FAWCETT MILLICENT GARRETT

SOME EMINENT WOMEN OF OUR TIMES

Millicent Fawcett

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Dame Millicent Garrett Fawcett Some Eminent Women of Our Times / Short Biographical Sketches

"Non aver tema, disse il mio Signore:
Fatti sicur, chè noi siamo a buon punto:
Non stringer, ma rallarga ogni vigore."

Purgatorio, Canto 9, v. 46-48.

"'I have a belief of my own, and it comforts me.'

"'What is that?' said Will…

"'That by desiring what is perfectly good, even when we don't quite know what it is and cannot do what we would, we are part of the divine power against evil – widening the skirts of light and making the struggle with darkness narrower.'"

– Middlemarch, Book iv.

PREFACE

The following short sketches of the lives of some of the eminent women of our times were written for *The Mothers' Companion*, and are now republished by the kind permission of the proprietors and publishers, Messrs. Partridge.

They were suggested by the fact that nearly all the best contributions of women to literature have been made during the last hundred years, and simultaneously with this remarkable development of literary activity among women, there has been an equally remarkable activity in spheres of work held to be peculiarly feminine. So far, therefore, from greater freedom and better education encouraging women to neglect womanly work, it has caused them to apply themselves to it more systematically and more successfully. The names of Elizabeth Fry, Mary Carpenter, Sarah Martin, Agnes Jones, Florence Nightingale, and Sister Dora are a proof of this. I believe that we owe their achievements to the same impulse which in another kind of excellence has given us Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, and Elizabeth Browning.

The sketches were intended chiefly for working women and young people; it was hoped it would be an encouragement to them to be reminded how much good work had been done in various ways by women.

An apology should, perhaps, be offered to the reader for the want of arrangement in the sequence of these sketches. As they appeared month by month, in 1887 and 1888, the incidents of the day sometimes suggested the subject. Thus the papers on Queen Victoria and on Queen Louisa of Prussia were suggested by the celebration of the Jubilee in June 1887, and by the universal grief felt for the death of Queen Louisa's son and grandson in 1888. As the incidents mentioned in some sketches are sometimes referred to in those that follow, it has been thought best not to alter the sequence in which they originally appeared. The authorities relied on are quoted in each paper.

MILLICENT GARRETT FAWCETT.
London, 1889.

I
ELIZABETH FRY

> "Humanity is erroneously considered among the commonplace virtues. If it deserved such a place there would be less urgent need than, alas! there is for its daily exercise among us. In its pale shape of kindly sentiment and bland pity it is common enough, and is always the portion of the cultivated. But humanity armed, aggressive, and alert, never slumbering and never wearying, moving like an ancient hero over the land to slay monsters, is the rarest of virtues." – John Morley.

The present century is one that is distinguished by the active part women have taken in careers that were previously closed to them. Some people would have us believe that if women write books, paint pictures, and understand science and ancient languages, they will cease to be true women, and cease to care for those womanly occupations and responsibilities that have always been entrusted to them. This is an essentially false and mistaken notion. True cultivation of the understanding makes a sensible woman value at their real high worth all her womanly duties, and so far from making her neglect them, causes her to appreciate them more highly than she would otherwise have done. It has always been held – at least, in Christian countries – that the most womanly of women's duties are to be found in works of mercy to those who are desolate and miserable. To be thirsty, hungry, naked, sick, or in prison, is to have a claim for compassion and comfort upon womanly pity and tenderness. And we shall see, if we look back over recent years, that never have these womanly tasks been more zealously fulfilled than they have been in the century which has produced Elizabeth Fry, Florence Nightingale, Josephine Butler, and Octavia Hill.

Mrs. Fry was born before the beginning of this century – in 1780 – but the great public work with which her memory will always be connected was not begun till about 1813. She was born of the wealthy Quaker family, the Gurneys of Norwich. Her parents were not very strict members of the sect to which they belonged, for they allowed their children to learn music and dancing – pursuits that were then considered very worldly even by many who did not belong to the Society of Friends. The gentle poet, William Cowper, speaks in one of his letters, written about the time of Elizabeth Fry's childhood, of love of music as a thing which tends "to weaken and destroy the spiritual discernment." Mr. and Mrs. Gurney, however, seem to have been very free from such prejudices, as well as from others which were much more universal, for their children not only learnt music and dancing, but also – girls as well as boys – Latin and mathematics.

Mrs. Gurney seems to have discerned that she had an especial treasure in her little Elizabeth. She is spoken of in her mother's journal as "my dove-like Betsy." The authoress of the biography of Elizabeth Fry in the Eminent Women series, says: "Her faculty for independent investigation, her unswerving loyalty to duty, and her fearless perseverance in works of benevolence, were all foreshadowed" in her childhood. She had as a young girl what appears to us now a very extraordinary dread of enthusiasm in religion. One would think that if ever a woman needed enthusiasm for her life's work, Elizabeth Fry was that woman. But she confesses in her journal, written when she was seventeen years of age, "the greatest fear of religion" because it is generally allied with enthusiasm. Perhaps the truth is that she had so deep a natural fount of enthusiasm in her heart that she dreaded the work that it would impel her to, when once it was allowed a free course. She had a very strong, innate repugnance to anything which drew public attention upon herself, and only the imperative sense of duty enabled her to overcome this feeling. In her heart she said what her Master had said before her: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

When the sphere of public duty first revealed itself to her, she records in her diary what it cost her to enter upon it, and writes of it as "the humiliating path that has appeared to be opening before

me." It must be noticed, however, that in her case, as always, the steep and difficult path of duty becomes easier to those who do not flinch from it. In a later passage of her diary, the public work which she had at first called a path of humiliation she speaks of as "this great mercy."

In the little book to which reference has just been made, we read that the first great change in Elizabeth Gurney's life was caused by the deep impression made upon her by the sermons of William Savery. It is rather strange to find the girl who had such a terror of enthusiasm, weeping passionately while William Savery was preaching. Her sister has described what took place. "Betsy astonished us all by the great feeling she showed. She wept most of the way home… What she went through in her own mind I cannot say; but the results were most powerful and most evident" (p. 11, *Elizabeth Fry*. By Mrs. E. R. Pitman). Her emotion was not of the kind that passes away and leaves no trace behind. The whole course of her life and tenor of her thoughts were changed. She became a strict Quakeress, not, however, without some conflict with herself. There are pleasant little touches of human nature in the facts that she found it a trial to say "thee" and "thou," and to give up her scarlet riding habit. Soon after this, at the age of twenty, she became the wife of Mr. Joseph Fry, and removed to London, where she lived in St. Mildred's Court, in the City. The family into which she married were Quakers, like her own, but of a much more severe and strict kind. Her marriage was, however, in every respect a fortunate one. Her husband sympathised deeply with her in all her efforts for the good of others, and encouraged her in her public work, although many in the Society of Friends did not scruple to protest that a married woman has no duties except to her husband and children. Her journal shows how anxiously she guarded herself against any temptation to neglect her home duties. She was a tender and devoted mother to her twelve children, and it was through her knowledge of the strength of a mother's love that she was able to reach the hearts of many of the poor prisoners whom she afterwards helped out of the wretchedness into which they had fallen.

Her study of the problem, how to help the poor, began in this way. A beggar-woman with a child in her arms stopped her in the street. Mrs. Fry, seeing that the child had whooping-cough and was dangerously ill, offered to go with the woman to her home in order more effectually to assist her. To Mrs. Fry's surprise, the woman immediately tried to make off; it was evident what she wanted was a gift of money, not any help to the suffering child. Mrs. Fry followed her, and found that her rooms were filled with a crowd of farmed-out children in every stage of sickness and misery; the more pitiable the appearance of one of these poor mites, the more useful an implement was it in the beggar's stock-in-trade. From this time onwards the condition of women and children in the lowest and most degraded of the criminal classes became the study of Mrs. Fry's life. She had the gift of speech on any subject which deeply moved her. From about 1809 she began to speak at the Friends' meeting-house. This power of speaking, as well as working, enabled her to draw about her an active band of co-workers. When she first began visiting the female prisoners in Newgate it is probable that she could not have supported all that she had to go through if it had not been for the sympathy and companionship of Anna Buxton and other Quaker ladies whom she had roused through her power of speech, just as she had herself been roused when a girl by the preaching of William Savery.

The condition of the women and children in Newgate Prison, when Mrs. Fry first began visiting them in 1813, was more horrible than anything that can be easily imagined. Three hundred poor wretches were herded together in two wards and two cells, with no furniture, no bedding of any kind, and no arrangements for decency or privacy. Cursing and swearing, foul language, and personal filthiness, made the dens in which the women were confined equally offensive to ear, eye, nose, and sense of modesty. The punishment of death at that time existed for 300 different offences, and though there were many mitigations of the sentence in the case of those who had only committed minor breaches of the law, yet the fact that nearly all had by law incurred the penalty of death, gave an apparent justification for herding the prisoners indiscriminately together. It thus happened that many a poor girl who had committed a comparatively trivial offence, became absolutely ruined in body and mind through her contact in prison with the vilest and most degraded of women. No attempt whatever

was made to reform or discipline the prisoners, or to teach them any trade whereby, on leaving the gaol, they might earn an honest livelihood. Add to this that there were no female warders nor female officers of any kind in the prison, and that the male warders were frequently men of depraved life, and it is not difficult to see that no element of degradation was wanting to make the female wards of Newgate what they were often called – a hell on earth.

When Elizabeth Fry and Anna Buxton first visited this Inferno, there was so little pretence at any kind of control over the prisoners, that the Governor of Newgate advised the ladies to leave their watches behind them at home. Mrs. Fry, with a wise instinct, felt that the best way of influencing the poor, wild, rough women was to show her care for their children. Many of the prisoners had their children with them in gaol, and there were very few even of the worst who could not be reached by care for their little ones. Even those who had no children were often not without the motherly instinct, and could be roused to some measure of self-restraint and decency for the sake of the children who were being corrupted by their example. So Mrs. Fry's first step towards reforming the women took the form of starting a school for the children in the prison. As usual in all good work of a novel kind, those who knew nothing about it were quite sure that Mrs. Fry would have been much more usefully employed if she had turned her energies in a different direction. People who have never stirred a finger to lighten the misery of mankind always know, so much better than the workers, what to do and how to do it. They would probably tell a fireman who is entering a burning house at the risk of his life, that he would be more usefully employed in studying the chemical action of fire, or in pondering over the indestructibility of matter. The popular feeling with regard to Mrs. Fry's work in Newgate was embodied by Thomas Hood in a ballad which is preserved in his collected works, and serves now to show how wrong a good and tender-hearted man may be in passing judgment on a work of the value of which he was entirely unqualified to form an opinion. The refrain of the poem is "Keep your school out of Newgate, Mrs. Fry" —

I like the pity in your full-brimmed eye.
I like your carriage and your silken gray,
Your dove-like habits and your silent preaching,
But I *don't* like your Newgatory teaching.

