughie, *dear* Hughie, still absent, still far away. God grant that he, too, may return to me before I say my *Nunc Dimittis*. In love I say good-bye to the old year—in love which I pray may bind

together the broken chain, and wrap me and mine in an atmosphere which is sweet with the fragrance of the higher and better life. Then all the toil and sorrow and grief for the sins of others and my *own* will not have been in vain.

‘The tale will soon be told now. God grant that His seal may be set on the last page, and that He who loves this sad and weary world may speak peace to them who are far off, and to them that are nigh.’

VI

BRISTOL

1888—1895

*FULL TIDE OF WORK—HOLIDAYS AT
BORDIGHERA AND FLORENCE*

‘Patience is very necessary for me, for I perceive that many things in this life do fall out as we would not.’

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

VI

BRISTOL

1888—1895

*FULL TIDE OF WORK—HOLIDAYS AT
BORDIGHERA AND FLORENCE*

THE first product of the New Year was another shilling story of bygone Bristol, which won golden opinions from Professor Nichol, who wrote of it from Carrick :

‘LOCH GOIL.

‘I have just read a charming little book called “Bristol Diamonds,” and wish to thank the writer for the pleasure I have had in doing so. It ranks, though on a smaller scale, along with your similarly vivid revival of Sir Thomas Browne; and the brevity enforced by the space perhaps even heightens the literary grace and value of the work. The actors of the close of the eighteenth century, with which it deals, move before us just as we believe them to have

lived, with the quaint mannerisms of their own time, dancing minuets, frequenting pump-rooms as a gaiety, and drinking dishes of tea, and with the passions, hopes, fears, loves, and aversions of all times. It is a triumph for a novelist to make us love her favourites and hate her *bêtes noires*. So I am made to love Ruth and hate Miss Sarah. The figure of Hannah More is ingeniously introduced, but I never could abide her. I bought her "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife" for 1s. 6d. and sold it for 1s., after wading through fifty pages of its cant. I don't like either, but if forced to the choice, would rather make my bed with Aphra Behn. Give us next as true and vivid a presentation of the later days of Edmund Burke, when, to compare great with small, he, like myself, in the years of mellowed wisdom, became a good Tory. I wish I could hear of your taking a good long rest. Next time I shall not speak of visiting Clifton till a day or so before the time when I can speak with certainty. The last occasion of my being in that part of the country was my charming day with Mrs. Owen, when we missed you so much. I should hardly care to visit Cheltenham again now; and there are so many changes at Clifton that I should require your presence to take me there. Meanwhile, remember we are here till

the end of October quite steadfast, rejoicing in the fixity, as Delos must have done when it had ceased from floating. . . . Remember that if you can by hook or crook, *i.e.*, by boat or rail, revisit during these months the North, you will find a room always ready for you here, and must make it your headquarters. If you will come to write by the waves of this loch, I promise to give you half a dozen themes, and even some outlines, if you find them worthy. I wrote to you last from Rome, empress of the world still, but with an atmosphere in which I cannot breathe.' . . .

Instead of going North, however, she went for her holiday this year to Florence, to stay with an old Clifton friend of her girlhood, who had married an Italian, Signor Damiani. Her host and hostess did everything in their power to make her visit delightful, and she looked back on it afterwards as one of the most refreshing times she ever spent in renewing her elasticity of mind and body. At once on her return home she was in harness again and unfolding the plan of a story, for which her impressions of Florence were to serve as the *milieu*.

‘WOODSIDE, LEIGH WOODS,
‘BRISTOL.

‘DEAR MR. SEELEY,

‘I think I can make a good story about a girl who goes to Florence to study art. I have not yet decided on a title, but I think “Awakening” is the idea. The widening of the horizon, and the revelation of something above and beyond the little groove in which a girl in the midst of admiring friends in a provincial town has lived, waking not only to the greatness of the past, but to the duties of the present. The bridge at Florence, San Miniato, the Uffizi, Fiesole, and Giotto’s Tower—all will come in. I shall write the story *con amore*. I am so full of Florence. It is always you who have my best work. I feel very differently when I am turned into a mere literary hack writing for magazines. The time will come when I shall drop them. As soon as my boy is through Oxford, and other *heavy* weights lifted, I shall be more at leisure. . . . I suppose you will like George Herbert for 1889? I must go to Salisbury in the spring and look at what is left of Bemerton. . . .

‘I shall be glad of your opinion and suggestion as to my next shilling story. I incline to Allen, the Bath philanthropist. Mr. Murch, a very well-read,

clever old man, has sent me "Worthies of Bath." He was Mayor of Bath last year, and was Chairman of the Board of the West of England Bank, the failure of which brought on us so many anxieties, my husband never having regained his position.'

A little later she writes :

"In the City of Flowers" seems to be a good deal liked and admired. I hope it is going off. . . . It is ten years to-day since the W. of E. Bank failed. It makes me sad to look at the list of my books and think what a nice provision they would have made for old age, now all used up and the fight still going on.

'I am very glad you are better, and I hope London will suit you for the winter. Travelling daily is a great strain, I should think. I am strong in that respect. I got to Milan so fresh that I could have gone straight on to Florence. It is the two W's which knock me over, *not* the work itself, but the worry. But all comes in the day's portion. "To accomplish cheerfully" is the grand aim we ought to have before us.'

The events of this year, as of the years that followed it till 1898, are gathered up in the diary which now

was rarely opened except at those solemn midnight hours when the bells were ringing in a new year.

‘ Surely the years fly faster as we grow older! It seems so short a time since I last wrote in this book. But the year is gone, and the life that knows no time is getting very near. In April I went to Florence, and so fulfilled the dream of years. Much of what I felt and saw there is told in my book “The City of Flowers.” In August we all went to Edinburgh and stayed six weeks in Mr. Yeo’s beautiful house at Fettes, lent to us with the generous kindness which is so winning and delightful to accept. The Angel of Death has called away many since the year began.

‘ In March most unexpectedly A. G—— passed away, leaving his wife and five dear young girls sorely bereft. On the eve of St. Michael and All Angels, Mr. Gambier Parry passed from his beautiful life here to the more beautiful life in the great hereafter. He died on the Angels’ Eve after a long day spent in painting Jacob’s Dream for the Chapel of St. Andrew in Gloucester Cathedral. I was honoured by his friendship, and often cheered by his kindly sympathy. I have embodied my thoughts about his noble life in a few verses.*

* ‘The Eve of St. Michael and All Angels, and other Poems’ (Arrowsmith).

‘All my children are well, all dear to my heart, and on this the last night of the old year I say, God bless and keep; God lift up the light of His countenance upon them and give them peace. Hughie still in Hong-Kong, Cyril in Canada—far from me, but ever pictured in my heart as they were in their sweet childhood. I live much in the past with my vanished joys, and yet I have much to give thanks for, though often sadly worn and weary with the weight of work and the chafe of worry and the coming shadows.

‘Dear H——, my sister in law and in love, has again and again during this year been lying at the very door of death, but she is yet spared to us, and full as ever of love and sympathy. So I say *Addio* to the old year. May the coming one find me more full of love towards God and man, less self-absorbed, less careful for the things which perish and fade as a dream.’

Since she had written “In Colston’s Days” my mother frequently received letters from people unknown to her containing suggestions for historical stories. In this way she became acquainted with an English lady living at Versailles, who had married a Corsican, and who had in her possession some very

interesting family papers relating to an Elizabethan ancestress, a great heiress, Margaret Dakyns, three times married, first to Walter Devereux, a brother of the Earl of Essex, secondly to a cousin of Sir Philip Sidney's, and lastly to a gentleman of Yorkshire. Out of this material my mother quickly worked up a story of the 'spacious times of great Elizabeth'—times 'when Spenser's "Faery Queene" was the poem of the day, when Shakespeare's sun had only just risen, when gallants and heroes of that age of discovery sailed across the great dividing ocean and brought back marvellous stories of the treasures and glories of the new world, such as the inhabitants of the old had never dreamed of.'*

This story was published in 1890 by Shaw, and has since been rechristened 'A True Gentlewoman.' It brought the lady who lent my mother the records of the Dakyns *en rapport* with several branches of her family in the New World and elsewhere whom she had never known before or even heard of.

In 1889 the usual brace of stories were written for Seeley and Co.—the spring shilling story, 'Her Season at Bath,' presenting the Bath of Sheridan, Miss Linley, and the Herschels; the longer autumn

* Preface to 'Eventide Light.'

one, 'Under Salisbury Spire,' introducing George Herbert. While busy with the last she wrote to Mr. Seeley :

'I am delighted with Shorthouse's preface to George Herbert's poems. To my mind it is the perfection of English, with the old-world fragrance of lavender and pot-pourri hanging over it. We want George Herberts nowadays. Rank unbelief and quasi-Romanism are rampant. I think the arrogance of Huxley reaches a pitch that almost approaches absurdity ; Mrs. ——'s egregious conceit, too, when she says, "Having got the ear of the world, I am preparing a fuller exposition of my doctrines," or words to that effect.

'I get so many letters about "Her Season at Bath." . . . I hope "The City of Flowers" is selling well. We have lost my husband's brother, Sir James Marshall. His career has been an extraordinary one. I have put together some of the details of his life for the Bristol paper, and will send it to you. The Roman Catholic papers have had long obituary paragraphs on him, and I wished to write the true story.'

In her yearly retrospect she refers again to this loss :

‘Another year gone, and as I look back I see the way marked by change and death. As we grow old, and our early ties are broken, and those who knew us in our youth are gone from us, the reality of our own coming death should be stronger; but is it so? I do not find it thus in my own experience. And yet how continually we may ask ourselves the question, Who next? In August James Marshall went to Margate for his delicate child’s health. He caught a chill, and died on the 10th of August, after a brief illness. His was a sunny, genial, and very attractive nature. He fought a courageous battle with adverse circumstances, and his life was remarkable in many ways. While shooting when a boy of fifteen on Lundy Island, he was shot accidentally by one of his friends in the right arm, which had to be amputated. He passed through strange changes, spiritual and material, and died a Knight of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, with a pension received for his conspicuous services as Chief Justice of the Gold Coast, especially during the Ashantee War. He was universally beloved, a great favourite with his nephews and nieces, and is associated with happy days of youth and brightness now passed like a dream.

‘The bright spots in 1889 have not been many

for me; a great deal of anxiety and wear, but still much to be thankful for. I can enter into no details. If spared to see the close of the now opening year, my earnest prayer is that there may be more love among those I love.

‘I often see my children before me as they were in their sweet, joyous childhood; in the old Wells nursery *first*, and *last* in the Gloucester nursery and schoolroom. I hear their merry voices, and how I long for the touch of my *vanished* children’s sweet, clinging arms as every night I bent over their pillow! But I must thank God that now they all are spared me, and though two are separated from me by thousands of miles, those two are ever near.

‘The last day of the eighties is especially solemn; the last decade of the century begins, and the change of the figure seems to bring old age very close. The last day of the eighties is marked by the funeral of Robert Browning in Westminster Abbey. Dying at his beloved Venice, his mortal part was brought to rest where lie the ashes of so many of our great dead. He has, we trust—to use his own words in his beautiful poem “Prospice”—passed

‘“ Into peace, out of pain,
And with God be the rest.”’

To some who only knew my mother in her

cheerful mood, her lively conversation, and beaming smile, it will be a revelation to find how she was thus given to introspective melancholy reflection on the mystery of death; but others, remembering her exclamation of deep concern at the news of the illness or death of a friend or even of an acquaintance, the far-away, tense earnestness of her expressive eyes, and the pain in her voice as she would say, 'They are all going; why am I left?' will not be surprised. I don't think she could ever have survived the loss of husband or child, and this crowning affliction, full as her cup was of manifold sorrows, she was not called upon to bear.

Owing to the exertions of friends—chiefly to Canon Troutbeck's—a grant from the Royal Literary Fund was obtained to defray the expenses this year of the spring holiday of which she stood so much in need, and which, especially if spent abroad, always worked wonders in restoring her health and spirits, sending her back to work with renewed vigour. Apropos of the grant Mr. Symonds wrote to her:

'AM HOF,
' DAVOS PLATZ,
' *January 6, 1890.*

' DEAR MRS. MARSHALL,

' I have been in bed for four days with this fashionable complaint, the influenza. Just before I

was prostrated I got your letter, and the last thing I did was to write to the Royal Literary Fund. Now that I find myself in my study again, the first thing I do is to tell you so, and to ask you to inform me whether the grant has been made. It is very necessary that you should get rest, and be able to accept the invitation to Bordighera in March. If then you do not get the grant from the R. L. F., we must look round and see whence the funds needful for your holiday are to be collected. Excuse me if I write stupidly. I have had the disease very sharply, and it has fallen on my weakest part, the lungs. I cannot on first getting up from bed command my thoughts or my language.

‘Very truly yours,

‘JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.’

In March she started for Bordighera, not before finishing a story, ‘Up and Down the Pantiles,’ which had not even been begun in January. The following letters to her publisher and the diary relate the history of the year :

‘CLIFTON.

‘I have read the proofs. I think the ending as you desire it very abrupt, but you must do as you think best. You have given me my lesson as to

moralizing; you know people are not all alike. Only the other day someone said to me, "The little bits in your books are always much more to me than the story itself." I think in the case of "Up and Down the Pantiles" it was the effect of reading "The Virginians" just before I began to write. Thackeray so continually deviates from the main story to reflect or "moralize." . . . Did you see how — caught it in the *Spectator* for preaching? . . . What a fuss Mrs. — has made about her plot! Rather undignified, I think. . . . I waded through a long MS. not long ago to oblige a friend; I never, no, never, read anything so utterly hopeless, and yet the poor author was full of hope.'

