

МАРГАРЕТ ОЛИФАНТ

HISTORICAL
CHARACTERS IN THE
REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE

Маргарет Олифант

**Historical Characters in
the Reign of Queen Anne**

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Chapter I

THE PRINCESS ANNE

THE reign of Queen Anne is one of the most illustrious in English history. In literature it has been common to call it the Augustan age. In politics it has all the interest of a transition period, less agitating, but not less important, than the actual era of revolution. In war, it is, with the exception of the great European wars of the beginning of this century, the most glorious for the English arms of any that have elapsed since Henry V. set up his rights of conquest over France. Opinions change as to the advantage of such superiorities; and, still more, as to the glory which is purchased by bloodshed; yet, according to the received nomenclature, and in the language of all the ages, the time of Marlborough cannot be characterized as anything but glorious. A great general, statesmen of eminence, great poets, men of letters of the first distinction—these are points in which this period cannot easily be excelled. It pleases the fancy to step historically from queen to queen, and to find in each a center of national greatness knitting together the loose threads of the great web. “The spacious times of great Elizabeth” bulk larger and more magnificently in history than those of Anne, but the two eras bear a certain balance which is agreeable to the imagination. And we can scarcely help regretting that the great age of Wordsworth and Scott, Byron and Wellington, should not have been deferred long enough to make the reign of Victoria the third noblest period of modern English history. But time has here balked us. This age is not without its own greatness, but it is not the next in national sequence to that of Anne, as Anne’s was to that of Elizabeth.

In the reigns of both these queens this country was trembling between two dynasties, scarcely yet removed from the convulsion of great political changes, and feeling that nothing but the life of the sovereign on the throne stood between it and unknown rulers and dangers to come. The deluge, in both cases, was ready to be let loose after the termination of the life of the central personage in the state. And thus the reign of Anne, like that of Elizabeth, was to her contemporaries the only piece of solid ground amid a sea of evil chances. What was to come after was clear to none.

But in the midst of its agitations and all its exuberant life—the wars abroad, the intrigues at home, the secret correspondences, the plots, the breathless hopes and fears—it is half ludicrous, half pathetic, to turn to the harmless figure of Queen Anne in the center of the scene—a fat, placid, middle-aged woman full of infirmities, with little about her of the picturesque yet artificial brightness of her time, and no gleam of reflection to answer to the wit and genius which have made her age illustrious. A monarch has the strangest fate in this respect: as long as she or he lives, the conscious center of everything whose notice elates and elevates the greatest; but as soon as his day is over, a mere image of state visible among his courtiers only as some unthought-of lackey or faded gentleman usher throws from his little literary lantern a ray of passing illumination upon him. The good things of their lives are thus almost counterbalanced by the insignificance of their historical position. Anne was one of the sovereigns who may, without too great a strain of hyperbole, be allowed to have been beloved in her day. She did nothing to repel the popular devotion. She was the best of wives, the most sadly disappointed of childless mothers. She made pecuniary sacrifices to the weal of her kingdom such as few kings or queens have thought of making. And she was a Stuart, Protestant, and safe, combining all the rights of the family with those of orthodoxy and constitutionalism, without even so much offense as lay in a foreign accent. There was indeed nothing foreign about her, a circumstance

in her favor which she shared with the other great English queen regnant, who, like her, was English on both sides of the lineage.

All these points made her popular and, it might be permissible to say, beloved. If she had been indifferent to her father's deprivation, she had not at least shocked popular feeling by any immediate triumph in succeeding him, as Mary had done; and her mild Englishism was delightful to the people after grim William with his Dutch accent and likings. But the historians have not been kind to Anne. They have lavished ill names upon her: a stupid woman,—“a very weak woman, always governed blindly by some female favorite,”—nobody has a civil word to say for her. Yet there is a mixture of the amusing and the tragic in the appearance of this passive figure seated on high, presiding over all the great events of the epoch, with her humble feminine history, her long anguish of motherhood, her hopes so often raised and so often shattered, her stifled family feeling, her profound and helpless sense of misfortune.

There is one high light in the picture, however, though but one, and it comes from one of the rarest and highest sentiments of humanity: the passion of friendship, of which women are popularly supposed to be incapable, but which never existed in more complete and disinterested exhibition than in the bosom of this poor queen. It is sad that it should have ended in disloyalty and estrangement; but, curiously enough, it is not the breach of this close union, but the union itself, which has exposed Anne to the censure and contempt of all her biographers and historians. To an impartial mind we think few things can be more interesting than the position of these two female figures in the foreground of English life. Their friendship brought with it no harm to England; no scandal, such as lurks about the antechamber of kings, and which has made the name of a favorite one of the most odious titles of reproach, could attach in any way to such a relationship. And nothing could be better adapted to enhance the dramatic features of the scene than the contrast between the two friends whose union for many years was so intimate and so complete.