. . . . .

No, I'll be your friend, and like a friend
Point out your very worst defect. Nay, never
Start at that word! But I must ask you why
You keep your school in Newgate, Mrs. Fry.

Mrs. Fry's philanthropy was not of a kind to be checked by a ballad, and she went on perseveringly with her work; the school was formed, and a prisoner, named Mary Cormor, was the first schoolmistress. A wonderful change gradually became apparent in the demeanour, language, and appearance of the women in prison. In 1817 an association was formed for carrying on the work Mrs. Fry had begun. It was called "An Association for the Improvement of the Female Prisoners in Newgate." Its first members were eleven Quakeresses and one clergyman's wife. Public attention was now alive to the importance of the work; and in the following year a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire and report upon the condition of the London prisons. Mrs. Fry was examined before this committee. Her chief recommendations were that the prisoners should be employed in some industry, and be paid for their work, and that good conduct should be encouraged

by rewards; she was also most urgent that the women prisoners should be in the charge of women warders. Her work in the prison naturally led her to consider the condition and ultimate fate of women who were transported. Transportation was then carried out upon a large scale, and all the evils of the prison existed in an intensified form on board the transport ships. The horrors of the voyage were followed by a brutal and licentious distribution of the women on their arrival to colonists, soldiers, and convicts, who went on board and took their choice of the human cargo. Mrs. Fry's efforts resulted in a check being placed on these shameful barbarities. The women were, owing to her exertions, sent out in charge of female warders, and they were provided with decent accommodation on their arrival.

Like Howard, Mrs. Fry did not confine her efforts to the poor and wretched of her own country. She visited foreign countries in order thoroughly to study various methods of prison work and discipline. On one occasion she found in Paris a congenial task in bringing the force of public opinion to bear on the treatment of children in the Foundling Hospital there. The poor babies were done up in swaddling clothes that were only unwrapped once in twelve hours. There was no healthy screaming in the wards, only a sound that a hearer compared to the faint and pitiful bleating of lambs. A lady who visited the hospital said she never made the round of the spotlessly clean white cots, without finding at least one dead baby! Everything in the hospital was regulated by clockwork; its outward appearance was clean and orderly in the extreme, but the babies died like flies! The Archbishop of Paris was vastly annoyed with Mrs. Fry for pointing out this drawback to the perfect organisation of the institution; but when once the light was let in, improvement followed.

There were many other classes of neglected or unfortunate people whose circumstances were improved by Mrs. Fry's exertions. The lonely shepherds of Salisbury Plain were provided with a library after she had visited the desolate region where they lived. She also organised a lending library for coastguardsmen and for domestic servants. There was no end to her active exertions for the good of others except that of her life.

She died at Ramsgate in 1845, and was buried at Barking.

Her private life was not without deep sorrows and anxieties. She lost a passionately beloved child in 1815; in 1828 her husband was unfortunate in his business affairs. They suffered from a great diminution of fortune, and were obliged to remove to a smaller house and adopt a less expensive style of living. She did not pretend to any indifference she was far from feeling under these trials; but they were powerless to turn her from the duties which she had marked out for herself. The work which she had undertaken for the good of others probably became, in its turn, her own solace and support in the hour of trial and affliction. In helping others she had unconsciously built up a strong refuge for herself, thus giving a new illustration to the truth of the words: "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life, for my sake, shall find it."

II
MARY CARPENTER

"That it may please Thee … to show Thy pity upon all prisoners and captives."

Mary Carpenter was thirty-eight years old when Mrs. Fry died in 1845. We do not hear, in reading the lives of either, that the two women ever met, or that the elder directly stimulated the activity of the younger. Yet the one most surely prepared the way for the other; their work was upon the same lines, and Miss Carpenter, the Unitarian, of Bristol, was the spiritual heir and successor of Mrs. Fry, the Quaker, of Norwich.

There is, it is true, a contrast in the manner in which the two women approached their work in life. The aim of both was the rescue of what Mary Carpenter called "the perishing and dangerous classes." But while Mrs. Fry was led, through her efforts on behalf of convicts, to establish schools for them and their children, Mary Carpenter's first object was the school for neglected children, and through the knowledge gained there she was led to form schemes for the reformation of criminals and for a new system of prison discipline. Mrs. Fry worked through convicts to schools; Mary Carpenter through schools to convicts.

It will not therefore be imagined that there is any want of appreciation of Mrs. Fry when it is said that Mary Carpenter's labours were more effective, inasmuch as they were directed to the cause of the evil, rather than to its results. By establishing reformatory and industrial schools, and by obtaining, after long years of patient effort, the sanction and support of Parliament for them, she virtually did more than had up to that time ever been done in England, to stop the supply of criminals. Children who were on the brink of crime, and those who had actually fallen into criminal courses, were, through her efforts, snatched away from their evil surroundings, and helped to become respectable and industrious men and women. Before her time, magistrates and judges had no choice, when a child criminal stood convicted before them, but to sentence him to prison, whence he would probably come out hopelessly corrupted and condemned for life to the existence of a beast of prey. She says, in one of her letters, dated 1850: "A Bristol magistrate told me that for twenty years he had felt quite unhappy at going on committing these young culprits. And yet he had *done* nothing!" The worse than uselessness of prisons for juvenile offenders was a fact that was burnt into Mary Carpenter's mind and heart by the experience of her life. She was absolutely incapable of recognising the evil and at the same time calmly acquiescing in it. Her magisterial friend is the type of the common run of humanity, who satisfy their consciences by saying, "Very grievous! very wrong!" and who do nothing to remove the grievance and the wrong; she is the type of the knights-errant of humanity, who never see a wrong without assailing it, and endeavouring to remove the causes which produce it.

Mary Carpenter was born at Exeter in 1807, the eldest of five children, several of whom have left their mark on the intellectual and moral history of this century. There was all through her life a great deal of the elder sister – one may almost say, of the mother – in Mary Carpenter. In an early letter her mother speaks of the wonderfully tranquillising influence of dolls on her little Mary. She never shrank from responsibility, and she had a special capacity for protecting love – a capacity that stood her in good stead in reclaiming the little waifs and strays to whom she afterwards devoted herself. Her motherliness comes out in a hundred ways in the story of her life. Her endless patience with the truant and naughty children was such as many a real mother might envy. She was especially proud of the title of "the old mother" which the Indian women, whom she visited towards the close of her life, gave her. In writing to a friend, she once said: "There is a verse in the prophecies, 'I have given thee children whom thou hast not borne,' and the motherly love of my heart has been given to many who have never known before a mother's love." She adopted a child in 1858 to be a daughter to her, and writes gleefully: "Just think of me with a little girl of *my own*! about five years old, ready-

made to my hand, without the trouble of marrying – a darling little thing, an orphan," etc. etc. Her friends spoke of her eager delight in buying the baby's outfit.

It was her motherliness that made her so successful with the children in the reformatories and industrial schools; moreover, the children believed in her love for them. One little ragged urchin told a clergyman that Miss Carpenter was a lady who gave away all her money for naughty boys, and only kept enough to make herself clean and decent. On one occasion she heard that two of her ex-pupils had "got into trouble," and were in prison at Winchester. She quickly found an opportunity of visiting them, and one of them exclaimed, directly he saw her, "Oh! Miss Carpenter, I knew you would not desert us!"

Another secret of her power, and also of her elasticity of spirit, was her sense of humour. It was like a silver thread running through her laborious life, saving her from dulness and despondency. In one of her reports, which has to record the return of a runaway, she said: "He came back resembling the prodigal in everything except his repentance!"

The motto which she especially made her own was *Dum doceo disco – While I teach, I learn*. Her father had a school for boys in Bristol, and Mary and her sister were educated in it. They were among the best of their father's pupils, one of whom, the Rev. James Martineau, has left a record of the great impression Mary's learning made upon him. She was indeed very proficient in many branches of knowledge. Her education included Latin, Greek, mathematics, and natural history; and the exactness which her father and the nature of her studies demanded of her, formed a most invaluable training for her after career. For many years the acquisition of knowledge, for its own sake, was the chief joy of her life; but a time came when it ceased to satisfy her. She was rudely awakened from the delightful dreams of a student's life by a severe visitation of cholera at Bristol in 1832. From this period, and indeed from a special day – that set apart as a fast-day in consequence of the cholera – dates a solemn dedication of herself to the service of her fellow-creatures. She wrote in her journal 31st March 1832, what her resolution was, and concluded: "These things I have written to be a witness against me, if ever I should forget what ought to be the object of all my active exertions in life." These solemn self-dedications are seldom or never spoken of by those who make them. Records of them are found sometimes in journals long after the hand that has written them is cold. But, either written or unwritten, they are probably the rule rather than the exception on the part of those who devote themselves to the good of others. The world has recently learned that this was the case with Lord Shaftesbury. There is a time when the knight-errant consciously enrols himself a member of the noble band of warriors against wrong and oppression, and takes upon himself his baptismal vow – manfully to fight against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant to his life's end.