'CASA CORRADI,

'BORDIGHERA,

'April 15, 1890.

'DEAR MR. SEELEY,

'I am very glad to see by the advertisement in the *Saturday* that "Under Salisbury Spire" is in its fourth thousand. . . . I feel a little anxious about my Ken story, and do hope it will be up to the same level. I should be glad of any hints from you. I have in my mind a pair of brothers like Frank and Amyas in "Westward Ho!"

'Bordighera has many charms. We are in an

Italian home, close to the gate and walls of the old, old town. My friends have had the house with two Italian servants since October. It is much more like real Italian life than a villa in the new Bordighera. We go to George Macdonald's every Wednesday for his poetical readings, and every Sunday at 8 o'clock for Bible readings. He is an exceptional man, but he gets very dreamy and vague in his religious meditations. He read a beautiful poem of Henry Vaughan's last Sunday evening, and began the Sunday before with a verse of George Herbert's about Easter. Casa Corregio is quite a centre here. All sorts and conditions meet there, and they give a variety of entertainments. I hear that the deeds of love and charity G. M. does by taking people into his house who cannot afford to pay are countless. The weather for the last fortnight of my visit was so lovely; now we have deluges of rain. And the wood fires and stone floors are drawbacks when the weather is sunless.'

'HÔTEL BEAULIEU,

'CANNES,

'April 25.

'I am returning to England next week, when I will get Plumptre's *Life of Ken*, and begin to consider my scheme. I think I was almost the first to

connect Sir Thomas Browne's Evening Hymn with Ken's, and I remember I wrote a letter to the *Daily News* about it. We have had now a week of the most perfect weather, and the Riviera is at its best—the sea so intensely blue, and flowers in great profusion. Cannes is too large and fashionable for my taste, but I came here to be with friends, the Miss Temples, who are in this hotel every winter for five or six months.

'We were at Grasse yesterday, and found it, like Cannes, *en fête* for the reception of the President. He passed here at eight o'clock this morning, and there are crowds of tricolour flags flying all along the line of route. Salutes were fired from the French men-of-war. I should not wonder if the same generation will be crying one day, "Vive l'Empereur!" or "Vive le Roi!" with as much enthusiasm as they now shout "Vive la République!" . . . I am much refreshed, and quite ready for work, and joyfully expecting my dear boy from Hong-Kong, after seven years' separation.'

'July 11, 1890.

'I have returned from my quest at Winchester, fully instructed by the Dean and others as to what is known of Bishop Ken. I have obtained what is

rare, a sketch, quite authentic, of Ken's house at Winchester, pulled down in 1847. . . . I ended with a day and night at Salisbury, and really it was pleasant to find how many friends "Under Salisbury Spire" has made me. Browne, the bookseller there, told me he had sold between three and four hundred copies. I trust I shall succeed as well with Winchester. St. Cross will be a very interesting background to romance upon.'

'THE LIBERTY,
'WELLS,
August 24.

'I enclose a suggestion for a title from no less a person than Miss Yonge. . . . I am going to Longleat to-morrow, and to see Dean Plumptre this afternoon. I felt obliged to come, but it puts my book back a week. Wells is, as ever, charming.'

'WOODSIDE,
'LEIGH WOODS,
September 29.

'You will have the MS. of "Winchester Meads" to-morrow. I put my whole strength into this book, and spared no pains, but Ken has not the charm of George Herbert. I have tried to make the most of his saintliness and steadfastness. . . . Ken played the organ in his own little chamber in the prebendal

house, and he also played upon the viol and flute, like George Herbert. I am certain to like anything you design. And there can be no two opinions about the illustrations of my books, whatever there may be of the contents. . . . I am almost sure Wykehamists had only two half-yearly holidays; but I will consult my husband's cousin, Bruce Richmond, who has been head boy of Winchester, and is now gone up to Oxford. . . . I am so glad you like my opening. It was my aim to begin as much unlike "Salisbury Spire" as possible. But autobiographies run off my pen more easily.'

Two thousand copies of "Winchester Meads" were sold in a fortnight. An old Wykehamist, the Dean of Chichester, wrote to my mother about it thus:

'I read yesterday your most delightful story of Bishop Ken and his times. It is charming in every way, most of all in its sketch of that saintly Bishop's character. He is one of the most typical instances of the Christianity which the English Church produces—meek, gentle, terrible, firm, practical, loyal to God, in resisting the Revolution, of unblemished purity, forbearing towards those who had missed the truth, full of tenderness to the poor and suffering,

but brave and firm as a rock against influential transgressors. Bishop Moberly, our dear old Headmaster, in his sermon on the Beatitudes, takes him as the type of meekness, and contrasts him with Marlborough. . . . The memory of all the old Wykehamist scenes has played about me like a strain of bygone music while I read your book. . . . For Winchester is singularly dear for a lifetime to those who have come under its influences. It never ceases to live in us, as we still live in it. . . . Let me thank you again for waking up in so delightful a way the memory of dear old times and places, and in so painting to the life the likeness of the saintly Bishop.

‘Yours very truly,

‘W. RANDALL.’

‘1890 past as a tale that is told,’ she begins her yearly summary. ‘I started on the 24th of March for Bordighera, and all through that month of sunshine and brightness, rest and enjoyment, the thought was ever with me that Hugh, after more than seven years’ separation, was coming home. It gilded the beauty around me with a fairer light, and now the shadow of his departure hangs over me. He sails again for Singapore on January 8. My heart is heavy. If only I could think he was happy,

the sadness of losing him would be as great, but the pain would not be there. God bless him, is all I can say. I saw many interesting people at Bordighera, and was much impressed by George Macdonald's readings. A pure, enthusiastic soul is his. The snowy Alps, the rare beauty of sky and sea and flowers became part of me, and will live with me in memory for ever. In July I went to Winchester, to prepare for my book "Winchester Meads." I was kindly entertained there by the Miss Jacobs, and spent a day and night at Salisbury on my way home. There I found my book on George Herbert had brought me many friends. In August I went to Wells for a few days, and was heart-warmed by the loving welcome of old friends—Maria Eden, Lucy Johnson, and the dear Churches all bound up with me in the bundle of life when it was a joy to live. The lovely cathedral, the tinkling waters, the everlasting hills, the chiming bells, all had their tale to tell of youth and hope and early love. My children's sweet infancy came before me, and they were real children once more: the young men and women were the phantoms.

“Oh, memories! oh, past that is!”

Mrs. Bowen (Elizabeth Richmond), my husband's last surviving aunt, died on October 20. So the old

generation is passing, and I am taking the place of those who knew me in youth. . . . I have done a great deal of work this year—"Eastward Ho!" for girls, "Curly's Crystal," for boys, "Eventide Light," besides "Winchester Meads" and a shilling story; also a variety of short tales for magazines. I hope to hold on a little longer; but life is brief, and mine must soon be over. Such a truism this, and so hard to realize how soon death may come—nay, *must* come. In November I went to pay short visits to old friends near here. Dear Sir George Prevost, at eighty-six, full of love and brightness. *His* old age is eventide light. Then to Bowdon Hall, where once a handsome young mistress and mother bade me welcome. She, too, has passed away, and her place in the beautiful home knows her no more. She loved life, and, short as her time on earth was, she saw good days. A musical service in beloved Gloucester Cathedral can never be forgotten. The singing of the *Sanctus* in the choir by unseen singers was angelic. So profound was the stillness in the nave, crowded with worshippers, that one almost fancied one heard the rustle of angels' wings as the last notes died away. So now farewell to the old year, with all its sorrows and joys and vain regrets. God give me and mine grace to lay hold on the anchor of

the soul sure and steadfast, and to trust Him for the coming year, wherein is written what no mortal eye can foresee nor even dimly picture. But He knows, and trusting in Him, I leave the old, old years behind, and start on the new.'

LEIGH WOODS,

January 31, 1891.

'We spend our years as a tale that is told, and the last chapter of the tale is not far off for me. This year has its record of cloud and sunshine, care and freedom from care, health and want of health. In October I had a recurrence of my illness of 1886. The attacks of dyspeptic pain almost unbearable. But now as I write I am free from pain, and hope to set about my accustomed work with the New Year, and carry it through. My darling Hughie left us in January, and is now stationed at Penang. His letters have been full of love for us all, and he sent every one a Christmas gift from the East, thoughtfully chosen to suit each one's tastes. Soon after his departure I had the news of Cyril's marriage in Toronto, of which I had no previous warning. I think he has a charming wife, and it has been a faithful attachment, like Jacob's for Rachel. Emily is the name of my new daughter, from whom I have had several very loving letters. I pray God to bless her and my

dear Cyril, from whom I am separated, but who is always present in my heart, as he was in his singularly attractive childhood and early boyhood. . . . On December 11 dear Mrs. Kingsley's long, long and weary suffering ended, and she passed to her rest. She was a most sympathetic and helpful friend to me, so full of perfect understanding of all a mother's cares and joys. I think I have prospered this year in my work. My recent books introducing dear George Herbert, Bishop Ken, and Bishop Hall have been well received. Besides "Winifred's Journal," I have written several girls' stories, "Those Three," "Little Queenie," and a shilling story of the French War in 1779, "A Romance of the Undercliff." These books have brought me numerous letters, and the circle of my unseen and unknown friends grows wider, for which I am thankful, for I do seem to reach the hearts of many and to awaken sympathy. One of the brightest days of this year was my visit to Ripon, where dear Douglas is now a master. I was there for the Speech Day, and, as usual, found the dear boy making friends, who love and appreciate him. He is ever a "well-spring of delight" to his mother's heart. Let him take that comfort when, perhaps, in after years he may read these words, when my pen has ceased its labours for ever.'

The following year we see her working with her accustomed industry and cheeriness, and enjoying a holiday abroad with all her old buoyancy of spirit.

She wrote to Mr. Seeley in April :

‘I am starting on Easter Tuesday for a *much*-needed change. We are going to Glion, over Montreux. When this was decided the heat was really summer-like. Now all is different, and snow has covered my beds of hyacinths. It is extraordinary weather. I hope to be in London in May to see Lambeth, and to go down to Canterbury. I cannot put my story into shape till I have been to those two places. If there is anything that strikes you as helpful for me to read or see, you will tell me when I am in London.’

And from Glion :

‘In a shop at Vevey yesterday I bought “Les Diamants de Bristol. Recit de 1778. Traduit librement de l’Anglais.” But though there is a very pretty preface, the translator gives no name. It reads very well in French. It is published at Lausanne. We are in a delightful hotel, 2,000 feet above Montreux, which we reach by a funicular railway. We had four days of the most perfect

summer weather, and then rain, which is snow on the lower mountains, and the cold is now bitter. Everything is most comfortable, and as a lift takes us to our rooms on the very top floor, we don't find it inconvenient to be so high up. I do not lose my troublesome dyspepsia, but I feel better all round. I think "Lady Rachel Russell" will be a change from the ecclesiastics of former books. I shall soon get the story into shape when I have seen Lambeth. . . . The flowers here are enchanting, and Ruskin has not exaggerated the charm of this particular neighbourhood, though I cannot see why he should speak slightly of Italy, as he does when comparing the two countries.'

On December 31, 1892, she recalls some of the walks about Glion in her diary.

'The memory of flowers and mountains is a perpetual pleasure to me. The gentians were in great beauty. I shall never forget a walk taken with Douglas one Sunday afternoon, with the gentians, oxlips, and cuckoo-flowers all around us, the Dent du Midi always before us. One thing struck me as never before. When the snowy peaks appeared in the sky, their lower slopes wreathed in clouds, it

gave the feeling of something above and beyond earth—an earnest of the immortal life.

‘The gardens of the hotel were very wide and pretty, stretching above “dear, placid Leman.” On our way home Lucy and I spent a week in Paris. I liked to see her enjoyment, but did not feel well all the time, the remains of my illness of the previous winter trying me much. In June I went up to London for a few days to my dear friends the Edward Percivals, and consulted Dr. Broadbent. His prescriptions have proved most beneficial, and I have been better ever since, though I had one sharp attack in November, just after the Women’s Conference in Bristol, when I took the chair at one of the meetings. My work this year has been heavy, but I am not conscious of any failure of power. My principal book, “In the Service of Rachel, Lady Russell,” was written in July and August; “New Relations,” “Bluebell,” and “Bristol Bells” (a story of Chatterton) earlier in the year, besides four which have been started since. I had a delightful day at Canterbury preparing for my book, and another at Lambeth, so full of historic interest.

‘There have been many blessings this year, no great anxiety, no severe illnesses amongst those I love. If the strain of incessant work sometimes

depresses me, I feel I have my reward. I have been able thus to do more for my children than otherwise would have been possible, and my books, translated into other languages and circulated in the Tauchnitz edition, have brought me innumerable friends whom I shall never see. One is the lovely Countess Chérémétieff, of St. Petersburg, whose letters and photograph of herself in the exquisite Russian Court dress, also one with her children, have been an intense pleasure to receive. I certainly can say I am rich in friends, and I have far more love and kindness shown me than I deserve. Perhaps it is for my good that my greatest earthly wish is still ungratified. Before I leave them, I did so hope to see my children's children, but God knows best. Dear Cyril and his wife seem very happy in their little home in Toronto, but as yet they have no children. Hughie is at Penang. I wish he, too, had a wife to love and care for him.