Yet her friend was as like to call forth such devotion as ever woman was. Seldom has there been a more brilliant figure in history than that of the great duchess, a woman beloved and hated as few have ever been; holding on one side in absolute devotion to her the greatest hero of the time, and on the other rousing to the height of adoration the mild and obtuse nature of her mistress; keeping her place on no ground but that of her own sense and spirit, amid all intrigues and opposition, for many of the most remarkable years of English history, and defending herself with such fire and eloquence when attacked, that her plea is as interesting and vivid as any controversy of to-day, and it is impossible to read it without taking a side, with more or less vehemence, in the exciting quarrel. Such a woman, standing like a beautiful Ishmael with every man's hand against her, yet fearing no man, and ready to meet every assailant, makes a welcome variety amid the historical scenes which so seldom exhibit anything so living, so imperious, so bold and free. That she has got little mercy and no

indulgence, that all chivalrous sentiment has been mute in respect to her, and an angry ill-temper takes possession of every historian who names her name, rather adds to the interest than takes from it. Women in history, strangely enough, seem always to import into the chronicle a certain heat of personal feeling unusual and undesirable in that region of calm. Whether it is that the historian is impatient at finding himself arrested by the troublesome personalities of a woman, and that a certain resentment of her intrusion colors his appreciation of her, or that her appearance naturally possesses an individuality which breaks the line, it is difficult to tell; but the calmest chronicler becomes a partizan when he treats of Mary and Elizabeth, and no man can name Sarah of Marlborough without a heat of indignation or scorn, almost ridiculous, as being so long after date.

To us the unfailing vivacity and spirit of the woman, the dauntless stand she makes, her determination not to be overcome, make her appearance always enlivening; and art could not have designed a more complete contrast than that of the homely figure by her side, with appealing eyes fixed upon her, a little bewildered, not always quick to understand—a woman born for other uses, but exposed all her harmless life to the fierce light that beats upon a throne. For her part, she has no

defense to make, no word to say; let them spend all their jibes upon her, Anne knows no reply. Her slow understanding and want of perception give her a certain composure which in a queen answers very well for dignity; yet there is something whimsically pathetic, pitiful, incongruous in the fate which has placed her there, which can scarcely fail to soften the heart of the spectators.

The tragedy of Anne's life, unlike that of her friend, had no utterance, and there was nothing romantic in her appearance or surroundings to attract the lovers of the picturesque. Yet in the blank of her humble intellect she discharged not amiss the duties that were so much too great for her; and if she was disloyal to her friend in the end, that betrayal only adds another touch of pathos to the spectacle of helplessness and human weakness. It is only the favored few of mankind who are wiser and better, not feebler and less noble, as life draws toward its end.

Anne was, like Elizabeth, the daughter of a subject. Her mother, Anne Hyde, the daughter of the great Clarendon, though naturally subjected to the hot criticism of the moment on account of that virtue which refused anything less from her prince than the position of wife, was not a woman of much individual character, nor did she live long enough to influence much the training of her daughters. Historians have not hesitated to sneer at the prudence with which this young lady secured herself by marriage, when so many fairer than she were less scrupulous—a reproach which is somewhat unfair, considering what would certainly have been said of her had she not done so. Curiously enough, her own father, whether in sincerity or pretense, seems at the moment to have been her most severe critic, exculpating himself with unnecessary energy from all participation in the matter, and declaring that if it were true “the king should immediately cause the woman to be sent to the Tower” till Parliament should have time to pass an act cutting off her head. It would appear, however, from the contemporary narratives of Pepys and Evelyn that he was not so bad as his words, for he seems to have supported and shielded his daughter during the period of uncertainty which preceded the acknowledgment of her marriage, and to have shared in the general satisfaction afterward. But this great marriage was not of much advantage to her family. It did not hinder Clarendon's disgrace and banishment, nor were his sons after him anything advantaged by their close relationship to two queens.

The Duchess of York does not seem to have been remarkable in any way. She is said to have governed her husband; and she died a Roman Catholic,—the first of the royal family to lead the way in that fatal particular: but did not live long enough to affect the belief or training of her children.

There was an interval of three years in age between Mary and Anne. The eldest, Mary, was like the Stuarts, with something of their natural grace of manner; the younger was a fair English child, rosy and plump and blooming; in later life they became more like each other. But the chief thing they inherited from their mother was what is called in fine language, “a tendency to embonpoint,” with, it is said, a love of good eating, which helped to produce the other peculiarity.