It must be remembered that when Mary Carpenter first began to exert herself for the benefit of neglected children, there were no reformatory or industrial schools, except those which had been established by the voluntary efforts of philanthropists like herself. Aided by a band of fellow-workers and wise advisers, chief of whom were Mr. Matthew Davenport Hill, the Recorder of Birmingham, and his daughters; Dr. Tuckerman, of the U.S.A.; Mr. Russell Scott, of Bath; Mr. Sheriff Watson, of Aberdeen; and Lady Byron, Mary Carpenter set to work to establish a voluntary reformatory school at Kingswood, near Bristol. Her principle was that by surrounding children, who would otherwise be criminals, with all the influences of a wholesome home life, there was a better chance than by any other course, of reclaiming these children, and making them useful members of society. To herd children together in large, unhomelike institutions, was always, in Mary Carpenter's view, undesirable; the effect on character is bad; the more perfectly such places are managed, the more nearly do the children in them become part of a huge machine, and the less are their faculties, as responsible human beings, developed. Over and over again, in books, in addresses, and by the example of the institutions which she managed herself, Mary Carpenter reiterated the lesson that if a child is to be rescued and reformed, he must be placed in a family; and that where it is necessary, for the good of society, to

separate children on account of their own viciousness, or that of their parents, from their own homes, the institutions receiving them should be based on the family ideal so far as possible. With this end in view, the children at Kingswood were surrounded by as many home influences as possible. Miss Carpenter at one time thought of living there herself, but this scheme was given up, in deference to her mother's wishes. She was, however, a constant visitor, and a little room, which had once been John Wesley's study, was fitted up as a resting-place for her. On a pane of one of the windows of this room her predecessor had written the words, "God is here." She taught the children herself, and provided them with rabbits, fowls, and pigs, the care of which she felt would exercise a humanising influence upon them. The whole discipline of the place was directed by her; one of her chief difficulties was to get a staff of assistants with sufficient faith in her methods to give them an honest trial. She did not believe in a physical force morality. "We must not attempt," she wrote, "to *break* the will, but to train it to govern itself wisely; and it must be our great aim to call out the good, which exists even in the most degraded, and make it conquer the bad." After a year's work at Kingswood in this spirit, she writes very hopefully of the improvement already visible in the sixteen boys and thirteen girls in her charge. The boys could be trusted to go into Bristol on messages, and even "thievish girls" could be sent out to shops with money, which they never thought of appropriating.

But although the success of the institution was so gratifying, it had no legal sanction; it had consequently no power to deal with runaways, and the great mass of juvenile delinquents were still sentenced to prisons, from which they emerged, like the man into whom seven devils entered, in a state far worse than their first. Mary Carpenter's work was not only to prove the success of her methods of dealing with young criminals, but, secondly, to convince the Government that the established system was a bad one, and thirdly, and most difficult of all, to get them to legislate on the subject. A long history of her efforts to obtain satisfactory legislation for children of the perishing and dangerous classes is given in her life, written by her nephew, Mr. J. Estlin Carpenter. It is enough here to say that in the House of Lords, Lord Shaftesbury, and in the House of Commons, Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Adderley (afterwards Lord Iddesleigh and Lord Norton), were her chief supporters. Mr. Lowe (now Lord Sherbrooke) was her chief opposer. Liberal as she was, born and bred, as well as by heart's conviction, she confessed with some feeling of shame, that the Tories "are best in *this* work." At last, in 1854, her efforts were crowned with success, and the Royal Assent was given to the Youthful Offenders Bill, which authorised the establishment of reformatory schools, under the sanction of the Home Secretary.

It is a striking proof of the change that has taken place in the sphere and social status of women, that Mary Carpenter, in the first half of her active life, suffered what can be called nothing less than anguish, from any effort which demanded from herself the least departure from absolute privacy. When she began her work of convincing the public and Parliament of the principles which ought to govern the education of juvenile criminals, her nephew writes that to have spoken at a conference in the presence of gentlemen, she would have felt, at that time (1851), as tantamount to unsexing herself. When she was called upon to give evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1852, her profound personal timidity made the occasion a painful ordeal to her, which she was only enabled to support by the consciousness of the needs of the children. Surely this excessive timidity arises from morbid self-consciousness, rather than from true womanly modesty. Mary Carpenter was enabled, by increasing absorption in her work, to throw it off, and for her work's sake she became able to speak in public with ease and self-possession. She frequently spoke and read papers at the Social Science Congresses, and at meetings of the British Association. A letter from her brother Philip describes one of these occasions, at the meeting in 1860 of the British Association at Oxford, when her subject was, "Educational Help from the Government Grant to the Destitute and Neglected Children of Great Britain."

"July – , 1860.

"There was a great gathering of celebrities to hear her. It was in one of the ancient schools or lecture-halls, which was crowded, evidently not by the curious, but by those who really wanted to know what she had to say. She stood up and read in her usual clear voice and expressive enunciation… It was, I suppose, the first time a woman's voice had read a lecture there before dignitaries of learning and the Church; but as there was not the slightest affectation on the one hand, so on the other hand there was neither a scorn nor an etiquettish politeness; but they all listened to her as they would have listened to Dr. Rae about Franklin, only with the additional feeling (expressed by the President, Mr. Nassau Senior) that it was a matter of heart and duty, as well as head."

As years passed by, her work and responsibilities rapidly increased. It is astonishing to read of the number of institutions, from ragged schools upwards, of which she was practically the head and chief. Her thoroughly practical and business-like methods of work, as well as her obvious self-devotion and earnestness, ensured to her a large share of public confidence and esteem, and although she was a Unitarian, sectarian prejudices did not often thwart her usefulness. Two instances to the contrary must, however, be given. In 1856 the Somersetshire magistrates at the Quarter Sessions at Wells refused to sanction the Girls' Reformatory, established by Miss Carpenter at the Red Lodge, Bristol, on account of the religious opinions of its foundress. They appeared to have forgotten that "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." A more deeply and truly religious spirit than Mary Carpenter's never existed; but that is the last thing that sectarian rancour takes heed of. The other little bit of persecution she met with was regarded by herself and her friends as something between a compliment and a joke. In 1864 she wrote a book entitled *Our Convicts*. The work was received with commendation by jurists in France, Germany, and the United States, but the crowning honour of all was that the Pope placed her and her books on the "Index Expurgatorius." After this she felt that if she had lived in earlier times she might have aspired to the crown of martyrdom.

The extraordinary energy and vitality of Mary Carpenter never declined. When she was over sixty years of age she made four successive visits to India, with the double object of arousing public opinion there about the education of women, and the condition of convicts, especially of female convicts. At the age of sixty-six she visited America. She had long been deeply interested in the social and political condition of the United States, and had many warm personal friends there. Her first impulse to reformatory work had come from an American citizen, Dr. Tuckerman; her sympathy and help had been abundantly bestowed upon the Abolitionist party, and she was of course deeply thankful when the Civil War in America ended as it did in the victory of the North, and in the complete abolition of negro slavery in the United States. Her mind remained vigorous and susceptible to new impressions and new enthusiasms to the last. Every movement for elevating the position of women had her encouragement. She frequently showed her approval of the movement for women's suffrage by signing petitions in its favour, and was convinced that legislation affecting both sexes would never be what it ought to be until women as well as men had the power of voting for Members of Parliament. In 1877, within a month of her death, she signed the memorial to the Senate of the London University in favour of the admission of women to medical degrees.

She passed away peacefully in her sleep, without previous illness or decline of mental powers, in June 1877, leaving an honoured name, and a network of institutions for the reform of young criminals, and the prevention of crime, of which our country will for many years to come reap the benefit.

III
CAROLINE HERSCHEL

"As when by night the glass
Of Galileo less assured observes
Imagined lands and regions in the moon." – *Paradise Lost.*

Every one knows the fame of Sir William Herschel, the first distinguished astronomer of that name, the builder and designer of the forty-foot telescope, and the discoverer of the planet, called after George III., Georgium Sidus. Hardly less well known is the name of his sister, Caroline Herschel, who was her brother's constant helper for fifty years. She was the discoverer of eight comets; she received, for her distinguished services to science, the gold medal of the Royal Astronomical Society, and the gold medal conferred annually by the King of Prussia for science; she was also made an honorary member of the Royal Astronomical Society and of the Royal Irish Academy, and received many other public marks of appreciation of the value of her astronomical labours. Few women have done as much as she for the promotion of science, and few have been more genuinely humble in their estimate of their own attainments. Nothing made her more angry than any praise which appeared, even in the slightest degree, to detract from the reputation of her brother; over and over again she asserted that she was nothing more than a tool which he had taken the trouble to sharpen. One of her favourite expressions about herself was that she only "minded the heavens" for her brother. "I am nothing," she wrote; "I have done nothing: all I am, all I know, I owe to my brother. I am only a tool which he shaped to his use – a well-trained puppy-dog would have done as much."

Scientific men and scientific societies did not endorse Caroline Herschel's extremely humble estimate of herself. In the address to the Astronomical Society by Mr. South, on presenting the medal to Miss Herschel in 1828, the highest praise was conferred upon her as her brother's fellow-worker, and as an original observer. "She it was," said Mr. South, "who reduced every observation, made every calculation; she it was who arranged everything in systematic order; and she it was who helped him (Sir W. Herschel) to obtain his imperishable name. But her claims to our gratitude do not end here: as an original observer she demands, and I am sure she has, our unfeigned thanks." He then narrates the series of her astronomical discoveries, and adds, referring to the brother and sister: "Indeed, in looking at the joint labours of these extraordinary personages, we scarcely know whether most to admire the intellectual power of the brother, or the unconquerable industry of his sister."

The sharpest tool, or the best-trained puppy-dog in the world, could hardly have earned such praise as this. Without endorsing what Caroline said of herself in her generous wish to heighten the fame of her brother, it must, however, be conceded that in a remarkable degree she was what he made her. With an excellent, and indeed an exceptionally powerful, natural understanding, she was ready to apply it in any direction her brother chose. She was far from being a mere tool, but her mind resembled a fine musical instrument upon which her brother was able to play the lightest air or the grandest symphony, according as he pleased. At his bidding she became, first, a prima donna, then an astronomer; if he had so wished it, she would probably with equal readiness and versatility have turned her attention to any other branch of science or art. Caroline Herschel was, indeed, a fine example of what devoted love can do to elevate the character and develop the natural capacity of the understanding.