‘The death of Tennyson has made this year sadly memorable. His voice was the voice which awoke all the romance of youth, and my love for his poetry and for Longfellow's was like the lifting of a veil that brought me nearer to all the beauty of God's fair world, and the treasures lying hid in it for eyes that can see and ears that can hear. Perhaps no words

are more fitting with which to close these last hours of 1893 than his swan-song :

‘“ Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark !
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark ;

‘“ For tho’ from out the bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.”

God grant it ! . . . So again I take another step forward towards the timeless country, and with blessings on my children, dearer to me if possible as the years roll on, I say farewell to the old year.’

The Countess Chérémétieff mentioned here had been an ardent lover of my mother’s books since her tenth birthday, when she had been presented with “*Brothers and Sisters*,” and so first made acquaintance with them. The letters in which she introduced herself to my mother gave the following interesting account of her family and connections :

‘ I think I will tell you about myself, so that you may at least know the antecedents of your unknown correspondent. I am the daughter of the late Grand Duchess Mary of Russia (by her second marriage with Count Strogonoff), the grand-daughter of the Emperor Nicholas ; and on my father’s side I am

descended from the family who conquered Siberia in the time of John the Terrible. My mother's first husband was the son of Eugène Beauharnais (grandson of the Empress Josephine). I am the youngest of the family. My beloved brothers and sisters were, and are, all in all to me. One of my brothers (the "light of my eyes," as you say of your son) was killed in the Turkish War of 1877, and though I was then not seventeen, I have never been the same since. My eldest brother, Nicholas, died last year in Paris; the two who remain are married, one to the sister of the famous General Scobelev, the other to the daughter of the Prince of Montenegro. My sisters—I do not know what terms are endearing enough to call them by—are married, one to a Prince of Baden, and unfortunately lives in Germany; the other to a Prince of Oldenburg, and happily they live here. We none of us have many children, but still there are nieces and nephews of different ages. I am very different from you, in that I do not care for all children. On the other hand, youth has a great charm for me, and I like to be with youths and girls. I never could appreciate *babies*, or even play with them properly. My husband is descended from a Field-Marshal who was guide, philosopher and friend to Peter the Great. At present he commands our

Emperor's Cossack Guard, and so we are almost always where their Majesties are. When I can I go to the Caucasus, as I love the East as passionately as I hate the North. I see by your books that you admire Florence and the Riviera, where I spent part of my childhood. I can assure you the beauty of those places pales in comparison with the splendours of the Caucasus.'

Some of the other letters from this correspondent are dated from the heart of what she calls 'that dear and splendid country,' and also from Gatchina. They are so full of glowing and sincere admiration for my mother's stories that it is difficult to forbear quoting from them.

'Lately I have been thinking of you and thanking you more than ever. Yesterday I finished "Her Season at Bath," and now I am reading with the children "To-day and Yesterday." The other day the English bookseller in St. Petersburg, knowing my taste, sent me a parcel of your books. You should have seen the children's joy when I showed them what it contained. I am sorry you have been overworked, and trust that your stay in Switzerland has done you good. The scenery there would seem to me rather like cardboard after the Caucasus. I

have been looking at estates beyond the great mountains, and hope to arrange a little paradise for myself there where I can spend the few weeks in the year that I have undisturbed. I thought much of you when passing the great chain of mountains—a glorious frontier between Europe and Asia truly. It is something so grand that I have heard only the Himalaya range can be compared to it. . . . I am really afraid of annoying you with my requests, but your list of books is very incomplete, and I did so much want to know all their titles. I see you have only sent me the later ones. I possess many published by Seeley and Co. that are not mentioned, so please forgive my troubling you again, and let me have a really complete list this time. My old favourites, “Heights and Valleys,” “Mrs. Mainwaring’s Journal,” and “Christabel Kingscote,” are not mentioned, and so I think there may be others left out that I do not know. I am now reading “Those Three,” and have just finished “Eventide Light.” Our Empress was reading it at the same time, and she has asked me to send her any other of your books I may have, as she enjoys them so much. When the Emperor’s daughter, the Grand Duchess Xenia, had typhus four years ago, she much enjoyed a book of yours called “Salome” (also not

mentioned in the list). I am ashamed to give you so much trouble, but then I think that you cannot really mind, as it must be so pleasant to know that you have done good and given pleasure by your writings. Though I much appreciate your historical tales, I think I prefer those of modern life. They are also more generally popular in Russia. If you are so kind as to write again, please tell me the names and ages of your children. My son is twelve years old, and is called Serge; my daughter ten, and is called Sophie. I have a niece in Iflis who is also one of your fervent admirers, so you see you are read and loved in all parts of our immense fatherland.'

One June day a tall, dark-bearded man, and a slim, agile boy with closely-cropped hair, attired in a Russian sailor blouse and loose trousers, drove up to Woodside without having given any warning of their coming. It was Serge and his tutor, who had been visiting the Marquis of Lorne, and sight-seeing in London the day before, and thought it the most natural thing to do to run down to Bristol and take by surprise the writer of stories the boy had learnt to know and love so well in his home at St. Petersburg.

'We came to Bristol to see *you*, madam,' was his courteous answer, given with a funny, jerky little bow, and a twinkle in his soft brown eyes, when my mother proposed taking him to see the cathedral and Clifton College. He was free from all shyness, spoke English very prettily (his tutor could only converse in French and German), and proved a most lively and charming guest.

'Serge is so taken up with his studies,' his mother wrote afterwards, 'that we have hardly any time to read together the charming book you gave him. Both he and M. Struvé cannot forget your kind reception of them, and speak with delight of the hours they spent at Woodside and of the young people they met there. . . . I do not wonder that you feel tired sometimes. The mere physical strain of so much writing must be enormous.'

A year before my mother died the Countess Chérémétieff sent her a photograph of her daughter, by that time grown into a young beauty, with a face of singular purity and sweetness. 'From your grateful and devoted Sophie' was the inscription, and it pleased my mother greatly to think that this ideal type of maiden had been brought up on her books in a far-away country.

Her fondness for youth could cheerfully bear the test of having as boarders in her house a succession of High School girls. Just as she had never been too busy to read to and amuse her children when they were young, she was now always ready to find time to talk to the girls under her care in the evening after their supper, trying to awaken their interest in things beyond their school life, and to widen the somewhat limited horizon of the average school-girl. When they had left her and gone into the world, she never forgot to write to them on their birthdays and send them a book.

‘She stands quite apart for me from all the friends of my childhood,’ writes one of the two Irish girls who were the first my mother had to live with her, ‘and not only of my childhood, for amongst all her hosts of friends, and in spite of her busy life, she never forgot her two children of the good old High School days, and I shall always look back with more than pleasure to the times I have stayed at Woodside since. . . . Somehow or other I can never think of Mrs. Marshall as an ordinary friend; she was so much more. She was a real mother to us in those Clifton days. I shall never forget the feeling of desolation when our mother left us at Worcester

Terrace, the first time we had ever been away from her, and how Mrs. Marshall took her place and mothered us, and made us feel in no time as if we had known and loved her all our lives. . . . I feel as if I should like people to know how good she was to us, and how she made us love her.'

When these girls lost their mother she wrote to them :

'MY DEAR CHILDREN,

'It is indeed a loss, and I am grieved for you both. Never, surely, could there be a mother who made her children's interests the first thought more entirely than she did. There is *no* loss in life like this. Other ties may be in measure replaced, but the tie which binds the child to the mother when broken makes life absolutely different. This I know, though I lost my mother when I had a husband and children about me. She wrote to me every Saturday for years, and it was long before I could bear to see the letters on Sunday morning and know *hers* was not there.'

And this is how she congratulated another 'old' girl, Nora Kirk, on becoming engaged to her tutor while working at Oxford for classical honours :

‘I am indeed delighted to send you my hearty congratulations. I have been thinking of you and the coming class list. Now, as you have taken a “First” in the engaged ranks, I suppose the other may not be of very great importance. I am sure I should congratulate Mr. Marett also. There has been a wave of marriage passing over your house, has there not? The Oxford dons seem bent on marriage. As you perhaps know, Alice Bruce’s sister Lily has married Mr. Mattheson. Her aunt, our dear friend Miss Napier, is passing away, to the great grief of many. . . . “The family” send their love and congratulations. Mr. Marshall is very pleased. He takes a deep interest in these matters, and remarked you were the first of the Woodside girls who had announced an engagement.’

‘I think she was a wonderfully kind friend to all of us,’ Mrs. Marett writes, ‘and we were, as you know, very fond of her. I always admired, too, the way she worked, and the way in which she could take an interest in everybody and everything around her, however busy she was. Your mother had a charm about her that always attracted people, and made them enjoy being with her.’

That the remaining years of her life were as full as

ever of works and cares, if not more full, her letters and diary amply testify.

In February, 1893, she writes :

‘ I have pretty well thought out my Sidney story. I must get to Penshurst soon for details. I hope to work out Sir Philip’s character, coloured so strongly as it is by the atmosphere of the times. Everyday stories are legion, so are all stories for that matter. I do wonder to see in the *Spectator* this week a reviewer writing, “ We confess a hearty liking for Mrs. J——’s novels.” You know she is capable of using “ like ” for “ as,” and the enormity “ different to ” appears constantly in her pages, and “ between him and I,” and yet her stories are said to be “ bright, pure, and wholesome.” . . . When I was staying with Dr. Percival at Rugby, I was driven to Bilton to see the beautiful old house where Addison was henpecked by Lady Warwick. Will not this do for a story some time? All the Warwick pictures are there, and the old ladies of eighty and ninety descended from the family of Warwick. I hope I may see you when I am in London for a few days in July.’

To Mrs. W. T. Arnold.

‘SCHOOL HOUSE,
‘RUGBY.

‘DEAREST HENRIETTA,

‘This seems an appropriate place to write from with the new form of address which you tell me to use. My window looks out on the immemorial elms of the close, from which the boys have just departed after cricket. It is like a bit of ancient history, and Tom Brown lives again. How the generations of boys come and go! How like the public school is to life—this ever-changing and varied life of hopes and fears, joys and sorrows! I came from Bowdon to-day, my niece Constance Geldart insisting on taking care of me as far as Manchester. I found Bowdon really charming. A great show of rhododendrons in my sister-in-law’s garden, and a wide expanse of turf. We drove to Rostherne on Thursday—a most enchanting view of the lake or mere from the old church porch. Do you know it? I dined with a cousin in the second degree last evening—a very clever, scientific doctor, Arthur Ransome. And they have a delightful dog, who immediately made overtures of friendship to me. I did miss the dogs in my two other visits. Mrs. Geldart is Mrs. Brightwen’s sister-in-law. She

showed me the beautiful photographs of Stanmore, where all the pets live and flourish. They (the pets) must have a happy home, and never wish to die. I did so love to read your dear little letter. This is to wish you both *bon voyage* [they were going abroad], and with my love. Always think of me as

‘ Your affectionate friend,

‘ EMMA MARSHALL.’

‘ *The last night of 1893.*—A year marked with many losses of friends, who have passed thitherward. On March 18 Sir George Prevost, as corn fully ripe, was gathered into the Paradise of God. No memory can be sweeter than that which he has left of holiness and purity of life. To be in his house was like leaving the glare and bustle of a hurrying world to breathe an atmosphere of peace and rest. This was my happiness for several years, and I feel it was a privilege to have been his friend. In June Mr. Emeris passed to his rest, a good and true friend, to whom I owed a happy month at Bordighera in 1890. Next came the death of Charles Moberly, on July 17, after a long illness. I saw him last in June, and bid him my farewell. There was a time when my friendship with him was a very close one. He was a man of great gifts, but all his aims were

unfulfilled. For this, those who knew him best can divine the reason. In July I went to Norwood, to see one whom, I may say without exaggeration, I loved passionately in my early married life. She was lying prostrate with the fell disease, which gripped her so that it often deprived her of the power of speech, and rendered her unable to read or write. She was very sweet and loving, and all the old feeling towards her rushed back upon me like a full tide. I was with her two hours, and then bid her my last good-bye. She died on Christmas Eve, and was laid to her rest in the Palm Churchyard at Wells on the Holy Innocents' Day. I am, perhaps, one of a very few who can recall her in her brilliant and engaging youth. When ill myself, I have thought so much of her, and sometimes think I shall be soon following her to where sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

'I have not had many months of health this year, my old trouble of dyspepsia beginning again in April. I, however, got away and had some pleasant visits in May. Especially pleasant was one to the dear William Arnolds at Manchester; and four days at Rugby were very delightful. In July I spent a charming week at the Deanery at Salisbury, and revisited Bemerton and saw Wilton. From Salis-

bury I went to Penshurst, to get up the neighbourhood for my story, "Penshurst Castle in the Time of Sir Philip Sidney." I had an introduction to Lord De Lisle, and so access to the stately old house and park, and hope I realized it all for the book. It was published in November, "The Close of St. Christopher" in October, "The Children of Dean's Croft" in November, with several smaller stories.

'Hughie is still at Penang, Cyril at Toronto. I hunger for the sound of their voices and the sight of their dear, dear faces. Another year passed and the *great* wish unfulfilled. . . . We had an invasion of influenza a month ago. On my husband and myself it fell most severely. I am still weak and constantly feverish, far from being fit to take up my pen and the duties of everyday life. Strength may return in time, but the sands are running low; and what with the losses of so many I have known and loved and the consciousness of broken health, my hold on life seems weaker. But I earnestly desire as a New Year gift what beautiful Mary Clifford in her little leaflet calls "touch with God." It is this that I long for as the hart desireth the water-brook. I can only say, "My soul gaspeth for the stream of living waters." So with a blessing on all I love, I say farewell to '93, in hope that

whatever the New Year may bring, it may bring peace and love, and that my children may cling to each other when I am no longer here.'