The religious training of the princesses is the first thing we hear of them. They were put under the charge of a most orthodox tutor, Compton, Bishop of London, with much haste and ostentation—their uncle, Charles II., probably feeling with his usual cynicism that the sop of two extra-Protestant princesses would please the people, and that the souls of a couple of girls could not be of much importance one way or another. How they fared in respect to the other features of education is not recorded. Lord Dartmouth, in his notes on Bishop Burnet's history, informs us that King Charles II., struck by the melodious voice of the little Lady Anne, had her trained in elocution by Mrs. Barry, an actress; while Colley Cibber adds that she and her sister were instructed by the well-known Mrs. Betterton to take their parts in a little court performance when Anne was but ten and Mary thirteen; but whether these are two accounts of the same incident, or refer to distinct events, seems doubtful.

The residence of the girls was chiefly at Richmond, where they were under the charge of Lady Frances Villiers, who had a number of daughters of her own, one of whom, Elizabeth, went with Mary to Holland, and was, in some respects, her evil genius. We have, unfortunately, no court chronicle to throw any light upon the lively scene at Richmond, where this little bevy of girls grew up together, conning their divinity, whatever other lessons might be neglected; taking the air upon the river in

their barges; following the hounds in the colder season, for this robust exercise seems to have been part of their training. When their youthful seclusion was broken by such a great event as the court mask, in which they played their little parts,—Mrs. Blogge, the saintly beauty, John Evelyn's friend, Godolphin's wife, acting the chief character, in a blaze of diamonds,—or that state visit to the city when King Charles in all his glory took the girls, his heirs, with him, no doubt the old withdrawing-rooms and galleries of Richmond rang with the story for weeks after. Princess Mary, her mind perhaps beginning to own a little agitation as to royal suitors, would have other distractions; but as to the Lady Anne, it soon came to be her chief holiday when the young Duchess of York, her stepmother, came from town in her chariot, or by water, in a great gilded barge breasting up the stream, to pay the young ladies a visit. For in the train of that princess was the young maid of honor, a delightful, brilliant *espiègle*, full of spirit and wilfulness, who bore the undistinguished name of Sarah Jennings, and brought with her such life and stir and movement as dispersed the dullness wherever she went.

There is no such love as a young girl's adoration for a beautiful young woman, a little older than herself, whom she can admire and imitate and cling to, and dream of with visionary passion. This was the kind of sentiment with which the little princess regarded the bright and animated creature in her young stepmother's train. Mary of Modena was herself only a few years older than her stepchildren. They were all young together, accustomed to the perpetual gaiety of the court of Charles II., though, let us hope, kept apart from its license, and

no shadow of fate seems to have fallen upon the group of girls in their early peaceful days. Anne in particular would seem to have been left to hang upon the arm and bask in the smiles of her stepmother's young lady in waiting at her pleasure—with many a laugh at premature favoritism. "We had used to play together when she was a child," said the great duchess long after. "She even then expressed a particular fondness for me; this inclination increased with our years. I was often at court, and the princess always distinguished me by the pleasure she took to honor me preferably to others with her conversation and confidence. In all her parties for amusement, I was sure by her choice to be one."

Mistress Sarah was one of the actors in the mask above referred to; she was in the most intimate circle of the Duke of York's household, closely linked to all its members, in that relationship, almost as close as kindred, which binds a court together.

And no doubt it added greatly to the attractions which the bright and animated girl exercised over her playmates and companions, that she had already a romantic love-story, and, at a period when matches were everywhere arranged, as at present in continental countries, by the parents, made a secret marriage, under the most romantic circumstances, with a young hero already a soldier of distinction. He was not an irreproachable hero. Court scandal had not spared him. He was said to have founded his fortune upon the bounty of one of the shameless women of Charles's court. But the imagination of the period was not over-delicate, and probably had he not become so great a man, and acquired so many enemies, we should have heard little of John Churchill's early vices. About his sister, Arabella Churchill, unfortunately there could not be any doubt; and it is a curious instance of the sudden efflorescence now and then of a race which neither before nor after is of particular note, that Marlborough's sister should have been the mother of that one illustrious Stuart who might, had he been legitimate, have changed the fortunes of the house—the Duke of Berwick. Had she, instead of Anne Hyde, been James's duchess, what a difference might have been made in history! Nobody had heard of the Churchills before—they have not been a distinguished race since. It is curious that they should have produced, all unawares, without preparation or warning, the two greatest soldiers of the age.

Young Churchill was attached to the Duke of York's service, as Sarah Jennings was to that of the duchess. He had served abroad with distinction. In 1672, when France and England for once, in a way, were allies against Holland, he had served under the great Turenne, who called him "my handsome Englishman," and vaunted his gallantry. He was but twenty-two when he thus gave proofs

of his future greatness. When he returned, after various other exploits, and resumed his court service, the brilliant maid of honor, whom the little princess adored, attained a complete dominion over the spirit of the young soldier. There were difficulties about the marriage, for he had no fortune, and his provident parents had secured an heiress for him. But it was at length accomplished so secretly that even the bride was never quite certain of the date, in the presence and with the favor of Mary of Modena herself. Sarah, if the dates are correct, must have been eighteen at this period, and her little princess fourteen. What a delightful interruption to the dullness of Richmond to hear all about it when the Duchess of York came with her train and the two girls could wander away together in some green avenue till Lady Frances sent a page or an usher after them!