She was born in Hanover on the 16th March 1750, the youngest but one of six children. Her exceptionally long life of nearly ninety-eight years closed in January 1848. Her memory, therefore, included the earthquake of Lisbon, the whole French Revolution, the meteor-like rise and fall of

Napoleon, and all the history of modern Europe to the eve of the socialistic outbreak of 1848. Her family life, before she left Germany, was of the narrowest possible kind. She had only one sister, seventeen years older than herself; and as Sophia Herschel married early, Caroline became the only girl in her family circle, and to the full was she kept to those exclusively feminine pursuits and occupations which the proprieties of Germany at that time enforced. Her mother appears to have been enthusiastically opposed to the education of girls. Her father wished to give her a good education, but the mother insisted that nothing of the kind should be attempted. How she learned to read and write we are not told in the biography written by her grand-niece, Mrs. J. Herschel. These accomplishments were by no means common among German women of the humbler middle class a hundred years ago. She did, however, acquire them, in spite of her mother's decree that two or three months' training in the art of making household linen was all the education that Caroline required. Her father, who was a professional musician himself, wished to teach her music, but could only do so by stealth, or by taking advantage of half an hour now and then, when his wife was in an exceptionally good temper. In a letter, written when she was eighty-eight years old, Caroline recalls these furtive hours stolen from the serious occupations of her life, which then consisted in sewing, "ornamental needlework, knitting, plaiting hair, and stringing beads and bugles." "It was my lot," she writes, "to be the Cinderella of the family… I could never find time for improving myself in many things I knew, and which, after all, proved of no use to me afterwards, except what little I knew of music … which my father took a pleasure in teaching me – *N.B., when my mother was not at home. Amen.*"

Very early in her life her brother William became Caroline's idol and hero. He was twelve years older than herself, and distinguished himself among the group of brothers for tenderness and kindness to the little maiden. Her eldest brother, Jacob, was a fastidious gentleman, and Caroline's inability to satisfy his requirements for nicety at table and as a waitress, often earned her a whipping. But her brother William's gentility was of a different order. She narrates one instance, which doubtless was a specimen of others, when "My dear brother William threw down his knife and fork and ran to welcome and crouched down to me, which made me forget all my grievances." Little did William or Caroline guess that in the kind brother soothing the little sister's trouble, the future astronomer was "sharpening the tool" that was hereafter to be of such inestimable service to him.

The connection of England and Hanover under one crown caused an intimate association between the two countries. William Herschel's first visit to England was as a member of the band of the regiment of which his father was bandmaster. On this first visit to England, William expended his little savings in buying Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding." Jacob made an equally characteristic purchase of specimens of English tailoring art. These professional journeys to England led, in the course of time, to William Herschel establishing himself as a music-master and professional musician at Bath. This, however, he very early regarded merely as a means to an end. He taught music to live, but he lived for his astronomical studies and for the inventions and improvements in telescopes which he afterwards introduced to the world. When Caroline was seventeen years old, her father died, leaving his family very ill provided for; Caroline was more closely than ever confined to the tasks of a household drudge and to endeavouring to supply home-made luxuries for Jacob. This went on for five years, the mother and sister slaving night and day in order that Jacob might cut a figure in the world not humbling to the family pride. In 1772 William Herschel unexpectedly arrived from England, and his short visit ended in his sister Caroline returning with him to Bath. She left, as she writes with some awe, even after an interval of many years, "without receiving the consent of my eldest brother to my going."

There could not possibly be a greater contrast than that between Caroline's life in Hanover and her life in England. From being a maid-of-all-work in a not very interesting family, where there was a dull monotony in her daily routine of drudgery, she found she was to become a public singer, an astronomer's apprentice, and an assistant manufacturer of scientific instruments; she was not only her brother's housekeeper, but his helper and coadjutor in every act of his life. Nothing is more

remarkable than the account of the life of William and Caroline Herschel at Bath. He frequently gave from thirty-five to forty music-lessons a week; this, with his work as director of public concerts, kept the wolf from the door, and, needless to say, occupied his daylight hours with tolerable completeness. The nights were given to "minding the heavens," or to making instruments necessary for minding them much more efficiently than had hitherto been possible. Every room in the house was converted into a workshop. William Herschel literally worked on, night and day, without rest, his sister on several occasions keeping him alive by putting bits of food into his mouth while he was still working. Once when he was finishing a seven-foot mirror for his telescope, he never took his hands from it for sixteen hours. The great work of constructing the forty-foot telescope took place at Bath; and at Bath also, while still practising the profession of a music-master, Herschel discovered the Georgium Sidus, and was acknowledged as the leading authority on astronomy in England.

Up to the time of Herschel's improvements, six or eight inches used to be considered a large size for the mirror of an astronomical telescope. His first great telescope had a twelve-foot mirror. There is a most exciting account in Mrs. Herschel's Life of Caroline Herschel, of the failure of the first casting of the mirror for the thirty-foot reflector. The molten metal leaked from the vessel containing it and fell on the stone floor, pieces of which flew about in all directions as high as the ceiling. The operators fortunately escaped without serious injury. "My poor brother fell, exhausted with heat and exertion, on a heap of brickbats." The disappointment must have been intense, but nothing ever baffled these indefatigable workers, and the second casting was a complete success.

Five years after she had joined her brother at Bath, Caroline made her first appearance as a public singer. She was very successful, and her friends anticipated that her well-cultivated and beautiful voice would become a means of providing her with an ample income. She, however, had so fully identified herself with her brother's astronomical labours, that she only regarded her musical acquirements as a means of setting him free to devote himself more completely to the real object of his life. His fame as a maker of telescopes had by this time spread all over Europe, and many scientific societies, royal persons, and other celebrities, ordered telescopes of him. On these orders he was able to realise a large profit, but Caroline always grudged the time devoted to their execution. Her aim for her brother was not that he should become rich or even well-to-do, but that he should devote himself unreservedly to advance the progress of astronomical science. She was ready to live on a crust, and to give herself up to the most pinching economies and even privations, for this end. She was the keeper of her brother's purse, and received his commands to spend therefrom anything that was necessary for herself; her thrift and self-denial may be judged from the fact that the sum thus abstracted for her own personal wants seldom amounted to more than £7 or £8 a year.

The next great change in the life of the brother and sister took place in 1782, when William Herschel left Bath and was appointed Astronomer-Royal by George the Third. His salary of only £200 a year involved a great loss of income, but this, in his eyes, was a small matter in comparison with the advantage of having his time entirely free to give up to his favourite studies. They bade farewell to Bath, and settled first at Datchet, shortly after, however, removing to Slough. Caroline had dismal visions of bankruptcy, but William was in the highest spirits, and declared that they would live on eggs and bacon, "which would cost nothing to speak of, now that they were really in the country."

Caroline was now installed as an assistant astronomer, and was given a telescope, which she calls a "seven-foot Newtonian Sweeper"; and she was instructed, whenever she had an evening not in attendance on her brother, to "sweep for comets"; but her principal business appears, at this time, to have been waiting on her brother, and writing down the results of his observations; they worked quite as hard as they had done at Bath. They laboured at the manufacture of instruments all day, and at the observation of the heavens all night. No severity of weather, if the sky was clear, ever kept them from their posts. The ink often froze with which Caroline was writing down the results of her brother's observations. It has been well said that if it had not been for occasional cloudy nights, they must have died of overwork. The apparatus for erecting the great forty-foot telescope, and the

iron and woodwork for its various motions, were all designed by William Herschel, and fixed under his immediate direction. His sister, in her *Recollections*, wrote: "I have seen him stretched many an hour in the burning sun across the top beam, whilst the iron-work for the various motions was being fixed." The penurious salary granted to William Herschel was supplemented by special grants for the removal and the erection of all this machinery; and in 1787 Caroline's services to her brother were publicly recognised by her receiving the appointment of assistant to her brother at a salary of £50 a year. She was at all times grateful to members of the royal family for acts of kindness shown by them to her brother and herself; but it is evident that she felt that, so far as money was concerned, she had not much cause for gratitude to the royal bounty. She points out that at the time when Parliament was granting George III. the sum of £80,000 a year for encouraging science, £200 was considered a sufficient salary for the first astronomer of the day; and yet money could flow liberally enough in some directions, for £30,000 was at that time being spent on the altar-piece of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Even Caroline's little salary of £50 a year was not regularly paid. It was a trial to her again to become a pensioner on her brother's purse, and it was not till nine quarters of her official salary remained unpaid, that she reluctantly applied to him for help. No wonder that in reading, after her brother's death, an account of his life and its achievements, she remarks, "The favours of monarchs ought to have been mentioned, *but once would have been enough*."

It was after her brother's marriage, in 1788, that the majority of Caroline's astronomical discoveries were made. She discovered her first comet in 1786, her eighth and last in 1797. She was recognised as a comrade by all the leading astronomers of Europe, and received many letters complimenting her on her discoveries. One from De la Lande addressed her as "Savante Miss," while another from the Rev. Dr. Maskelyne saluted her as "My worthy sister in astronomy." Royal and other distinguished visitors constantly visited the wonderful forty-foot telescope at Slough, and either William Herschel or his sister were required to be in attendance to explain its marvels. The Prince of Orange, on one occasion, called, and left an extraordinary message "to ask Mr. Herschel, or if he was not at home, Miss Herschel, if it was true that Mr. Herschel had discovered a new star, whose light was not as that of the common stars, but with swallow-tails, as stars in embroidery." The only glimpse we get, through the peaceful labours of Caroline's long life, of the strife and turmoil of the French Revolution, is the note she makes of the visit, to her brother's observatory, of the Princesse de Lamballe. "About a fortnight after this," the diarist observes, "her head was off." The absence of all comment upon the wonderful political events of the time is noticeable, and so also is Caroline's thinly-veiled contempt for any science less sublime than that to which she and her brother were devoted. Her youngest brother, Dietrich, was a student of the insect world. "He amuses himself with insects," she wrote to her nephew; "it is well he does not see the word *amuses*, for whenever he catches a fly with a leg more than usual, he says it is as good as catching a comet." Her brother's marriage, though far from welcome at the time it took place, was a great blessing to her; for it gave her a most tender and affectionate sister, and ultimately a nephew, the inheritor of his father's great gifts, and the being to whom, after William Herschel's death in 1822, Caroline transferred all the devoted and passionate attachment of which her nature was capable.