In the following spring she wrote 'The First Light on the Eddystone,' and gathered material for her story of 'Kensington Palace.'

To R. Seeley, Esq.

'NORTHREPPS HALL,

'NORWICH,

'April 30, 1894.

'DEAR MR. SEELEY,

'I got an order to see the Palace through the sub-Dean of the Chapel Royal. It is very disappointing, so rambling and desolate. William's and Mary's rooms are built up, and no view from them. I could hear of no chapel, except the large place used now for coals by the housekeeper. . . . However, I have some idea of the rooms now and the oak cornice with W. M. running round.'

'WOODSIDE,

'LEIGH WOODS,

'July 30.

'I am getting through my book. I think it will be about the length of "Colston's Days." I find it very difficult to put a real picture of the Queen before others as *I* now see it myself. Her youth and her enormous difficulties never struck me before.

It was said to me the other day, "And such a dull person for you to choose!" I have made as much as I could of the fire at Whitehall. Canon Ainger preached a most admirable sermon on the bad novels of the day. I, alas! was at Salisbury that Sunday, and did not hear it; but my daughters have given me a report of it. He seemed fired with indignation against the generally degraded taste of these times in literature. . . . I am afraid I could not write two long historical books in one year. The effort of getting all the facts into order, and escaping blunders in dates, makes the writing of these stories far more laborious than one supposes. . . . Most people think, I dare say, that I find it very easy. I like the subject of Kett. I know all that part of the country, and in my childhood used to ride on my pony to Kett's Castle, on Mousehold. Edward VI., too, would be a new personality. If you think it really best to make a 3s. 6d. volume for the spring instead of 1s., I will do it. I like the idea of Handel very much for the 5s. book.'

To Miss Eva Shackleton.

'November 4, 1894.

'MY DEAR EVA,

'This is to wish you many happy returns of your birthday. I am so glad to have seen you

recently, and to find my little Irish girl in the brown check frock grown into the young woman whom I am glad and pleased to number among my friends. I am sure all your mother's wishes and hopes for you both are realized, and that is a comforting thought for you. The years roll on so quickly that everything is like a dream, even to you who are young, much more to me who am old. We have had literally no summer, a few lovely days to vary many pouring wet ones. We were at Ascot for five weeks in August and September, and enjoyed it, in spite of wet weather. The heather and ling were in their full glory, and Windsor Forest and Park close to our door. We had an order for the private apartments in the Castle, and went to the State apartments several times. I spent one long heavenly day on the Thames, between Caversham and Wallingford, with Douglas, his companionship always deepening my enjoyment of things. He had a narrow escape three weeks ago. His bicycle skidded on a wet road, and he and it were thrown under a heavily-laden cart of luggage going to Lord Ripon's. He heard piercing shrieks from women, who ran out of their cottages, thinking he must be killed; but his presence of mind, thank God, saved him. He lay quite motionless, and the wheels crushed his

bicycle, but left him untouched. The horse's hoof just bruised his shoulder, and that was all! My best love to you, my dear Eva, and to Azelie also.

'Ever your affectionate friend,

'EMMA MARSHALL.'

On the last night of 1894 she writes:

'This year has been marked by several troubles, of which it is impossible to write.

'Old friends have passed away. In March dear Mrs. Reynolds Lloyd passed to her rest. A true and most charming friend, one of the old school, who made an art of conversation. I knew her in my young days, and she loved me faithfully to the end. She was very fond of Lucy. There is nothing socially in Clifton to take the place of her luncheon parties. I did not recover from the effects of influenza for a long time. On Easter Eve I got a severe chill and dyspeptic agonies of the same character as those I had in 1886 and 1891. I became very thin, and was tired of being told how ill I looked, so in April I went to London and again consulted Sir William Broadbent, who did me a great deal of good. After a few days with my good and kind friends the E. Percivals, Douglas and I went to Norfolk, and stayed at Northrepps Hall. I enjoyed seeing the

places so familiar to my mother—The Cottage, where my sister, the first Emma, died at eleven years old; The Hill House, where I was born and given her name; and The Hall, where Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, who worked for the abolition of the slave trade, lived. From there I went to Earlham Hall, and was entertained with the utmost kindness by Canon and Mrs. Ripley. Another pleasant few days in London with the Kennaways, and then I went to Bath, and to Dunster, to stay with the Battesbys, who have a lovely house under the rolling violet hills of Exmoor. I came home and worked hard at “Kensington Palace,” which was finished by July 31; and then we all, including Max, spent a very happy month at Ascot, leaving Woodside in the hands of painters. I must not forget to mention my delightful visit to Salisbury Deanery for the Home-Reading Union.’

This seems an appropriate place to quote the Dean of Salisbury’s reminiscences of my mother and his opinion of her work, which he has very kindly sent me :

‘It is more than ten years ago since I first saw Mrs. Marshall, who was then the guest of a lady resident in our Close who had heard of Mrs. Mar-

shall's intention of writing a story about Salisbury. When Mrs. Hussey brought her to the Deanery, I found she was working on the story that has been so popular—"Under Salisbury Spire"—and our acquaintance very soon became an intimate friendship. It led to our having many pleasant visits from her, and an intellectual intercourse long to be remembered. What must have impressed others about Mrs. Marshall, as it did me, was the earnest attempt to realize for herself every particular regarding the persons, scenes and times she wished to depict. She was remarkably free from literary prejudices, and delighted to pick out all that was pleasantest in the lives of great historic figures. From time to time I had the good fortune to introduce her to books which she had not before known, and I was always impressed with the happiness of her criticisms, and her evident desire to get at the real meaning of an author. Readers of her many volumes must often have been struck with the careful touches by which traits of character, as in the case of Nicholas Ferrar, Bishop Ken, Handel and Purcell, are slightly and skilfully produced. . . . Mrs. Marshall was a true daughter of the Anglican Church, and although she had a real artistic appreciation of the way in which art and music can minister to

religious worship, she was always careful to respect and admire those who preferred a simple and unadorned form of public service. The book in which Rachel Lady Russell is a prominent personage affords a striking example of the catholicity of her writings. In the course of her life the same temper and disposition made her value different types of character, and won for her the friendship of many who, though belonging to different schools of thought, entirely sympathized in all her literary endeavours, and knew how anxious was her wish to add something to literature which can attract and elevate the young. When the Home-Reading Union visited Salisbury, two or three years ago, she was our guest, and enjoyed most keenly the lectures and excursions which gave a character and zest to the proceedings. It was delightful to hear her remark that Professor Jebb's lecture on Dr. Johnson was quite an epoch in her life. In attempting to write now the briefest record of one who deserves to be remembered as a real labourer in a delightful region of literature, I do not want to introduce anything of a personal nature. I have always in my own mind compared her with some few of the literary characters I have known, and should venture to say fearlessly that she always held before her

ideals of manly worth and true feminine dignity. Her heroines hardly perhaps approach the Violet of Miss Yonge's "Heartsease," or the Anne Elliot of Miss Austen's "Persuasion"; but grace, refinement, happy sense of humour, and a wit which never gives a wound, are the characteristics of many of them. Especially is this the case in her last story, which, alas! she did not live to finish, but which will be dear to the many who remember with admiration her hard work and her kindly consideration for her friends.'

Among friends made about this time were the Bishop of Bath and Wells and Mrs. Kennion. The latter writes:

'I valued your mother's friendship very much. I first met her at my uncle the Dean of Salisbury's, at the Deanery, Salisbury, where she was a very honoured guest. I felt we at once became friends, as I had so long read and loved her books. She was pleased when I told her how much they had been appreciated at Adelaide, in South Australia, and how I had read several of them aloud at our Cathedral working parties. I told her that several girls had begun to read George Herbert after hearing "Under Salisbury Spire," and had been inspired by "The

Banks of the Ouse" to study Cowper's poems (not often read by the young). I can see her smile of pleasure now as I told her this, and added how much good I thought the true and high tone of her stories did for old and young.

'She afterwards paid us two visits here in Wells, where she had been so much beloved and respected formerly. She stayed with us during the days of the Diocesan Conference, and we and our guests enjoyed her society very much. It was quite fascinating to me when she spoke of her early married days at Wells, when she lived in the quaint old house (supposed to be haunted) in the Market-place. Older friends are more competent than I can be to describe her life and brave, unselfish character. I can only add that we felt honoured to receive her as our guest here, in the old Palace, of which she has written so beautifully in her story, "Under the Mendips," and that I cherish a very warm memory of her friendship and kindness.'

With the MS. of 'The White King's Daughter,' in March, 1895, my mother wrote to Mr. Seeley:

'I have done my best, but it may be said that I have worked this period of history dry. I feel a little out of it when I read of the tremendous suc-

cesses scored by volumes of sketchy tales which take the public fancy. I have been trying to read "Doreen," but have stuck in it, and I wonder if people do that with my books. One such pure, simple story as the first in "Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush" is worth cartloads of current fiction, with its unpleasantness and misery and suicide brought about by illegal *love* (so called). There surely is a very degenerate taste abroad. Even a harmless story by Margaret Deland, "Philip's Wife," must make a married man love another woman. This phase of society I cannot touch. Then there is ——, a story of low, sordid crime and misery ending with suicide. I call it a detestable story, its coarseness unredeemed by a single touch of higher and better things. I find Sir Walter Scott's letters quite a refreshment to turn to. How simple-hearted and free from affectation he was! One wonders what he would think of the present state of things.

'I read all biographies and recollections, and finished yesterday my friend Dean Boyle's. The book is amusing, and remarkable for its kindness and charity.'

To the Dean of Salisbury.

‘WOODSIDE, LEIGH WOODS,

‘BRISTOL,

‘*March 3, 1895.*

‘DEAR MR. DEAN,

‘I was so fortunate as to get your “Recollections” in our Grosvenor box last week. Need I say how much I have enjoyed reading the book, so full of messages from a vanished past, and so freshly brought before me? You have indeed produced out of the treasure-trove of memory things new and old, all in the light of a never-failing charity. It seems to me that in this respect your “Recollections” stand out most favourably when compared with those of many of your contemporaries. There is not a single unkind word throughout. Much as you may differ from those of whom you write, it is always in a wide and beautiful spirit. I am reminded of Sir Arthur Helps’ words: “Herein lies the great trial of a man, that his sincerity should have kindness in it, and his kindness *truth.*” You have come out of the trial victoriously. I hope I have not said too much, but on the ground of the friendship you are so good as to show me I trust I may be forgiven. In my early days at Wells I used to see many of whom you write, the Taits, Jowett, Goldwin Smith, and Bishop

Wilberforce. Dean Church, silent and reticent, used to come to his brother's, where we met him. When I again have the pleasure of seeing you, I will tell you how my young enthusiasm was cruelly crushed by Goldwin Smith, and how utterly humbled I felt.

‘ I hope you and Mrs. Boyle have escaped influenza. It has been all around us, and some very serious cases—200 boys in the college, and seventeen masters; the headmaster much broken down by his attack. Who will go to Rugby? There is doubtless a flutter in the public school regions. We are told the Dean of Gloucester will come to be our Bishop. I personally have a great regard for Dr. Percival, and I am so pleased at his promotion. It was expected he would come to Bristol, about which there were conflicting views. I hear from my Wells friends that their new Bishop wins golden opinions. He is making great alterations at the Palace, which Lord Arthur Harvey thought perfect in its arrangements. I find Austin Dobson's eighteenth-century pictures very pleasant reading. We have now Balfour's book in the house, but I have not begun it yet. The flood of novels is amazing. I feel myself not in the running with the present style. I have just finished “The White King's Daughter,” in which I tell the

story of a forgotten Princess, Charles I.'s second daughter.

‘ With my best love to Mrs. Boyle and congratulations on your book,

‘ Believe me, dear Mr. Dean,

‘ Most sincerely yours,

‘ EMMA MARSHALL.’

I have found it as impossible to give an account of my mother's life without deviating into the history of some of her numerous friendships as to avoid frequent allusion to the sons and daughters in each of whom individually she was wrapt up. On looking back, her friends, like her children, seem to have been part of herself, her peculiar large-heartedness making it easy for her to pour out the same unstinted measure of sympathy and of loyal loving affection on all. In June of this year she opened her diary before the accustomed time to lament the death of one with whom she had of late years become very intimate—Mrs. Edward Percival, a sister of the late Sir David Wedderburn :

‘ It has been my sad lot to write my memories of many—alas ! how many !—of my contemporaries and friends. Little did I think when a year ago I went to consult Sir William Broadbent with dear Louisa

Percival, who was so tenderly concerned and full of anxiety about me, that she, sixteen years younger than I am, should be taken hence before me, in the full vigour of her womanhood, perfect in her relations of wife and mother. When she went to their London house, in Kensington Park Gardens, in April, after nursing her sister in Scotland, she seemed in her usual good health, but she was taken ill with pneumonia on the 20th, and after one week's weary struggle from want of sleep and breath, she died on the 27th.