The great mistake of her life was going back to Germany after Sir W. Herschel's death in 1822. She was then seventy-two years of age, and the previous fifty years of her life, containing all her most precious memories and associations, had been spent in England. In this country, also, were all those who were dearest to her. Yet, no sooner was her brother dead, than she felt life in England to be an impossibility. She little thought that she had still twenty-six years to live; indeed she had long been under the impression that her end was near, but while her brother lived she kept this to herself, because she wished to be useful to him as long as she possibly could. She never really re-acclimatised herself to Germany. "Why did I leave happy England?" she often said. The one German institution she thoroughly enjoyed was the winter series of concerts and operas, which she constantly attended, and she mentions with pleasure, in her letters, that she was "always sure to be noticed by the Duke

of Cambridge as his countrywoman, and that is what I want; I will be no Hanoverian." She laments the death of William IV., chiefly because, by causing a separation of the crowns of England and Hanover, it seemed to break a link between herself and the country of her adoption.

She never revisited England, but she kept up a constant communication with it by letters to her sister-in-law, her nephew, and later to her niece, Sir John Herschel's wife. At that time the post between London and Hanover was an affair of fifteen days, and letters were carried by a monthly messenger, of whose services she seldom failed to avail herself. She took the keenest interest in her nephew's distinguished career. His letters to her are full of astronomy. In 1832 he made a voyage to the Cape to observe the stars in the Southern Hemisphere. When Miss Herschel first heard of the intended voyage she refused to believe it. But when she was really convinced of it, the old impulse was as strong upon her as upon a war-horse who hears the trumpet. "Ja! if I was thirty or forty years younger and could go too!" she exclaimed.

On 1st January 1840 the tube of the celebrated forty-foot telescope was closed with a sort of family celebration. A requiem, composed by Sir John Herschel for the occasion, was chanted, and he and Lady Herschel, with their seven children and some old servants, walked in procession round it, singing as they went. On hearing of this from Slough, Miss Herschel recalls that the famous telescope had also been inaugurated with music. "God save the King" had then been sung in it, the whole company from the dinner-table mounting into the tube, and taking any musical instruments they could get hold of, to form a band and orchestra.

The most laborious of all her undertakings she accomplished after her brother's death. It was "The Reduction and Arrangement in the form of a catalogue, in Zones, of all the Star Clusters and Nebulæ, observed by Sir W. Herschel in his Sweeps." It was for this that the gold medal of the Royal Astronomical Society was voted to her in 1828.

All through her life in Hanover she lived with the most careful economy, seldom or never consenting to draw upon Sir John Herschel for the annuity of £100 that had been left her by her brother. She said it was impossible for her to spend more than £50 a year without making herself ridiculous. The only luxuries she granted herself were her concert and opera tickets, and her English bed, which all sufferers from the inhuman German bedding must be thankful to hear she possessed. The self-forgetfulness and devotion to others which had characterised her in youth accompanied her to her grave. Every detail with regard to the disposition of her property and the arrangements for her funeral had been made by herself, with the view of giving as little trouble as possible to her nephew, and making the smallest encroachment upon his time. In her latest moments her only thought for herself was embodied in a request that a lock of her beloved brother's hair might be laid with her in her coffin.

IV
SARAH MARTIN
THE DRESSMAKER AND PRISON VISITOR OF YARMOUTH

> "Two men I honour and no third. First the toilworn craftsman that with earth-made Implement laboriously conquers the earth and makes her man's… A second man I honour, and still more highly: Him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread, but the bread of Life… Unspeakably touching is it however when I find both dignities united; and he that must toil outwardly for the lowest of man's wants, is also toiling inwardly for the highest. Sublimer in this world know I nothing than the Peasant Saint, could such now anywhere be met with. Such a one will take thee back to Nazareth itself; thou wilt see the splendour of Heaven spring forth from the humblest depths of Earth, like a light shining in great darkness." – *Sartor Resartus*, pp. 157, 158.

Every one of us has probably been tempted at one time or another to say or think when asked to join in some good work, "If only I had more time or more money, I would take it up." It is good for us, therefore, to be reminded that neither leisure nor wealth are necessary to those whose hearts are fixed upon the earnest desire to leave this world a little better and a little happier than they found it.

This lesson was wonderfully taught by Sarah Martin, a poor dressmaker, who was born at Caister, near Great Yarmouth, in 1791. In her own locality she did as great a work in solving the problems of prison discipline, and how to improve the moral condition of prisoners, as Mrs. Fry was doing about the same time upon a larger scale in London. It is very extraordinary that this poor woman, who was almost entirely self-educated, and who was dependent on daily toil for daily bread, should have been able, through her own mother-wit and native goodness of heart, to see the evil and provide the same remedies for it as were in course of time provided throughout the land, as the result of study given to the subject, by statesmen, philosophers, and philanthropists.

When Sarah Martin first began to visit the prison at Great Yarmouth, there was no sort of provision for the moral or educational improvement of the prisoners. There was no chaplain, there were no religious services, there was no school, and there was no employment of any kind, except what Satan finds for idle hands to do. The quiet, little, gentle-voiced dressmaker changed all this.

She was first led to visit the prison in 1819, through the compassionate horror which filled her when she heard of the committal to prison of a woman for brutally ill-treating her child. Without any introduction or recommendation from influential persons, she knocked timidly at the gate of the prison, and asked leave to see this woman. She had not told a single human creature of her intention, not even her grandmother, with whom she lived. She was fearful lest she should be overcome by the counsels of worldly wisdom that she had better mind her own business, that the woman's wickedness was no concern of hers, and so forth. Her first application at the gaol was unsuccessful; but she tried again, and the second time she was admitted without any question whatever. Once in the presence of the prisoner, the first inquiry by which she was met was a somewhat rough one as to the object of her visit. When the poor creature heard and felt all the deep compassion which had moved Sarah Martin to her side, she burst into tears, and with many expressions of contrition and gratitude besought her visitor to help her to be a better woman.

From the date of this visit, the best energies of Sarah Martin's life were devoted to improving the lot of the prisoners in Great Yarmouth Gaol. She did not – indeed, she could not – give up her dressmaking. She worked out at her customers' houses, earning about 1s. 3d. a day. Her first resolve

was to give up always one day a week to her prison work, and as many other days as she could spare. She began teaching the prisoners to read and write; she also read to them, and told them stories. A deeply religious woman herself, it pained her that there were no services of any kind in the prison, and she prevailed upon the prisoners to gather together on Sunday mornings and read to one another. To encourage them in this she attended herself, not at first as the conductor of the service, but as a fellow-worshipper. This was very typical of her method and character. She was among them as one who served, not as one seeking power and authority. Another illustration of this sweet humility in her character may be given. She wished those of her pupils who could read to learn each day a few Bible texts; and she always learned some herself, and said them with the prisoners. Sometimes an objection was made. In her own words, "Many said at first, 'It would be of no use,' and my reply was, 'It is of use to me, and why should it not be so to you? You have not tried it, but I have.'" There was a simplicity in this, a complete absence of the "Depart from me, for I am holier than thou," which was irresistible, and always silenced excuse.

Soon after the commencement of the Sunday services in the prison, it was found necessary, through the difficulty of finding a reader, that Sarah Martin herself should conduct the service. At first she used to read a sermon from a book, but later she wrote her own sermons, and later still she was able to preach without writing beforehand. According to the testimony of Captain Williams, the Inspector of Prisons for the district, the whole service was in a high degree reverent and impressive. The prisoners listened with deep attention to the clear, melodious voice of their self-appointed pastor.

At no time did she seek to obtain from the governor of the prison any authority over the prisoners; that is, she never sought to control them against their will; authority over them she had, but it was the authority which proceeded from her own personal influence. The prisoners did what she wished, because they knew her devotion to them. Her hold over them is best proved by the fact that never but once did she meet from them with anything that could be called rudeness or insult.

Next to her care for godliness and education, her chief thoughts were given to provide employment for the prisoners, first for the women, and then for the men. A gentleman gave her 10s., and in the same week another gave her £1. Her gratitude for the possession of this small capital is touching to read of. She expended it in the purchase of materials for baby-clothes, and borrowing patterns, she set the women to work upon making little shifts and wrappers. The garments, when completed, were sold for the benefit of the women who had made them.

Her capital grew from thirty shillings to seven guineas, and in all more than £400 worth of clothing, made in this way, was sold. The advantages were twofold. First, the women were employed and taught to sew, and secondly, each woman was enabled to earn a small sum, which was saved for her till the time of her release from prison. This money was frequently the means of giving the discharged prisoner a chance of starting a new life and gaining an honest livelihood.

Sarah Martin gave particular attention to this very important branch of her work. A man or a woman just out of prison, branded with all the stigma and disgrace of the gaol, is too often almost forced back into crime as the only means of livelihood. Endless were the devices and schemes which Sarah Martin employed to prevent this. She would seek out respectable lodgings for the prisoners on their discharge; she would see their former employers and entreat that another chance might be given; her note-books and diaries are filled with items of her own personal expenditure in setting up her poor clients with the small stock-in-trade or the tools necessary to start some simple business on their own account.

After many years of patient and devoted work she was well known throughout the whole town and neighbourhood, and was no longer entirely dependent on her own slender earnings. Her grandmother died in 1826, and she then inherited a small income of about £12 a year. She removed into Yarmouth, and hired two rooms in a poor part of the town. Shortly after this she entirely gave up working as a dressmaker. She could not, of course, live on the little annuity she inherited from her grandmother; this was not much more than enough to pay for her rooms. But she did not fear for

herself. Her personal wants were of the simplest description, and she said herself that she had no care: "God, who had called me into the vineyard, had said, 'Whatsoever is right, I will give you.'" It would, indeed, have been to the discredit of Yarmouth if such a woman had been suffered to be in want. Many gifts were sent to her, but she scrupulously devoted everything that reached her to the prisoners, unless the donor expressly stated that it was not for her charities but for herself. About 1840, after twenty-one years' work in the prison and workhouse of the town, the Corporation of Yarmouth urged her to accept a small salary from the borough funds. She at first refused, because it was painful to her that the prisoners should ever regard her in any other light than as their disinterested friend; she feared that if she accepted the money of the Corporation she would be looked upon as merely one of the gaol functionaries, and that they would "rank her with the turnkeys and others who got their living by the duties which they discharged." It was urged upon her that this view was a mistaken one, and she was advised at least to accept a small salary as an experiment. She replied, "To try the experiment, which might injure the thing I live and breathe for, seems like applying a knife to your child's throat to know if it will cut. As for my circumstances, I have not a wish ungratified, and am more than content." The following year, however, it was evident that her health was giving way, and another attempt was made, which ended in the Corporation voting her the small sum of £12 a year, not as a salary, but as a voluntary gift to one who had been of such inestimable service to the town. She did not live long after this. Her health gradually became feebler, but she continued her daily work at the gaol till 17th April 1843. After that date she never again left her rooms, and after a few months of intense suffering, she died on the 15th October. When the nurse who was with her told her the end was near, she clasped her hands together and exclaimed, "Thank God, thank God." They were her last words. She was buried at Caister; the tombstone which marks her grave bears an inscription dictated by herself, giving simply her name and the dates of her birth and death, with a reference to the chapter of Corinthians which forms part of the Church of England Service for the Burial of the Dead. Well, indeed, is it near that grave, and full of the thoughts inspired by that life, for us to feel that "Death is swallowed up in victory."