'For the last seventeen years she has been the truest and kindest friend to me and my children. She carried on the love her dear mother Lady Wedderburn bore for me, and which I felt for her. From the time of her death, in '82, my friendship with the daughter deepened. Many a happy visit have I had at her house high above Gloucester, in the Cotswolds, and there every January my three youngest children have gone for a week of enjoyment in a home where, with a marked absence of anything like pretension or show, a large house party of the young was made welcome. Of her I can say that her most striking characteristic was her absolute sincerity and truthfulness. Sham and pretension were impossible in her presence. She despised airs,

but her amusement at the expense of those who gave themselves airs was always good-natured. I never knew—I never shall know again—a mother who identified herself so completely with her children. No governess was allowed to take them in hand in their childhood. The boys were prepared for school by her, and took scholarships at Charterhouse. The elder ones—John, now at the Bar, and Philip, in India, having passed seventh into the Civil Service after taking his degree at Balliol—have lost a friend as well as a mother.

‘I had previously arranged my yearly visit to them in town for May 7, so at Mr. Percival’s express desire I went to the desolate house. I found him wonderfully supported, trying to fulfil all her last wishes; for she was conscious to the end. She was a woman of intellectual gifts of a very high order, and she earnestly worked in her own neighbourhood on behalf of friendless girls, and all who needed help. Her powers of conversation were remarkable, and she was a most humorous companion as well as an instructive one. What passed between her soul and God in those last days we know not, but there was perfect peace and calmness at the approach of death, and He took her quietly to Himself.’

‘*December 31, 1895.*—The record of this year has

been a sad one. The last six months have been fraught with anxieties and cares. On the 2nd of July my dear son Hugh came home on leave from Penang. The joy of seeing him once more was soon clouded by finding the life in the East is so distasteful to him, and now the last day of the year has been a very sad one to me. Hughie has left us again, and I think it has been the most painful parting I have yet known. I shall feel his last kisses and hear his good-bye while I live—so sad, so very sad, he is. God bless and comfort him! I am powerless to do so, but dearly do I love him, and pray that brighter days may be in store for him.

‘ In November dear Christabel met with a bicycle accident in London; she fractured her knee-cap, and is still quite helpless, and laid up in the house of her friends in Great College Street, Westminster. That, too, has been a sad cloud over me, and I missed her bright presence and pretty face at our Christmas gathering—the first Christmas she has ever been absent from her home. It will be a long time, I fear, before she can be her wonted active self again. She has been very brave, and has tried to write cheerfully to me, though it must have cost her a great effort to do so. I have been confined so much to the house owing to the persistent cough

following influenza. What with this and sorrow and anxiety and cares, I have felt much older lately, as if the spring of life was broken. Nevertheless I have done a great deal of work, and so far my head has been as strong as ever. I wrote my annual girl's story, "The Lady's Manor," in the spring, and "The White King's Daughter"; also my story for the *Boys' and Girls' Companion*, "Sir Benjamin's Bounty," and one for *Friendly Leaves*, "Abigail Templeton"; added to these, the greater part of a serial for the *Sunday Magazine*, and my historical story for Seeley, "The Master of the Musicians." This sustained output of literary work is not accomplished without effort, but I hope to continue it while strength lasts. But the river is running swiftly towards the ocean, and it cannot be very long before time will be no more for me. Old age has no earthly future; one must just take one day as it comes, and say "Lead Thou me on." The happiness of my children has always been my chief longing and desire. . . . I can only commend them to God and say, "It is well with them." They are all ever present with me in their charming childhood. Sometimes I see them more vividly as little children than as young men and women. Happy days when they were all under one roof, all sleeping peacefully

in their little beds, safe in their Heavenly Father's keeping! And are they less in His keeping now? No. I would not be so faithless as to think so. Let me trust them to Him for the coming years. In all the changes and chances of this mortal life let them hold to His presence.'

It will be seen how constantly my mother speaks of old age in her diary; yet few who looked at her could have dreamed of associating her with it. Lucas Malet once wrote of her mother, Mrs. Kingsley: 'I have to remind myself sometimes that old age may be the cause of her not recovering. But it is so difficult to think of old age in connection with so brilliant, and lovely, and sympathetic a woman.' So it was with my mother. To think of her as an old lady, or even as becoming one, was almost an impossibility. She was alert and active, and held herself straight and erect till the last. Her deep-set eyes had a curious azure clearness; her skin, except at the time she suffered from acute dyspepsia, retained much of its youthful smoothness and delicacy. The whole outer woman, indeed, expressed the indomitable spirit within, whose courage no trials could quench. I remember in 1894 I was with her in a country house, when she opened a

letter one Sunday morning at breakfast, which contained perhaps the worst news she had ever received. She turned white, and for a while it seemed as if the blow would completely shatter her. But an hour or two later our host said to me, 'Your mother has gone to church. Upon my word, I could not help watching her with admiration as she crossed the lawn. Her step is as vigorous and elastic as a girl's.'

Thus bravely she lived down never-ending sorrows and disappointments, and faced the world with cheerfulness. Such was her extraordinary vitality that she could always feel it was a joy to be alive on a fair spring day. In the early morning of spring and summer, up to the last year of her life, she took a walk before breakfast in the Leigh Woods, coming back often with her hands full of wild roses; or on the Observatory Hill, where she and my father had so often walked as lovers in the days long ago. She was always down first, and read prayers at 8.30. No special room in the house was appropriated for her writing. Generally she wrote at the dining-room table, clearing up her papers when it was laid for meals. A vast amount of correspondence and often a chapter of a story were got through between breakfast and luncheon. In the afternoon, unless much pressed to finish a book, she rarely touched

a pen. When not out paying a round of calls, she would sit in her drawing-room by the fireside knitting her husband's socks and son's golf-stockings, and dipping into the literature of the day. Beside her was the devoted, demure old black-and-tan dachshund, with his fore-feet in the fender, to whom she had become more attached than to any of his predecessors. 'Max,' she would say to him, 'the sad day must come when we shall have to say good-bye to you, and lay you under the turf. Oh Max, dear good old dog, what a sad day that will be!' But Max survived her. He became acquainted with the restraints of a muzzled and London life after eleven years' supreme liberty in the country, and now rests at Hendon, far away from the scenes of his happy youth and maturity.

My mother was a beautiful knitter, and very expert at artistic fancy-work. She liked things around her to be pretty and well ordered, and took not a little justifiable pride in this last home which she had created and maintained for others by her own unaided gallant endeavours. The garden, shaded by a venerable oak-tree, was a delight to her, and though she did not actually work in the garden herself, she knew and watched fondly every plant and flower growing in it.

In the winter she hung cocoanuts and marrow-bones outside her window to attract and entertain the tom-tits and chaffinches, and she used to listen enraptured to the song of the thrush and blackbird that sing so divinely in the neighbourhood of the Leigh Woods. Occasionally in the summer holidays, when the house was full of an idle, and sometimes noisy, party, she would retire to her bedroom to write, locking herself up there in communion with George Herbert, Nicolas Ferrar, Wren, or whoever the particular worthy introduced into her romance might be. At luncheon-time she would appear with a good appetite and a pleased face, announcing that her pen had been flying like Pegasus, and that she had done a good morning's work.

Often she worked late into the night. I see her now, with the lamp close to her manuscript, her small hand scurrying over sheet after sheet without a pause, the veins on her forehead starting from the fatigue she was too engrossed to notice. As I recall the picture, I think of the young man in Castle Street, Edinburgh, who watched a hand writing on the other side of the road, and marvelled at its untiring industry—a greater, but surely a not more pathetically indefatigable hand than my mother's.

VII
BRISTOL

1896—1898

LAST YEARS OF LIFE AND WORK

‘ I was ever a fighter ; so one fight more,
The best and the last.’

R. BROWNING.

‘ Grow old along with me,
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made.’

R. BROWNING.

VII
BRISTOL

1896—1898

LAST YEARS OF LIFE AND WORK

WHAT more there is to tell of the now numbered years of her life can be told for the most part in her letters and brief annual retrospects better than I can tell it. The book on which her energies were chiefly engaged in 1896 was 'A Haunt of Ancient Peace.'

'WOODSIDE,

'*July* 18, 1896.

'DEAR MR. SEELEY,

'I put down a few titles, not with much hope that they are any good. I have described a scene at Chelsea, or, as Donne calls it, "Chelsy," when he preached Lady Magdalen Herbert's funeral sermon. I bring in there Donne and George Herbert, with his mother, and give the story of Mrs. Ferrar's foundation at Little Gidding, and of

Nicholas' ordination on the Trinity Sunday of the year 1626. I feel a little weighted by this book because your expectations tend to destroy spontaneity. I have not been so well for three or four years as lately, till the sun caught me last Saturday when I exposed myself to it at three o'clock going into Clifton to see a dying friend. I hope for next spring you may think of a more modern subject for my 3s. 6d. volume. Two historical stories a year are a little tax on both author and reader. How Mrs. — has been boomed and fêted because of her new novel, which one reviewer likens to "Esmond," and calls the heroine a glorious woman—a murderess worse than any *fin-de-siècle* woman in fiction!

'I am going to meet Miss Yonge at dinner tomorrow. I feel a little like her—as if the world wanted more sensation and go than she or I can provide. I read "The Heir of Redcliffe," and cried over it long before I was married, and "Heartsease" and "The Daisy Chain." Now girls of the age I was then don't care for these books. I tried reading "The Heir of Redcliffe" to some girls not long ago. They seemed glad when I stopped!

'I see you are at Sherringham. Have you been to Northrepps, where The Hall, The Cottage, and The

Hill House are so much associated with Gurneys and Buxtons? Anna Gurney, celebrated as a scholar and philanthropist, lived at The Cottage, and used to go down to the sea on stormy nights in her chair (she was lame in both feet), and by her courage and enthusiasm saved many lives by inciting the people to throw ropes, etc., to the wrecks. One of the first lifeboats was launched by her means. Sir Fowell Buxton lived at The Hall, where the news of the Bill passed for the abolition of slavery reached him on the morning of his daughter's wedding. I heard the other day from Mr. Richard Gurney, who married a Buxton, and now lives at The Hall, that Cromer was never known to be so crowded as this year. I put the Northrepps houses into my story "The Rochemonts," but with imaginary names. I should like to write another East Country story. There are Blickling and Walsingham Abbey, both full of interest. The atmosphere to-day is like an orchid-house, not a breath of air stirring.'

Perhaps nothing could be more characteristic of my mother's tact and warm, affectionate heart than her letters to the son of a very dear dead friend, whose loss she felt keenly, when his father had decided to marry again.

‘WOODSIDE,
‘LEIGH WOODS.

‘MY DEAR JOHNNIE,

‘Your letter gives me much pleasure. It could not have been better expressed, and it was really a comfort to me to read it. You take the wisest and best view of the inevitable, and I am sure your father must be thankful. Then, I feel your dear mother would so entirely desire her children to accept this decision of your father’s cheerfully. She had such a clear vision of the fitness of things. . . . I know exactly how you feel about the home life at ——. It is over in one sense for you ; but you are young, and full of many interests ; and you will have, I trust, a happy home of your own, with someone who will be the pillar and stay of your future life. . . . You ask for Christabel. She was at home ten weeks, and left us walking fairly well with a stiff knee, still in leather manacles. She went to her friends the Tollemaches at Peckforton, and I hear to-day that the bracing air there has made her perfectly well. We were so glad to have her for ten weeks. Edith’s happiness was delightful to see. And Chris, even with a broken knee, is a sunshiny presence. Good-bye, dear Johnnie.

‘Ever your sincere friend,

‘EMMA MARSHALL.’

To the Same.

‘MY DEAR JOHNNIE,

‘We are very sorry that you cannot come to us. This is *the* summer for Norway, and you have, I am sure, a delightful tour in prospect. The news you give of Philip and David is exactly what I like to hear. Your dear mother always kept me up in all that happened to her children. Ever since 1878 I have heard all about you and your successes, and everything that concerned you. We used to exchange these histories of our children, so please, whenever you can, tell me what happens. Is Alice to go to Cambridge? . . . Wishing you *bon voyage*,

‘Ever your sincere friend,

‘EMMA MARSHALL.’

To Mrs. Kennion.

‘WOODSIDE,

‘LEIGH WOODS,

‘BRISTOL.

‘I must tell you how greatly I enjoyed my visit, and how much I feel your kindness and your encouraging words about my work. There are times when I am ready to sit down, like Elijah under the juniper-tree, and feel I may have laboured in vain. Such sincerely-expressed appreciation as yours and

the Bishop's is sweeter and more valuable to me than the outside and perfunctory approval of press notices and reviews. It is a joy to think of the Wells Palace and the delightful successor of Ken. There was no Mrs. Ken to be your ancestress as Bishop's wife. It was a great pleasure to me to meet Lady Dorothy. I love to see a pure and simple English girl, in all the freshness of lovely youth, untouched by the dust of the world's highway. I found everyone well at home, and so glad to hear all I had to tell of my visit.'

'December 31st, 1896.—Another solemn eventide, and the year is dying. These divisions of time are useful as reminders that the timeless life is drawing near. I know it is drawing near for me. Looking back on this past year, there have been many mercies, many cares, many heartaches. On this very day a year ago I bid my dear son Hughie good-bye, and the pain of parting is still fresh. His letters are sad and his life is uncongenial to him. He knows I would change it if I could, but I am powerless. In June the wife of the Bishop of Hereford passed away, following the other Mrs. Percival in little more than a year.

'At Tenby I had a short happy time in April with

my dearest Douglas, and they were the last of our old days together, for he is now engaged to be married to Jeanie Harding. She came here in August, and I think I can truly say I love her for his sake and her own. May she be a comfort and happiness to him when I am gone. On December 20 this dearly-loved son was ordained at Ripon, and a bad cold prevented my being present. From the same cause I could not hear him preach his first sermon in our little church in the Leigh Woods, which was a very great disappointment.