The citizens of Yarmouth marked their gratitude and veneration for her by putting a stained-glass window to her memory in St. Nicholas's Church. Her name is reverently cherished in her native town. Dr. Stanley, who was Bishop of Norwich at the time of her death, gave expression to the general feeling when he said, "I would canonise Sarah Martin if I could!"

V
MARY SOMERVILLE

Mary Somerville, the most remarkable scientific woman our country has produced, was born at Jedburgh in 1780. Her father was a naval officer, and in December 1780 had just parted from his wife to go on foreign service for some years. She had accompanied her husband to London, and on returning home to Scotland was obliged to stay at the Manse of Jedburgh, the home of her brother-in-law and sister, Dr. and Mrs. Somerville. Here little Mary was born, in the house of her uncle and aunt, who afterwards became her father and mother-in-law, for her second husband was their son. In the interesting reminiscences she has left of her life, she records the curious fact that she was born in the home of her future husband, and was nursed by his mother.

Mary was of good birth on both sides. Her father was Admiral Sir William Fairfax, of the well-known Yorkshire family of that name, which had furnished a General to the Parliamentary army in the civil wars of the reign of Charles I. This family was connected with that of the famous American patriot, George Washington. During the American War of Independence, Mary Somerville's father, then Lieutenant Fairfax, was on board his ship on an American station, when he received a letter from General Washington, claiming cousinship with him, and inviting the young man to pay him a visit. The invitation was not accepted, but Lieutenant Fairfax's daughter lived to regret that the letter which conveyed it had not been preserved. Admiral Fairfax was concerned with Admiral Duncan in the famous victory of Camperdown, and gave many proofs that he was in every way a gallant sailor and a brave man. Mary Somerville's mother was of an ancient Scottish family named Charters. The pride of descent was very strongly marked among her Scotch relatives. Lady Fairfax does not seem much to have sympathised with her remarkable child. Mary, however, inherited some excellent qualities from both parents. Lady Fairfax was, in some ways, as courageous as her husband; notwithstanding a full allowance of Scotch superstitions and a special terror of storms and darkness, she had what her daughter called "presence of mind and the courage of necessity." On one occasion the house she was living in was in the greatest danger of being burned down. The flames of a neighbouring fire had spread till they reached the next house but one to that which she occupied. Casks of turpentine and oil in a neighbouring carriage manufactory were exploding with the heat. Lady Fairfax made all the needful preparations for saving her furniture, and had her family plate and papers securely packed. She assembled in the house a sufficient number of men to move the furniture out, if needs were. Then she quietly remarked, "Now let us breakfast; it is time enough for us to move our things when the next house takes fire." The next house, after all, did not take fire, and, while her neighbours lost half their property by throwing it recklessly into the street, before the actual necessity for doing so had arisen, Lady Fairfax suffered no loss at all. The same kind of cool courage was often exhibited by Mary Somerville in later life. On one occasion she stayed with her family at Florence during a severe outbreak of cholera there, when almost every one who could do so had fled panic-stricken from the city.

During the long absences of Sir William Fairfax on foreign service, Lady Fairfax and her children led a very quiet life at the little seaside village of Burntisland, just opposite to Edinburgh, on the Firth of Forth. As a young child, Mary led a wild, outdoor life, with hardly any education, in the ordinary sense of the word, though there is no doubt that in collecting shells, fossils, and seaweeds, in watching and studying the habits and appearance of wild birds, and in gazing at the stars through her little bedroom window, the whole life of this wonderful child was really an education of the great powers of her mind. However, when her father returned from sea about 1789 he was shocked to find Mary "such a little savage"; and it was resolved that she must be sent to a boarding school. She remained there a year and learned nothing at all. Her lithesome, active, well-formed body was

enclosed in stiff stays, with a steel busk in front; a metal rod, with a semicircle which went under the chin, was clasped to this busk, and in this instrument of torture she was set to learn columns of Johnson's dictionary by heart. This was the process which at that time went by the name of education in girls' schools. Fortunately she was not kept long at school. Mary had learned nothing, and her mother was angry that she had spent so much money in vain. She would have been content, she said, if Mary had only learnt to write well and keep accounts, which was all that a woman was expected to know. After this Mary soon commenced the process of self-education which only ended with her long life of ninety-two years. She not only learnt all she could about birds, beasts, fishes, plants, eggs and seaweeds, but she also found a Shakespeare which she read at every moment when she could do so undisturbed. A little later her mother moved into Edinburgh for the winter, and Mary had music lessons, and by degrees taught herself Latin. The studious bent of her mind had now thoroughly declared itself; but till she was about fourteen she had never received a word of encouragement about her studies. At that age she had the good fortune to pay a visit to her uncle and aunt at Jedburgh, in whose house she had been born. Her uncle, Dr. Somerville, was the first person who ever encouraged and helped her in her studies. She ventured to confide in him that she had been trying to learn Latin by herself, but feared it was no use. He reassured her by telling her of the women in ancient times who had been classical scholars. He moreover read Virgil with her for two hours every morning in his study. A few years later than this she taught herself Greek enough to read Xenophon and Herodotus, and in time she became sufficiently proficient in the language to thoroughly appreciate its greatest literature.

One of the most striking things about her was the many-sided character of her mind. Some people – men as well as women – who are scientific or mathematical seem to care for nothing but science or mathematics; but it may be truly said of her that "Everything was grist that came to her mill." There was hardly any branch of art or knowledge which she did not delight in. She studied painting under Mr. Nasmyth in Edinburgh, and he declared her to be the best pupil he had ever had. Almost to the day of her death she delighted in painting and drawing. She was also an excellent musician and botanist. The special study with which her name will always be associated was mathematics as applied to the study of the heavens, but she also wrote on physical geography and on microscopic science. It is sometimes thought that if women are learned they are nearly sure to neglect their domestic duties, or that, in the witty words of Sydney Smith, "if women are permitted to eat of the tree of knowledge, the rest of the family will soon be reduced to the same aerial and unsatisfactory diet." Mrs. Somerville was a living proof of the folly of this opinion. She was an excellent housewife and a particularly skilful needlewoman. She astonished those who thought a scientific woman could not understand anything of cookery, by her notable preparation of black currant jelly for her husband's throat on their wedding journey. On one occasion she supplied with marmalade, made by her own hands, one of the ships that were being fitted out for a Polar expedition. She was a most loving wife and tender mother as well as a devoted and faithful friend. She gave up far more time than most mothers do to the education of her children. Her love of animals, especially of birds, was very strongly developed. With all her devotion to science she was horrified at the barbarities of vivisection, and cordially supported those who have successfully exerted themselves to prevent it from spreading in England to the same hideous proportions which it has reached on the continent of Europe. Many pages of one of her learned works were written with a little tame mountain sparrow sitting on her shoulder. On one occasion, having been introduced to the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, she says he quite won her heart by exclaiming, in reference to the number of little birds that were eaten in Italy, "What! robins! Eat a robin! I would as soon eat a child."

Her first husband, Mr. Samuel Greig, only lived three years after their marriage in 1804. He appears to have been one of those men of inferior capacity, who dislike and dread intellectual power in women. He had a very low opinion of the intelligence of women, and had himself no interest in, nor knowledge of, any kind of science. When his wife was left a widow with two sons at the early age

of twenty-seven, she returned to her father's house in Scotland, and worked steadily at mathematics. She profited by the instructions of Professor Wallace, of the University of Edinburgh, and gained a silver medal from one of the mathematical societies of that day. Nearly all the members of her family were still loud in their condemnation of what they chose to regard as her eccentric and foolish behaviour in devoting herself to science instead of society. There were, however, exceptions. Her Uncle and Aunt Somerville and their son William did not join in the chorus of disapprobation which her studies provoked. With them she found a real home of loving sympathy and encouragement. In 1812 she and her cousin William were married. His delight and pride in her during their long married life of nearly fifty years were unbounded. For the first time in her life she now had the daily companionship of a thoroughly sympathetic spirit. Much of what the world owes to her it owes indirectly to him, because he stimulated her powers, and delighted in anything that brought them out. He was in the medical department of the army, and scientific pursuits were thoroughly congenial to him. He had a fine and well cultivated mind which he delighted in using to further his wife's pursuits. He searched libraries for the books she required, "copying and recopying her manuscripts to save her time." In the words of one of their daughters, "No trouble seemed too great which he bestowed upon her; it was a labour of love." When Mrs. Somerville became famous through her scientific writings, the other members of her family, who had formerly ridiculed and blamed her, became loud in her praise. She knew how to value such commendation in comparison with that which she had constantly received from her husband. She wrote about this, "The warmth with which my husband entered into my success deeply affected me; for not one in ten thousand would have rejoiced at it as he did; but he was of a generous nature, far above jealousy, and he continued through life to take the kindest interest in all I did." Mrs. Somerville's first work, *The Mechanism of the Heavens*, would probably never have been written but at the instance of Lord Brougham, whose efforts were warmly supported by those of Mr. Somerville. In March 1827 Lord Brougham, on behalf of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, wrote a letter begging Mrs. Somerville to write an account of Newton's *Principia* and of La Place's *Mécanique Céleste*. In reference to the latter book he wrote, "In England there are now not twenty people who know this great work, except by name, and not a hundred who know it even by name. My firm belief is that Mrs. Somerville could add two cyphers to each of these figures." Mrs. Somerville was overwhelmed with astonishment at this request. She was most modest and diffident of her own powers, and honestly believed that her self-acquired knowledge was so greatly inferior to that of the men who had been educated at the universities, that it would be the height of presumption for her to attempt to write on the subject. The persuasions of Lord Brougham and of her husband at last prevailed so far that she promised to make the attempt; on the express condition, however, that her manuscript should be put into the fire unless it fulfilled the expectations of those who urged its production. "Thus suddenly," she writes, "the whole character and course of my future life was changed." One is tempted to believe that this first plunge into authorship was, to some extent, stimulated by a loss of nearly all their fortune which had a short time before befallen Mr. and Mrs. Somerville. Before authorship has become a habit, the whip of poverty is often needed to rouse a student to the exertion and labour it requires. The impediments to authorship in Mrs. Somerville's case were more than usually formidable. In the memoirs she has left of this part of her life, she speaks of the difficulty which she experienced as the mother of a family and the head of a household in keeping any time free for her work. It was only after she had attended to social and family duties that she had time for writing, and even then she was subjected to many interruptions. The Somervilles were then living at Chelsea, and she felt at that distance from town, it would be ungracious to decline to receive those who had come out to call upon her. But she groans at the remembrance of the annoyance she sometimes felt when she was engaged in solving a difficult problem, by the entry of a well-meaning friend, who would calmly announce, "I have come to spend an hour or two with you." Her work, to which she gave the name of *The Mechanism of the Heavens*, progressed, however, in spite of interruptions, to such good purpose that in less than