‘I went to stay at Wells in October, where the past always lives again for me, and the present seems the dream. The children were there so vividly before me, and I forgot they had become men and women. From Wells I went to Kimsbury House, in the hills above Gloucester. There I found a new wife and mistress in my friend’s place, the right wife truly, but the change could not but be felt. I had one Sunday in Gloucester, and saw the great east window gorgeous in the glory of eastern sunlight, and I knelt at the altar for Holy Communion as in days long past. Afterwards, at Cheltenham, I had one of the greatest and most sudden shocks of my life—a telegram to summon me to my darling child Christabel, who had been taken to the Westminster

Hospital dangerously ill. Through God's mercy, by the time I reached her the danger was passed, and she is now bright and blooming as ever. She had taken overdoses of phenacetine carelessly, being in agony from toothache and neuralgia. Gas was administered when her condition was too critical to bear it, and she was unconscious for several hours. However, let me thank God all is now well with her, and may she use her many gifts and her restored life in His service. This is my earnest prayer for my youngest and dearly-loved child.

'My literary work has gone on as usual through the year—"An Escape from the Tower," "Only Susan," "A Haunt of Ancient Peace," "The Two Henriettas," and several shorter stories. I do trust I may be able to go on for another year or two, to leave my children free of debt; but I cannot know how long my powers will be granted me. It is in God's hands, and I must leave it to Him.

'And now farewell to the old year, as the bells ring out the last hour. With a blessing on all I love, near and far, I end another page in this book. Among the changes since I wrote in it last I ought to record Eliza Love's departure. It was pain to me, for she belonged to days of happiness at Wells, and it was the end of thirty-six years' faithful service.

She left us to nurse her mother of ninety-three, to whom she is a devoted daughter.

“Change and decay in all around I see ;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.”

The correspondence for 1897 deals mainly with the two forthcoming books for the year, ‘Castle Meadow,’ a story of Norwich, written round Crotch the marvellous boy musician, and Crome the artist, and ‘In the Choir of Westminster Abbey,’ in which Purcell and the charming actress Mrs. Bracegirdle are leading figures. After finishing the first, my mother took a spring holiday in the Isle of Wight, where she had laid the scene of a previous story, ‘A Romance of the Undercliff.’ She wrote from there to Mr. Seeley :

‘I find Ventnor and Shanklin *towns*. When I knew them first they were villages. I am going to Brading with my son to-day to show him the scene of his great-grandfather’s, Legh Richmond’s, “Little Jane.”’

The result of the visit to Brading was my mother being so disturbed at finding no memorial there to the author of “Domestic Portraiture” and “The Young Cottager,” that she at once set about collect-

ing funds from the Richmond family and other relatives to defray the cost of a brass being put up to the memory of Legh Richmond in the church with which as pastor he had been so long associated.

‘WOODSIDE,
‘LEIGH WOODS,
‘June 28, 1897.

‘DEAR MR. SEELEY,

‘I have decided to give my new story the form of an autobiography. I have not done this since “Winifrede’s Journal.” I think I can manage thus to bring in all the historical facts. I begin in Dean’s Yard, Westminster, in 1684. The MS. will not be ready till quite the end of August. The Jubilee has had a distracting effect even in the country. What a memorable pageant it must have been! I should like to have seen the scene at St. Paul’s. I am annoyed to see I am supposed to be the Mrs. Marshall who wrote the paper in the *English Illustrated* on “How Men Propose,” or some such nonsense. I have had several press-cuttings sent me as the author. It is so unlike me. I see I must stick to “Emma.” My paper on Mrs. Ewing, which Hurst and Blackett asked me to write for a Jubilee volume, does not get much notice, as it comes last

in the book. I think Mrs. Oliphant admirable on the Brontës and Mrs. Lynn Lynton detestable on George Eliot. . . .'

'August 31.

'I am glad you are in a bracing place. To-day here is terribly relaxing, pouring rain, and an atmosphere like an orchid-house. My husband is on a mountain-top above Amsteg, reached only by a mule-track. He has not been well, and wanted bracing. As soon as "Westminster Choir" is done I shall take my autumn holiday. . . . I am delighted to see Hall Caine is getting his deserts in most of the notices of "The Christian." But what a hit it is, all the same! There is something so intensely unreal in the book, and he certainly is very ignorant of London life. He writes, too, such slipshod English. Lord Roberts' book I have not had time to read till now. I think it most interesting, especially now, when the same story is being rehearsed on the Frontier. It is so refreshing to read a man's account of his own career, in which he speaks well of every one of his comrades, and is so modest about his own achievements. There is a rather remarkable little book, "The Choir Invisible." I admire it in many ways, though it has its faults. The people

don't talk, I think, as they would have talked at the date of the story.'

'September 14.

'I hope all the MS. will be in your hands in a day or two. There is a great deal of sadness in Purcell's early death, and I have tried to brighten the story with imaginary details.

'I have been out in a chair and in a carriage' (she had sprained her ankle in August), 'but I sorely miss my early walks and activity. But how much worse it might have been! Mrs. Brock's accident, if it had happened to me, would have stopped the writing up of my MS. unless I could have dictated it, which I don't think I ever could do. Is it not sickening to see 50,000 of "The Christian" exhausted, and 20,000 more being published? There is not a word of reality in it, and all the materials got up from hearsay, not experience. Yet I hear people say they have been enthralled by it.'

ESCOT,

OITERY ST. MARY,

'October 11.

'I was very glad to receive your letter, and to realize how much trouble you had kindly taken about my book. The angels (on the cover) are so lovely, and will, I am sure, be appreciated. I must

take a Purcell pilgrimage with you one day to Westminster. He seems now quite like a friend I have lost. . . . You will like to see Dr. Troutbeck's letter. I have certainly pleased him. I am greatly worried by the news that three of my household have influenza. This will probably shorten my holiday. Indeed, I may have to go home to-morrow. I still feel the effects of the sprain, which prevented me from taking my usual exercise.'

The 'influenza' at Woodside proved to be typhoid, of which there was a serious epidemic in Clifton that autumn.

'26, SION HILL,
'CLIFTON,
'November 16.

'Thank you very much. You are always kind and considerate. The air here is full of sorrow. In two families we know there have been deaths, one dear little boy of eight, and his brother is lying in a most critical state; in the other, a charming girl, the only daughter. It is all too sad. The children in my house are all quite convalescent, for which we are most thankful. We hope the plague is stayed, but in the college many boys and three masters are all very ill. . . . I have been so worried and anxious. Woodside is in the possession of the girls' *mothers*,

and my servants are having a trying time. Before we return the drains have to be overhauled. Hence the extra expenses of lodgings will last another month.'

It was at 26, Sion Hill, that my mother wrote the last entry but one in her diary at the end of the year :

'A variety of trials for myself and those I love has been the distinguishing feature of this year '97, now gone as a tale that is told. There have been mercies, too, for the Angel of Death that has been in many homes here has spared us, and we are all still unseparated by that broad river which divides the living from those who have crossed to the further shore.

'In March my dear child Christabel had a third misfortune. She lost all her possessions by fire. The old house in Great College Street, Westminster, where she had two quaint little rooms full of books and many treasures, was burnt to the ground. Mercifully she was away at the time with Mrs. Tyndall, at Hindhead, helping her to sort her husband's papers for his 'Life,' otherwise she herself might have been in danger. In April and May I had a refreshing time in the Isle of Wight, where I had spent so

many happy days in my youth. My dear Douglas was first with me, then two of the girls, and we greatly enjoyed the loveliness of the little island, with its beautiful flowers and sea-breezes. In May I had a golden week at the Wells Palace with the Bishop and Mrs. Kennion, comparatively new friends, but friends whom it is a pleasure to have. . . . In June my husband attempted to separate our Irish terrier Pat from another in a fight, and was severely bitten, and has felt the shock very much. The wound did not heal for many weeks. . . . I had a delightful week in October at Escot with the dear Kennaways, and then nothing but anxiety owing to the cases of typhoid at home. I thankfully record that the three children all got through the disease without complications, and went to their homes almost well. Unfortunately, the drains at Woodside were found to be out of order, and we have had to be in lodgings for ten weeks. I am writing now in a room which is very unlike home. All this has been a great trial, and seems to alter the whole idea of our life. We shall probably give up having girls to live with us, and their presence in our home for nearly ten years has been both a pleasure and profit.

‘The future looks very uncertain, and once more at a time of life when I need rest I may have to

make a move and seek another dwelling. My literary work has prospered. I have written four books this year, and have many offers from publishers, but I feel it is doubtful if I fulfil now all my engagements. My son Douglas was ordained priest in September. He continues to be the chief joy and comfort of my life. I have written in former years of my longing for grandchildren ; I still long in vain.

‘ Our little community in the Leigh Woods had a great loss in the sudden death of Mr. Burrow Hill, on June 29. He was in the full prime of manhood, and led a happy and useful life. In one instant he was cut down as a flower at Bristol Station, whither he had gone to meet one of his boys. He was only thirty-seven, and left six young children fatherless. She whom he left a widow is very dear to me. I wrote a little “ In Memoriam ” of him for the *Guardian*.

‘ And now the year is come to its last hour, and I am alone while all the house is mute. To me there is but a short future, but may that future find me more patient and forbearing with those around me. I pray God to bless my sons and daughters and their father, and may they realize the promise that they who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up on wings like eagles ; they shall run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.’

To the friend and neighbour whose sad bereavement in the Jubilee summer is here referred to, she wrote the following after she had broken the news of her father's death to the eldest child, who was all unsuspecting, having watched him ride off that morning on his bicycle, full of life and spirits.

'You know, my dear one, without being troubled with many words, *what* I feel, and *how* I feel for you. This is only to tell you of my tenderest love and sympathy, and to say, Is there anything I can do for you? When we love our friends as I love you, we do long to be of some comfort in their sorrow. Norna was so brave and good yesterday. I shall never forget her. She will be a real solace to you.

'Your loving,

'E. M.'

My mother delighted in nearly all children, but she had a special fondness for these small neighbours of hers in the Leigh Woods—unconventional, untidy, plucky little people, full of character and fun. One of them, a little fellow with a halo of fluffy curls and melancholy, pensive gray eyes strangely out of keeping with his merry voice and laugh, exclaimed fervently when he was told his friend Mrs. Marshall was dead, 'What a pity!'—a spontaneous utterance

of childish sympathy that she herself would have dearly loved to hear. Anyone who saw my mother with these children, her ecstasies over the naked toes of one baby-girl, and the flaming Titian locks of another, must have understood her poignant regret that she, of all women, should not have been a grandmother. As it was never granted her to see her children's children, she dwelt very much with the phantom children of past years. This was especially the case when she revisited Wells. The very last time she was there, in October, 1898, she wrote the following fragment of unfinished verses :

' In the chill of the autumn twilight,
 With the minster towers on high,
I stood, as often—how often !—
 In the days long gone by.

' There's a light in the nursery-window,
 The children are waiting there ;
I see the glimmer of fitful radiance
 On the gold of Cyril's hair.

' " I must hasten," I said, " to the children,
 They are waiting for me to come ;
It is time for our fireside story,
 I am late in going home."

' And faces are pressed to the casement,
 And little hands tap on the glass ;
Yes, they are watching for mother,
 And joyful to see her pass.

' Then loud on the still cold air
 Rang out the minster chime ;
 It roused me from my dreaming
 Of a far-off happier time.
 ' Ah, mother ! come back from thy dreaming,
 Thy children have vanished away ;
 It was but a fading vision,
 A vision too fair to stay.
 ' The light on the nursery-window
 Is for other eyes than mine ;
 No little faces are watching,
 There are no golden heads to shine.
 ' No need to hasten homewards,
 And climb the nursery stair ;
 There are no young voices to greet thee,
 No children are waiting there.
 ' Oh, dream-children, I see in a vision.'

* * * * *

Here the lines break off.

All through this last year her literary activity was not abated ; her bodily strength seemed at times quite renewed, and her intellectual interests as keen as ever. The outside world could have no idea of the burdens she had borne, and was still bearing.

' 26, SION HILL,
 ' CLIFTON,
 ' *January 6, 1898.*

' DEAR MR. SEELEY,

' I hope to be at my own table at Woodside on Tuesday, and I shall then put my story into

shape. . . . I am pleased with the review of "Westminster Choir" in *Literature*. The weather is unnaturally warm, but there is little sunshine. I have had an anonymous letter, telling me I pander to the low taste of the day, and besecching me to mend my ways, for I have fallen from my old standard. What next! Anonymous letters should only be put into the waste-paper basket. It seems "Castle Meadow" is the wicked book. . . . I must thank you for all your valuable help in these historical stories. I have my husband ill at present with an affection of his eye and face, brought on by ear-ache.'

‘WOODSIDE,
‘ *March 9.*

‘I have two books of my story ("The Young Queen of Hearts") ready. I could wish it were a five-shilling book. It really has been the same effort to me to get it into form. I hope you will like it. . . . What do you propose for the autumn? You said something about Wren. I should be glad to do the Bristol stories, but I think it would be a great undertaking to write six separate ones, and would require much labour. But I am most anxious to work while it is yet day, for the night cometh wherein no man can work. The weather is much

improved. I saw such a sunrise this morning from my window. Truly a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun !'

'WOODSIDE,
'May 2.

'We have been in great trouble by the death of my brother, Dr. Marshall—a widespread calamity. He was indeed the "beloved physician." The scene at his funeral was striking and touching, rich and poor alike showing their love for him. I have sent a little "In Memoriam" of him to the *Guardian*. It is a terrible loss to us, especially to my husband in his present state of health. He was such a friend and wise adviser. . . . We have a very dear son at Manila, so you can judge of our anxiety at the present moment. I am sorry that Mrs. Brock is so ill. Her books were of the greatest use to me when my children were young. I have been asked to join this scheme for the Charlotte Yonge scholarship. I could not refuse, but I doubt whether £6,000 will be raised. The fashion for Miss Yonge's stories is over, yet we owe her much for the new departure of forty-five years ago. The girls of these days must have something a little different from histories of large families, and their innocent joys and loves. Then in the great

flood of books few rise out of the surging tide nowadays enough to be much noticed. I wish I had lived and written half a century ago.'

'May 30.

'I find the preparations for work divert my mind from dwelling too much on Manila. I have no news yet, and open the papers daily in dread. But I hope for the best. . . . I wish very much to get a complete change abroad in August. But all depends on circumstances. My brother-in-law's beautiful house is sold to the doctor who takes over his practice. It has been the saddest time for us and for many. The Dean called a meeting on Saturday to consider what memorial should be raised to Dr. Marshall. We hope it will be some useful thing connected with the hospital, for he was a healer of men and their friend and helper in trouble and sorrow. I am glad you are having a rest at Beccles. You missed the great function at Westminster (Gladstone's funeral). What an extraordinary manifestation of feeling it was! We had a solemn and impressive service in our cathedral on Saturday.'

I shall never forget with what eager and mournful interest my mother had read the news from Hawarden

in the papers that spring, during the prolonged illness of the great statesman, for whom, apart from all political considerations, she cherished, especially of late years, an intense admiration and veneration regard. In July she wrote :

‘ I am making way with my story, and am hopeful about it. If I can get away on August 5, I shall lie fallow for six weeks, and begin again with renewed vigour. . . . I have let this house for August and part of September, otherwise I could not have managed the long journey to the Tyrol. As it is, I shall have to make a push for it. My son will be chaplain at Kitzbühel, and that has tempted me to go. It is said to be a delightful pension in an old castle kept by an English lady. A real summer day at last. I was in the woods before eight o’clock gathering the lovely wild roses—a dream of beauty just now. How one grows to love the fair earth as one grows old! I met a fellow-craftswoman of the pen the other day. She is so changed, and snubbed me at every turn. The lady with whom she is staying said she had become so professional. May I escape a like verdict! I have become more and more in love with Sir Christopher Wren every day since I began to study him. I knew *nothing* of him

before as a man, only as the builder of St. Paul's and some other churches. I am afraid I have nearly exhausted great figures for my stories. I hope I shall not be regarded as a cuckoo plundering other people's nests. I hear they call — now the “Literary Whiteley.”

To J. Percival, Esq.

‘PFLEGHOF, KITZBÜHEL,

‘TYROL,

‘August 29, 1898.

‘MY DEAR JOHNNIE,

‘I hear that you have been having a gay time at Kimsbury, and that you are now gone to Scotland, so I address you at Pinkie. . . . I should be glad if you would remember me most kindly to Lady Hope. I am glad Alice and Dorothy Wedderburn are with her. I have memories of Dorothy as a charming child at Inveresk in 1886, when, with the loyalty of her race, she refused to pick any of the best flowers in her aunt's garden for me, but considered hen-and-chicken daisies were allowable.

‘We have had three weeks' glorious weather in this delightful place. Heat has not oppressed us, and our thunderstorms have been far less violent than in England. The heat in Clifton seems to have been intense. The Scotch ladies who are in

possession of Woodside ask if this is the normal climate of Clifton. Kitzbühel (which means the haunt of the chamois kids) lies in the heart of the mountains, all covered with pine-forests and lovely in outline. The Kaiser-Gebirge is the same form as the Dolomites; its profile stands out like a giant rugged rampart.

‘ This is an old, old castle; the room where we dine is eleven hundred years old. When the interior was modernized, about fifteen years ago, a knight in full armour was found walled up in one of the corridors. His bones and his armour are now in the museum at Vienna. His ghost remains in his ancient haunts, but as yet we have not made his acquaintance. Excursions have been numerous, and the most notable was achieved last week by Lucy, Edith and Douglas, and the Vicar of St. John’s, Richmond. They started at 6 a.m. and did not put in an appearance till 9 p.m. It was a long ascent to a mountain-top, where they had a magnificent view of snow-capped ranges in a clear opal atmosphere. The peasants in the *châlet* where they paused for an hour’s rest produced a large pan of milk and four spoons, the only refreshment available, but of course they took their lunch with them. I dare say Edith will tell you her experiences. Mr. — (the said Vicar) declares she

tripped up and down mountain-paths like a chamois. She was the least tired of the party, and you would be surprised to see how well she looks. The same may be said of Douglas, who, alas! leaves us tomorrow. I have been several good walks with him up to waterfalls, etc., and on Saturday to a quiet village quite out of the beat of tourists. It was extraordinary to find there a large church full of really good pictures, and looking so well cared for. The villagers must be only peasants, and quite poor folk. That walk was *eight* miles, so you may imagine I am not the worse for Kitzbühel. Mrs. Allen has two pensions; one castle is high up outside the town, with pine-woods behind it, and nearer the lake, where bathing goes on merrily every day. The water is supposed to be a Bethesda, and certainly seems to be very invigorating. Douglas generally brings back handfuls of water-lilies after his swim, and Lucy and Edith are getting quite expert swimmers. The charm of this place is that it is so free from swarms of tourists. The only English to be found are in Schloss Pfleghof and Leberberg. There are Austrians and Germans in the hotels, and a French Duchess is lodging in the street. We have seen a great deal of Tyrolean life. The little town was beautifully illuminated in honour of the Emperor's

Jubilee. The band, in the charming costume of the country, played by torchlight ; there were bonfires on the lower crests of the hills, and " Franz Joseph " blazing in letters of fire. An impromptu ball was given one night by the officers of an Austrian regiment quartered in the town ; Lucy and Edith went to it and enjoyed it. All was so simple, coffee and sweets for the ladies, and *beer* for the gentlemen. On Sunday there was an open-air Mass in the market-place. It was a striking sight, the colours of some fourteen Tyrolean regiments grouped round the altar and lowered when the Host was raised. The next day we had an immense religious procession, four white-robed stalwart maidens carrying an image of the Virgin, followed by a hundred girls and children bearing lilies ; men with candles, and monks and sisters, and finally the priest under a canopy in gorgeous vestments bearing the Host. The women here wear the most lovely brocade aprons and silk kerchiefs, colours that would shame Liberty. We hear they are often heirlooms with the necklace and clasps. It is a most picturesque dress. I fear that in the next few years a big modern hotel will spring up by the lake, and the place will be spoiled. When this enterprising lady, Mrs. Allen, took Pflëghof, she was the very first Englishwoman who had ever come

to Kitzbühel, and she has succeeded so well that she took the upper castle two years ago. We stopped at Cologne and Munich on our way here, and return by the Arlberg route, staying at Innsbrück and Sant Anton. I wonder if you will care for all this. It would have been written to your *mother*. Alas! for the impenetrable silence of the grave. Dear Johnnie,

‘ Ever your affectionate friend,

‘ EMMA MARSHALL.

‘ P.S.—I had a letter from Hugh the other day from Singapore. This is what he said: “I was ordered to Hong Kong on June 9th. For your sake I was glad, knowing your anxiety. But I was nearly broken-hearted to leave poor beleaguered Manila. Having shared dangers and privations with the English there, many of whom were my friends, it seemed base to leave them.” This is so like Hugh, always plucky and ready to do anything for his friends. Of course *I* am thankful.’

‘ KAUSER’S PENSION,

‘ INNSBRÜCK,

‘ *September 12, 1898.*

‘ DEAR MR. SEELEY,

‘ I received proofs safely yesterday. I am afraid I cannot alter the place of Sir Christopher’s death. It will entirely destroy the picture of Dorothy’s

finding him. . . . I really do not think it necessary. . . . As I have let Woodside till the 28th, I cannot return till then. We are all enchanted with the Tyrol. Kitzbühel is the quaintest little town, with noble churches and picturesque houses. Your artistic eye would delight in the peasants, who are pictures ready made. My daughter has made some pretty sketches of our castle, and bits of the street. The great Kaiser-Gebirge stands like a gigantic sentinel some fourteen miles distant, with endless variations of light and shade and colour playing on its rugged face. We are in a pension now overlooking Innsbrück, with the sun shining below and mountains all round.'

'SANT ANTON, ARLBERG,

'TYROL,

'September 21.

'I have now altered the scene of Sir Christopher's death to St. James' Street. I have sent all the sheets, that you may see if it is all right. I am sorry to do it, but of course it is well to avoid a blunder. We came up here from Innsbrück on Monday. A little mountain valley; the weather brilliant, but so cold. A change indeed from what we have had in other places. . . . We shall stay at Zurich till the 28th, and then go straight home. I have seen much that will be a joy for ever—most lovely scenery, and

the mountains speaking peace. I have met, too, many pleasant people to whom my books were an introduction.

‘ I should like to write something about the Tyrol, its people, and its natural beauty. The tragic news of the poor Empress’s murder reached Innsbrück the night we arrived there. The bells proclaimed the passing of her body through the station by a strange impressive jangling. It is *the* tragedy of modern times.’

Never, perhaps, had my mother’s power of detachment from cares and worries, her inextinguishable *joie de vivre* (which I think I have mentioned before as one of her characteristics), been more strikingly manifested than during this the last of her all too few holidays abroad. At Innsbrück she caught a slight chill on the liver, and was confronted with her old enemy dyspepsia ; but up till then her energy and spirits, her unbounded enjoyment and interest in everything, had been the wonder and envy of many mothers in the pension younger than herself in years. She possessed the faculty of being able to compose herself to sleep at any time and in any place, which alone is a wonderful restorative. I see her now, on the night of the journey between Cologne and Munich, wrapt the whole way in profound and

peaceful slumber, with an expression of almost child-like contented serenity on her face. At the end of our travels she arrived by far the least tired and the brightest of the party. Among the pleasant acquaintances to whom she alludes in her letter from Sant Anton was a lovely American girl married to a German, the Baron von Hutten. She was staying at Innsbrück with her parents, and my mother was greatly charmed by her frank and gracious manner. At her request she wrote a brief criticism of a sketch which the young Baroness passed the sunny hours in scribbling one morning on the balcony, with the glorious valley of the Inn spread out before her. 'The beautiful little idyl, with a fascination all its own,' as my mother described it, was afterwards published in the *Westminster Gazette*. Later, the same aspirant sought advice on the weightier matter of publishing a novel, and my mother replied :

'WOODSIDE, LEIGH WOODS,
'BRISTOL,
'October 9, 1898.

'MY DEAR BARONESS,

'As the "little difficulty" has brought me a letter from you, I cannot be sorry that it has arisen. I feel always doubtful about the advisability of paying a publisher to bring out a book. As he takes care not to lose by the venture, it is only probable

that he will not make any great efforts to sell the book; but as I have never had personal experience in the matter, and never paid for a book to be published, I do not speak from actual knowledge. . . . I am sending you a copy of "The Author." I have been a member of the Society of Authors for ten years. The subscription is only one guinea a year, and, as you will see, it gives you a right to apply for advice, etc. . . . We all look back on our short acquaintance with you with great pleasure. You were a "phantom of delight" when I first saw you walk into Kayser's dining-room. . . . I was so delighted to hear you tell of your baby's first tooth. The sweet young mother of older days often seems to me to have disappeared from the earth. It is refreshing to know she lives in *you*. I hope the dear little fellow may be an increasing joy to you and his father. Edith is happy at work again, and sends you her love. Indeed, we all hold you in affectionate remembrance; therefore don't forget us. We came down from Sant Anton to Zürich, and thence straight home a week ago. Now, with kindest regards to Baron von Hutten, and love to you,

'Yours very sincerely

'EMMA MARSHALL.

'P.S. I shall look out for "The Oldest and the Youngest."'

The novel in question was published eventually by Lippincott, and has had a considerable success in America.

My mother's books, bound specially in white and silver, proved very acceptable wedding-presents to her favourite girl-friends when they married.

'Several of the brides,' she wrote to Mr. Seeley, 'have said they are sure in this case to have no duplicates. I am now asking you to prepare a copy of "The Dome of St. Paul's" for Princess Christian. The reason for my asking you to do this is that my son Douglas, who is at Ripon, was sent for by the Bishop last Tuesday at the Princess's desire, as she wished him to be presented to her, as my stories are great favourites of hers. It was a somewhat trying ordeal for him, with all the big people of Yorkshire looking on. H.R.H. was extremely nice to him, and he says repeatedly said how much pleasure my historical books gave her. "But," she added, "does your mother still go on with these?" I think the best answer to that question is to send her "St. Paul's" and "The Young Queen of Hearts."'

'November 6.

'I am much obliged to you for the book about Gainsborough and your letter. You find me my

materials, and really this is half the battle. I must simmer this idea for some time, and I hope to bring out something in the end that may take the popular taste. I came across a large and important-looking story yesterday, "A Noble Sacrifice," by an author whose name I have never even heard of. The book is published by Scott, and has "Twenty-fifth Thousand" on the title-page. The period is James I. and Charles I. The dialogue is very archaic, and Jeremy Taylor appears in it. The illustrations are good. It is rather vexatious to me that a really unknown author like this should secure a sale that I have never touched. Mrs. A. Lang might well say the other day, when she went to the *Women Writers'* dinner, that the great majority of women writers there were unknown even by name to her. I hope you will get some rest, difficult to attain in this hurrying age. My husband is still very unwell, and my weight heavy.'