a year it was complete, and it immediately placed its author in the first rank among the scientific thinkers and writers of the day. She was elected an honorary member of the Astronomical Society, at the same time with Caroline Herschel, and honours and rewards of all kinds flowed in upon her. Her bust, by Chantrey, was placed in the great hall of the Royal Society, and she was elected an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Dublin, and of many other scientific societies. It was a little later than this, in 1835, that Sir Robert Peel, on behalf of the Government, conferred a civil list pension of £200 a year upon Mrs. Somerville; the announcement of this came almost simultaneously with the news of the loss of the remainder of her own and her husband's private fortune, through the treachery of those who had been entrusted with it. The public recognition of her services to science came therefore at a very appropriate time; the pension was a few years later increased to £300 a year by Lord John Russell.

Throughout her life Mrs. Somerville was a staunch advocate of all that tended to raise up and improve the lot of women. When quite a young girl she was stimulated to work hard by the feeling that it was in her power thus to serve the cause of her fellow-women. Writing of the period when she was only sixteen years old, she says: "I must say the idea of making money had never entered my head in any of my pursuits, but I was intensely ambitious to excel in something, for I felt in my own breast that women were capable of taking a higher place in creation than that assigned to them in my early days, which was very low." It is interesting to observe that her enthusiasm for what are sometimes called "women's rights" was as warm at the end of her life as it had been at its dawn. When she was eighty-nine, she was as keen as she had been at sixteen for all that lifts up the lot of women. She was a firm supporter of Mr. John Stuart Mill in the effort he made to extend to women the benefit and protection of Parliamentary representation. She recognised that many of the English laws are unjust to women, and clearly saw that there can be no security for their being made just and equal until the law-makers are chosen partly by women and partly by men. The first name to the petition in favour of women's suffrage which was presented to Parliament by Mr. J. S. Mill in 1868 was that of Mary Somerville. She also joined in the first petition to the Senate of the London University, praying that degrees might be granted to women. At the time this petition was unsuccessful, but its prayer was granted within a very few years. One cannot but regret that Mrs. Somerville did not live to see this fulfilment of her wishes. She showed her sympathy with the movement for the higher education of women, by bequeathing her mathematical and scientific library to Girton College. It is one of the possessions of which the College is most justly proud. The books are enclosed in a very beautifully designed case, which also forms a sort of framework for a cast of Chantrey's bust of Mrs. Somerville. The fine and delicate lines of her beautiful face offer to the students of the College a worthy ideal of completely developed womanhood, in which intellect and emotion balance one another and make a perfect whole.

Mrs. Somerville's other works, written after *The Mechanism of the Heavens*, were *The Connection of the Physical Sciences*, *Physical Geography*, and *Molecular and Microscopic Science*. The last book was commenced after she had completed her eightieth year. Her mental powers remained unimpaired to a remarkably late period, and she also had extraordinary physical vigour to the end of her life. She affords a striking instance of the fallacy of supposing that intellectual labour undermines the physical strength of women. Her last occupations, continued till the actual day of her death, were the revision and completion of a treatise on *The Theory of Differences*, and the study of a book on *Quaternions*. Her only physical infirmity in extreme old age was deafness. She was able to go out and enjoy life up to the time of her death, which took place in 1872, at the great age of ninety-two years.

She was a woman of deep and strong religious feeling. Her beautiful character shines through every word and action of her life. Her deep humility was very striking, as was also her tenderness for, and her sympathy with, the sufferings of all who were wretched and oppressed. One of the last entries in her journal refers again to her love of animals, and she says, "Among the numerous plans for the education of the young, let us hope that mercy may be taught as a part of religion." The reflections in

these last pages of her diary give such a lovely picture of serene, noble, and dignified old age that they may well be quoted here. They show the warm heart of the generous woman, as well as the trained intellect of a reverent student of the laws of nature. “Though far advanced in years, I take as lively an interest as ever in passing events. I regret that I shall not live to know the result of the expedition to determine the currents of the ocean, the distance of the earth from the sun determined by the transits of Venus, and the source of the most renowned of rivers, the discovery of which will immortalise the name of Dr. Livingstone. But I regret most of all that I shall not see the suppression of the most atrocious system of slavery that ever disgraced humanity – that made known to the world by Dr. Livingstone and by Mr. Stanley, and which Sir Bartle Frere has gone to suppress, by order of the British Government.” A later entry still, and the last, gives another view of her happy, faithful spirit. The Admiral’s daughter speaks in it: “The Blue Peter has been long flying at my foremast, and now that I am in my ninety-second year I must soon expect the signal for sailing. It is a solemn voyage, but it does not disturb my tranquillity. Deeply sensible of my utter unworthiness, and profoundly grateful for the innumerable blessings I have received, I trust in the infinite mercy of my Almighty Creator.” She then expresses her gratitude for the loving care of her daughters, and her journal concludes with the words, “I am perfectly happy.” She died and was buried at Naples. Her death took place in her sleep, on 29th November 1872. Her daughter writes, “Her pure spirit passed away so gently that those around her scarcely perceived when she left them. It was the beautiful and painless close of a noble and happy life.” Wordsworth’s words about old age were fully realised in her case —

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee when gray hairs are nigh,
A melancholy slave;
But an old age, serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

VI
QUEEN VICTORIA [1]

A Jubilee, or a fiftieth anniversary of the reign of a king or queen, is a very rare event in our history. Rather more than a thousand years have rolled away since the time when Egbert was the first king of all England. And in all these thousand years there have only been *three* jubilees before that now being celebrated, and these three have each been clouded by some national or personal misfortune casting a gloom over the rejoicings which would naturally have taken place on such an occasion. It is rather curious that each of the three kings of England who has reached a fiftieth year of sovereignty has been the third of his name to occupy the throne. Henry III., Edward III., and George III. are the only English sovereigns, before Victoria, who have reigned for as long as fifty years. In the case of Henry the Third, the fifty years of his reign are a record of bad government, rebellion, and civil war. Edward the Third's reign, which began so triumphantly, ended in disaster; the king had fallen into a kind of dotage; Edward the Black Prince had died before his father, and the kingdom was ruled by the incompetent and unscrupulous John of Gaunt; the last years of this reign were characterised by military disasters, by harsh and unjust methods of taxation, and by subservience to the papacy. Those who thus sowed the wind were not long in reaping the whirlwind; for these misfortunes were followed by the one hundred years' war with France, by the peasants' war under Wat Tyler, and by the persecution of heretics in England, when for the first time in our history a statute was passed forfeiting the lives of men and women for their religious opinions. Passing on to the reign of George III., the jubilee of 1810 must have been a sad one, for the poor king had twice had attacks of madness, and one of exceptional severity began in the very year of the jubilee.

Happily, on the present occasion the spell is broken. The Queen is not the third, but the first of her name, and although there are no doubt many causes for anxiety as regards the outlook in our political and social history, yet there are still greater causes for hopefulness and for confidence that the marvellous improvement in the social, moral, and material condition of the people which has marked the reign in the past will be continued in the future.

It is not very easy at this distance of time to picture to one's self the passion of loyalty and devotion inspired by the young girl who became Queen of England in 1837. To realise what was felt for her, one must look at the character of the monarchs who had immediately preceded her. The immorality and faithlessness of George IV. are too well known to need emphasis. He was probably one of the most contemptible human beings who ever occupied a throne; he was eaten up by vanity, self-indulgence, and grossness. With no pretence to conjugal fidelity himself, he attempted to visit with the severest punishment the supposed infidelity of the unhappy woman who had been condemned to be his wife. Recklessly extravagant where his own glorification or pleasure was concerned, he could be penurious enough to a former boon companion who had fallen into want. There is hardly a feature in his character, either as a man or a sovereign, that could win genuine esteem or love. Mrs. Somerville was present at the gorgeous scene of his coronation, when something more than a quarter of a million of money was spent in decorations and ceremonial. She describes the tremendous effect produced upon every one by the knocking at the door which announced that Queen Caroline was claiming admittance. She says every heart stood still; it was like the handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar's feast. Only by contrast with such a man as George IV. could William IV. be regarded with favour. Several prominent offices about the Court were occupied by the Fitz Clarences, his illegitimate children. His manners were described as "bluff" by those who wished to make the best of them; "brutal" would have been a more accurate word. On one occasion a guest at one of his dinner

[1] Written for the Jubilee, June 1887.

parties asked for water, and the king, with an oath, exclaimed that no water should be drunk at his table. On another occasion, on his birthday, he took the opportunity, in the presence of the young Princess Victoria and her mother, the Duchess of Kent, to make the most unmanly and ungenerous attack upon the latter, who was sitting by his side. Greville speaks of this outburst as an extraordinary and outrageous speech. The Princess burst into tears, and her mother rose and ordered her carriage for her immediate departure.