'December 17.

'*The Queen* has a very nice notice of "The Dome of St. Paul's." I wonder why it is they say these books are for children? Certainly I do not think they are intended for children. The fact is, that unless novels or stories have some incident arising from a man loving the wrong woman, and the

woman loving the wrong man after marriage, the taste of the great majority of the story-readers is not satisfied. *This*, from principle and the knowledge that it is too common in life as in fiction, is a theme I will never introduce into my books. I have to go to my dear son's wedding on January 11, in Staffordshire. I shall send you a prospectus of his school in S. Hampstead, and beg you and Mrs. Seeley to show it to your friends. His farewells at Ripon, from rich and poor, have been most touching and gratifying. He has had beautiful gifts, both from the boys and the poor people in his district. . . .'

On December 31, 1898, for the last time she recorded the past year's events, anxieties and achievements.

'A year of loss and change now closes. It began with the illness (facial paralysis) of my husband who has been a long time recovering. All unexpectedly his much younger brother Harry Marshall, on the Second Sunday after Easter, died of pneumonia in one week. An unspeakable wave of sorrow passed over Clifton, for he was the friend as well as the doctor to so many. To his family he was the kindest and best of brothers, and his sister, who is

now seriously ill, misses his daily visits terribly. In August and September I let this house, and went with Lucy, Douglas, Bee and Edith, to the Austrian Tyrol—a great refreshment. The mountains, the clear air and sky, brilliant sunshine, and lovely surroundings, seemed to revive my somewhat worn and jaded brain. Walks with my dear son through pinewoods and by rushing streams, with mountains rising in many majestic forms around us, will live in my memory while the few years left to me remain. Once quite alone I walked along a solitary road with a glorious range of snow-peaks before me, mossy banks, jewelled with countless flowers on one side, and dark pines rising above; on the other side the foaming river, and the tinkle of cow-bells accentuating the stillness. I had in that hour an uplifting which it is in vain to put into words. All the spirits of those I loved seemed near, very near me, and the great shining peaks were like the gates of the fair city into which “no enemy can enter, and no friends pass out.” We went to Innsbrück, that most picturesque of cities, and to the little Sant Anton on the Arlberg, where we had two gloriously brilliant days; then to Zurich, fair, hazy and restful, and home on September 30.

‘I had the delight, too, this summer of being

present at Salisbury for the thanksgiving for the safety of the spire. The Dean and Mrs. Boyle, as usual, showed me the kindest hospitality. In October I had a week at the Wells Palace, and met many pleasant people. Wells, my early home of love and joy, must always awaken sad yet sweet memories. As I looked up at the old nursery window in the October twilight, I stood like one in a dream, and could almost see the sunny hair of the little heads. Alas for the children, all gone, and my dreams and hopes and aspirations for them have not been fulfilled! Yet I have them all, and that is cause of thankfulness. My darling son Douglas is making a fresh start in life, and is to be married on January 14. I feel that in Jeanie Harding he will have all that a wife and helpmeet should be, and I pray God to bless their union.

'Amongst the anxieties of the year, dear Hughie being at Manila during the siege, when all the communications were cut off, was the chief. He says bullets whizzed round him like wasps, and shells shrieked overhead night and day. My literary work this year has prospered. "The Young Queen of Hearts" was written in the spring; "Christmas Roses" finished for Arrowsmith. Then "Under the Laburnums," and "The Dome of St. Paul's."

“A Daughter of the People,” for Chambers, was written after my return from the Tyrol, and a story for the *Boys and Girls’ Companion*,’ and the *Girls’ Realm*. So far my powers have not failed me, and I think there is better work in some of these books than I have done at all.’

‘The close of the year is shadowed for us by the illness of my dear sister-in-law H——, and the return of my husband’s malady. It seems likely that we may have to move from Woodside. If so, may God make the way plain before us. I leave the future in His hands.’

VIII

REST FROM LABOUR

'Fear no more the heat of the sun
Nor the furious winter rages.
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.'

SHAKESPEARE.

'Life, we have been long together
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather ;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear,
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh or tear.
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time ;
Say not Good-Night—but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good-Morning.'

MRS. BARBAULD.

'And we have seen on many a loved one's face
This rapture at the goal ;
This joy in death, this last and sweetest grace
Of the departing soul.'

B. M.



VIII

REST FROM LABOUR

To those who loved her most, there is consolation in the thought that my mother never experienced that failure of powers of which she had sometimes felt a haunting dread. At her youngest son's wedding in January there was no face more bright and smiling than hers.

The weather was cold and tempestuous, and the journey into Staffordshire a trying one, with many changes; but she returned home none the worse, to work at three new stories. She was brisk and well through February, a month with which she had particularly tender associations, for in it her first child had been born, on the eve of St. Valentine, the patron saint of her own happy Norfolk childhood, and through life her buoyant spirit always rushed forth to greet the first faint blush of spring. Once more she saw the 'fair maids of February' whiten the ground, and the early crocuses spring up

through the earth like tongues of flame. But the later spring flowers she only saw in her sick-room. Early in March she was attacked quite suddenly by gastric influenza, and she did not come downstairs again. She fought the fiend bravely, and between relapses which were of constant occurrence she wrote up the weekly parts of a serial she had undertaken for a Church newspaper, and attempted her usual correspondence. Then she was supposed to be convalescent, the doctor ceased his daily visits, and she talked of coming down. She sat dressed in her room, with her face to the window, a table beside her on which were piled the proofs of 'The Parson's Daughter' so far as she had written it, and many books, among them Robertson's Sermons, which she had been in the habit of reading on Sundays for years when prevented from going to church.

She spoke regretfully of not being able to give an 'at home' and a 'book-tea'—a form of entertainment much in vogue in Clifton just then—in honour of her son and his bride, who had come for Easter. 'Next time they shall not have such a dull visit,' she said; but when a country bunch of wild flowers was brought to her from one of the toll-keepers of the Suspension Bridge, whose children had so often come with offerings of moss and primrose-roots,

she was heard to say as she bent over the nosegay, 'Tell John Ford he will never see me cross the bridge again.' It was unlike her active, impetuous nature to be so patient and resigned during those irksome weeks when she was said to be 'getting well.' Throughout this last illness, indeed, her patience and meekness were very touching, and the admiration of doctor and nurses and all who tended her. It was on the afternoon before the fatal turn came in the night, that she was sitting with the window open, and said repeatedly, 'I really am better; I shall be down to-morrow.' 'Yes,' we told her encouragingly, 'you look *quite* well now.' Yet surely some of us must have noticed in her eyes, with their crystal clearness, that wistful, 'gazing beyond' expression which means so unmistakably losing touch with this life and nearing another.

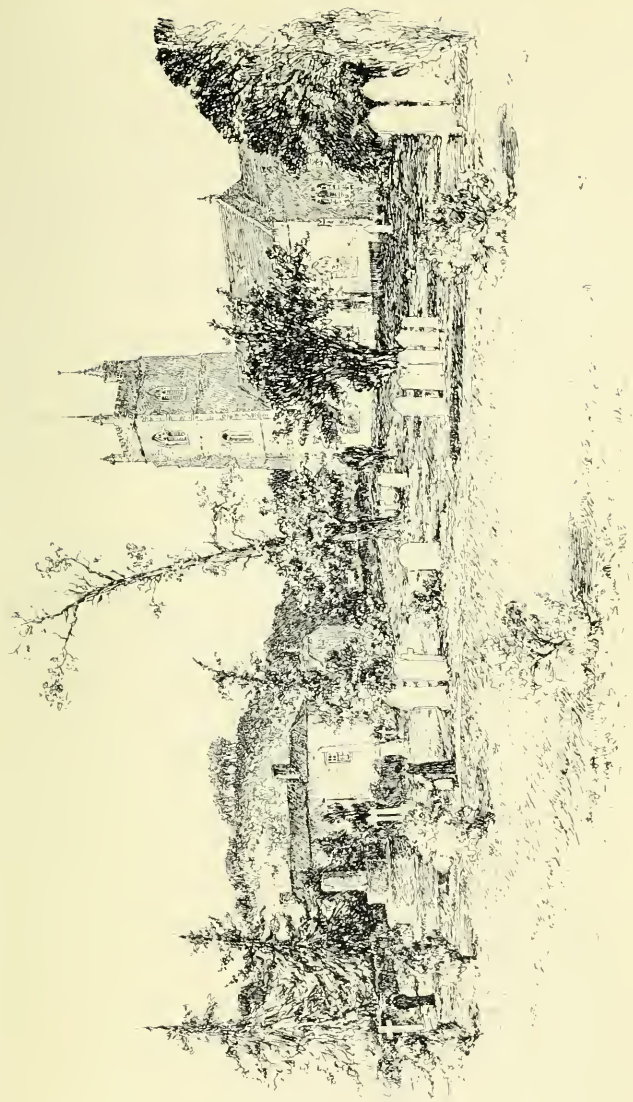
The next day her temperature had risen alarmingly, and her lungs were affected. It was pneumonia, but not the usual kind. There was no cough or painful breathing, and she suffered comparatively little. In a few days the lungs healed, but the fever fiend retained his grip and slowly scorched her strength away.

She still lay, as she had always done, with her face turned towards the light at dawn to watch the 'case-

ment grow a glimmering square,' and to listen for the 'earliest pipe of half-awakened birds.'

'Why have the birds given up singing?' she asked once, not knowing that frequent doses of quinine administered in hopes of reducing her fever had dulled her hearing. A great drowsiness descended on her, and only at rare intervals did she seem conscious of the grief-stricken watchers round her bed. Thus very gradually and dreamily she drifted down through the Valley of the Shadow where so many dear to her had passed before her, and the eternal mystery on which her thoughts had so often dwelt with awe and reverence was at last revealed to her. The outer world basked green and fair in the brilliant May sunshine, and the birds carolled joyously as my mother lay wrapped in her long sleep, most lovely in death, looking younger than I ever remember her in life, with a smile of triumphant radiance on her lips. One could not help wondering what glad surprise as her soul spread its wings had brought it there, and whether she had not seen 'those angel faces smile,' that she had 'loved long since and lost awhile.'

Her funeral was very simple, for she always had expressed a horror of the pomp and trappings of woe. Under masses of exquisite flowers, she was borne through beautiful Ashton Park, followed by



LONG ASHTON CHURCH, NEAR BRISTOL.

the surpliced choristers of St. Mary's, Leigh Woods, and by hundreds of mourners. There beneath the shadow of the noble old parish church of Long Ashton, in the quiet God's Acre, with the Mendip Hills keeping distant watch, after life's fitful fever she sleeps well.

Three months later my father, to whom her loss proved a too crushing and heart-breaking sorrow to be borne, was laid in the same grave, and so side by side they await the Resurrection morning.

I feel I cannot better close this attempt to give an impression of my mother's character, and of how she lived and worked for others, than by quoting from a few of the numerous letters which at her death brought comfort to her children's hearts. The Bishop of Hereford's few lines are eloquent of much feeling.

'THE ATHENÆUM,

'PALL MALL STREET,

'DEAR MISS MARSHALL,

'May 6, 1899.

'I am sorely grieved at your sad news. Your mother was one of my dearest friends, and I cannot at this moment say more.

'With true sympathy,

'I am yours very sincerely,

'J. HEREFORD.'

In a second letter expressing regret that he could not be present at the grave, he said :

‘ At my time of life I cannot expect to make new friends who would be anything like what your mother has been, even if any such were to be found, and so I can but cherish her memory till I die. To you it must always be a consolation of a rare kind to think how lovingly her memory will be cherished in one heart and another all over the world. Of such friends one says: “To live in hearts you leave behind is not to die.” ’

Canon Ainger wrote :

‘ You will not need the assurance of my real sorrow and sympathy with you all. I had always a great admiration and respect for your mother and her long and valuable work. Few of her time will have given notably to the young such happiness and such wholesome stimulus towards all that is lovely and of good report. I am so thankful to have had a long and enjoyable talk with her when I was last in residence. My heart indeed bleeds for you all, and I earnestly pray that God may send you His best comfort, and help you all to walk more faithfully and more strongly for the blessed memory of her who is gone before.’

From Mrs. Harrison (Lucas Malet), since the death of Mrs. Kingsley one of my mother's most valued correspondents, came the following beautiful expression of sympathy :

' I see by to-day's paper that the end has come and that your mother rests after her life of brave work and unfailing love towards her children and her friends. I do not try to comfort you, save with that thought of her past work and her present rest. Death is the most natural of all things, but it hits one very hard all the same, and I think it is right and wholesome to grieve, not that our beloved ones have ceased to fight here in this troublesome world, but that they have left us, and that we miss them so terribly. I need not say to you that your mother was a very noble woman ; you must know it far better than I do. The thought of her has often braced me to work and to endure when I was disposed to be somewhat lazy, and sick of labour.'

' I can hardly believe that her brave, loving heart has ceased to beat,' wrote Mrs. T. H. Green. ' What a noble life hers was, and how untiring of zeal for good and for those whom she loved ! . . . I cannot help wishing to join in the chorus of loving admiration. How sorely you will miss the tie that bound

you all together, and yet what a call to life her memory is !'

Many more there were who joined in the 'chorus of loving admiration,' and recorded their sorrow in language no less heartfelt and moving, but I will only add here the words which keep her memory green for future generations of worshippers in Bristol Cathedral on a brass appropriately placed close to Colston's window :

' A lover of good men, and herself a follower of their faith and patience, she strove by her writings to make others love them.'

THE END

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