It is no wonder that the Duchess of Kent was anxious, as far as possible, to keep her daughter from the influence of such a Court as this. Much of the Queen's conscientiousness and punctual discharge of the political duties of her station may be attributed to her careful education by her mother and her uncle Leopold, the widower of Princess Charlotte, and afterwards King of the Belgians. It is not possible to tell from the published memorials what clouds overshadowed the Princess Victoria's childhood. She seems to have had a most loving mother, excellent health and abilities, and a judicious training in every way; yet she says herself, in reference to the choice of the name of Leopold for her youngest son, "It is a name which is the dearest to me after Albert, one which recalls the almost only happy days of my sad childhood."

It is evident, therefore, that her young life was not so happy and tranquil as it appeared to be to outsiders. Perhaps her extreme and almost abnormal sense of responsibility was hardly compatible with the joyousness of childhood. There is a story that it was not till the Princess was eleven years old that her future destiny was revealed to her. Her governess then purposely put a genealogical table of the royal family into her history book. The child gazed earnestly at it, and by degrees she comprehended what it meant, namely, that she herself was next in succession to the ancient crown of England; she put her hand into her governess's and said, "I will be good. I understand now why you wanted me to learn so much, even Latin… I understand all better now." And she repeated more than once, "I will be good." The anecdote shows an unusually keen sense of duty and of conscientiousness in so young a child, and there are other anecdotes which show the same characteristic. Who, therefore, can wonder at the unbounded joy which filled all hearts in England when this young girl, pure, sweet, innocent, conscientious, and unselfish, ascended the throne of George IV. and William IV.? Her manners were frank, natural, simple, and dignified. The bright young presence of the girl Queen filled every one, high and low, throughout the nation with enthusiasm.

The American author, Mr. N. P. Willis, republican as he was, spoke of her in one of his letters as "quite unnecessarily pretty and interesting for the heir of such a crown as that of England." Daniel O'Connell, then the leader of the movement for the repeal of the union between England and Ireland, was as great an enthusiast for her as any one in the three kingdoms. His stentorian voice led the cheering of the crowd outside of St. James's Palace who welcomed her at the ceremony of proclamation. He said, when some of the gossips of the day chattered of a scheme to depose "the all but infant Queen" in favour of the hated Duke of Cumberland, "If necessary I can get 500,000 brave Irishmen to defend the life, the honour, and the person of the beloved young lady by whom England's throne is now filled."

The picture of the Queen's first council by Wilkie was shown in 1887 in the winter exhibition at the Royal Academy. It helps one very much to understand the sort of enthusiasm which she created. The sweet, girlish dignity and quiet simplicity with which she performed all the duties of her station filled every one with admiration. Surrounded by aged politicians, statesmen, and soldiers, she presides over them all with the grace and dignity associated with a complete absence of affectation and self-consciousness. Greville, the Clerk of the Council then, and for many years before and after, writes of this occasion: "Never was anything like the impression she produced, or the chorus of praise and admiration which is raised about her manner and behaviour, and certainly not without justice. It was something very extraordinary and far beyond what was looked for." Melbourne, her first Prime Minister, loved her as a daughter; the Duke of Wellington had a similar feeling for her, which she returned with unstinted confidence and reliance. The first request made by the girl Queen to her

mother, immediately after the proclamation, was that she might be left for two hours quite alone to think over her position and strengthen the resolutions that were to guide her future life. The childish words, "I will be good," probably gave the forecast of the tone of the young Queen's reflections. She must have felt the difficulties and peculiar temptations of her position very keenly, for when she was awakened from her sleep on the night of the 20th June 1837, to be told of William the Fourth's death, and that she was Queen of England, her first words to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who made the announcement, were, "I beg your Grace to pray for me."

The Queen was very careful from the beginning of her reign thoroughly to understand all the business of the State, and never to put her signature to any document till she had mastered its contents. Lord Melbourne was heard to declare that this sort of thing was quite new in his experience as Prime Minister, and he said jokingly that he would rather manage ten kings than one Queen. On one occasion he brought a document to her, and urged its importance on the ground of expediency. She looked up quietly, and said, "I have been taught to judge between what is right and what is wrong; but 'expediency' is a word I neither wish to hear nor to understand." Thirty years later one of the best men who ever sat in the House of Commons, John Stuart Mill, said, "There is an important branch of expediency called justice." But this was probably not the kind of expediency that Lord Melbourne recommended, and the Queen condemned.

In the *Memoirs of Mrs. Jameson*, by Mrs. Macpherson, there is a letter, dated December 1838, containing the following illustration of the way in which the Queen regarded the duties of her position. "Spring Rice told a friend of mine that he once carried her (the Queen) some papers to sign, and said something about managing so as to give Her Majesty less trouble. She looked up from her paper and said quietly, 'Pray never let me hear those words again; never mention the word "trouble." Only tell me how the thing is to be done, to be done rightly, and I will do it if I can.'" Everything that is known of the Queen at that time shows a similar high conception of duty and right. She was resolved to be no mere pleasure-seeking, self-indulgent monarch, but one who strove earnestly to understand her duties, and was determined to throw her best strength into their fulfilment.

It is this conscientious fulfilment of her political duties which gives the Queen such a very strong claim upon the gratitude of all her subjects. People do not always understand how hard and constant her work is, nor how deeply she feels her responsibilities. She is sometimes blamed for not leading society as she did in the earlier years of her reign, and it is no doubt true that her good influence in this way is much missed. Mrs. Oliphant has spoken of the way in which in those early years of her married life she was "in the foreground of the national life, affecting it always for good, and setting an example of purity and virtue. The theatres to which she went, and which both she and her husband enjoyed, were purified by her presence; evils which had been the growth of years disappearing before the face of the young Queen." That good influence at the head of society has been withdrawn by the Queen's withdrawal from fashionable life; and there is another disadvantage arising from her seclusion, in the degree to which it prevents her from feeling the force and value of many of the most important social movements of our time. Except in opening Holloway College, and in the impetus which she has given to providing medical women for the women of India, she has never, for instance, shown any special sympathy with any of the various branches of the movement for improving and lifting up the lives of women. Still, fully allowing all this, it is beyond doubt that her subjects, and especially her women subjects, have deep cause for gratitude and affection to the Queen. She has set a high example of duty and faithfulness to the whole nation. The childish resolve, "I will be good," has never been lost sight of. With almost boundless opportunities for self-indulgence, and living in an atmosphere where she is necessarily almost entirely removed from the wholesome criticism of equals and friends, she has clung tenaciously to the ideal with which she started on her more than fifty years of sovereignty. Simplicity of daily life and daily hard work are the antidotes which she has constantly applied to counteract the unwholesome influences associated with royalty. Women have special cause for gratitude to her, because she has shown, as no other woman could, how absurd is the

statement that political duties unsex a woman, and make her lose womanly tenderness and sympathy. The passionate worship which she bestowed upon her husband, the deep love she constantly shows for her children and grandchildren, and the eager sympathy which she extends to every creature on whom the load of suffering or sorrow has fallen, prove that being the first political officer of the greatest empire in the world cannot harden her heart or dull her sympathy. A woman's a woman "for a' that."

So much has lately been written about the supreme happiness of the Queen's married life, and so much has been revealed of her inner family circle, that no more is needed to make every woman realise the anguish of the great bereavement of her life. In earlier and happier years she wrote to her uncle Leopold on the occasion of one of the Prince Consort's short absences from her: "You cannot think how much this costs me, nor how completely forlorn I am and feel when he is away, or how I count the hours till he returns. All the numerous children are as nothing to me when he is away. It seems as if the whole life of the house and home were gone." Poor Queen, poor woman! Surely it is ungenerous, while she so strenuously goes on working at the duties of her position, to blame her because she cannot again join in what are supposed to be its pleasures.

One of the princesses lately spoke of the loneliness of the Queen. "You can have no idea," she is reported to have said, "how lonely mamma is." All who were her elders, and in a sense her guardians and protectors in the earlier part of her reign, have been removed by death. Her strongest affections are in the past, and with the dead. She is reported to have said on the death of one of those nearest to her: "There is no one left to call me Victoria now!" The etiquette which, in public at any rate, rules the behaviour of her children and grandchildren to the Queen, seems to render her isolation more painful than it would otherwise be. Lady Lyttelton, who was governess to the royal children, is stated in the *Greville Memoirs* to have said that "the Queen was very fond of them, but severe in her manner, and a strict disciplinarian." This may have perhaps increased her present loneliness, if it created a sense of reserve and formality between her children and herself.

The Queen has always shown a truly royal appreciation of those who were great in art, science, or literature. It is well known that she sent her book, *Leaves from our Journal in the Highlands*, to Charles Dickens, with the inscription, "From one of the humblest of writers to one of the greatest." Mrs. Somerville, in her *Reminiscences*, speaks of the gracious reception given to herself by the Queen while she was still Princess Victoria, when the authoress presented a copy of her *Mechanism of the Heavens* to the Duchess of Kent and her daughter. More than twenty years later Mrs. Somerville wrote, "I am glad to hear that the Queen has been so kind to my friend Faraday. It seems she has given him an apartment at Hampton Court, nicely fitted up. She went to see it herself, and having consulted scientific men as to the instruments necessary for his pursuits, she had a laboratory fitted up with them, and made him a present of the whole. That is doing things handsomely, and no one since Newton has deserved so much." The Queen was also very ready to show her warm appreciation of Carlyle and other eminent writers. In an interview with Carlyle, at the Deanery, Westminster, she quite charmed the rugged old philosopher by her kind and gracious manner. Many years ago, when the fame of Jenny Lind was at its height, she was invited to sing in private before the Queen at Buckingham Palace. Owing to some contemptible spite or jealousy, her accompanist did not play what was set down in the music, and this of course had a very discomposing effect upon the singer. The Queen's quick ear immediately detected what was going on, and at the conclusion of the song, when another was about to be commenced, she stepped up to the piano and said, "I will accompany Miss Lind."

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