Mary of Modena must have been a lover of romances, and true love also, though her youth had fallen to such a gruesome bridegroom as James Stuart; for not only Sarah Jennings and her great general, who were to have so great a hand in keeping that poor lady's son from his kingdom, but Mary Blogge and her statesman, who was to rule England so wisely in the interest of the opposing side, were both secretly married under the young duchess's wing, she helping, planning, and sanctioning the secret. How many additional bitternesses must this have put into her cup when she was sitting, a shadow queen, at St.-Germain, and all those people whom she had loved and caressed were swaying the fortunes of England! And who can tell what tender recollections of his secret wedding and the sweet and saintly prude whom King James's young wife gave him, may have touched the soul of Godolphin in those hankerings after his old master—if it were not, as scandal said, to his old mistress—which moved him from time to time, great minister as he was, almost to the verge of treachery! The Churchills, it must be owned, showed little gratitude to their royal patrons.

When the Princess Mary married and went to Holland with her husband, the position of her sister at home became a more important one. Anne was not without some experience of travel and those educational advantages which the sight of foreign countries are said to bring. She went to The Hague to visit her sister. She accompanied her father, sturdy little Protestant as she was, when he was in disgrace for his religious views, and spent some time in Brussels, from which place she wrote to one of the ladies about the court a letter which has been preserved,—with just as much and as little reason as any other letter of a fifteen-year-old girl with her eyes about her, at a distance of two hundred years,—in which the young lady describes a ball she had seen, herself *incognita*, at which some gentlemen “danced extremely well—as well if not better than the Duke of Monmouth or Sir E. Villiers, which I think is very extraordinary,” says the girl, no doubt sincerely believing that the best of all things was to be found at home. She had little difficulties about her spelling, but that was common enough. “As for the town,” says the Princess Anne, “methinks tho' the streets are not so clean as in Holland, yet they are not so dirty as ours; they are very well paved and very easy—they only have od smells.” This is a peculiarity which has outlived her day, and it would seem to imply that England, even before the invention of sanitary science, was superior in this respect at least to the towns of the Continent.

After these unusual dissipations Anne remained in the shade until she married, in 1683, George, Prince of Denmark, a perfectly inoffensive and insignificant person, to whom she gave, during the rest of her life, a faithful, humdrum, but unbroken attachment, such as shows to little advantage in print, but makes the happiness of many a home. This marriage was another sacrifice to the Protestantism of England, and in that point of view pleased the people much. King Charles, glad to satisfy the country by any act which cost him nothing, thought it “very convenient and suitable.” James, unwilling, but powerless, grumbled to himself that “he had little encouragement in the conduct of the Prince of Orange to marry another daughter in the same interest,” but made no effort against it. The prince himself produced no very great impression, one way or another, as indeed he was little fitted to do. “He has the Danish countenance, blonde,” says Evelyn, in his diary; “of few words; spoke French but ill; seemed somewhat heavy, but is reported to be valiant.” He had never any occasion to show his valor during his long residence in England, but many to prove the former quality,—the heaviness,

—which was only too evident; but Anne herself was not brilliant, and she was made for friendship, not for passion in the ordinary sense of the word. She never seems to have been in the smallest way dissatisfied with her heavy, honest goodman. He was fond of eating and

drinking, but of no more dangerous pleasures. Her peace of mind was fluttered by no rival, nor her feminine pride touched. Her attendants might be as seductive as they pleased, this steady, stolid husband was immovable, and there is no doubt that the princess appreciated the advantages of this immunity from one of the thorns which were planted in every other royal pillow.

Her marriage had another advantage of giving her a household and court of her own, and enabled her at once to secure for herself the companionship of her always beloved friend. “So desirous was she,” says Duchess Sarah, “of having me always near her, that upon her marriage with the Prince of Denmark, in 1683, it was at her own earnest request to her father I was made one of the ladies of her bedchamber. What conduced to make me the more agreeable to her in this station was, doubtless,” she adds with candor, “the dislike she conceived to most of the other persons about her, and particularly for her first lady of the bedchamber—the Countess of Clarendon, a lady whose discourse and manner could not possibly recommend her to so young a mistress; for she looked like a mad-woman and talked like a scholar. Indeed, her highness’s court was so oddly composed that I think it would be making myself no great compliment if I should say her choosing to spend more of her time with me than with any of her other servants did no discredit to her taste.”

Lady Clarendon was the wife of the great chancellor’s son, and was thus the aunt, by marriage, of the princess—not always a very endearing relationship. She was not a great lady by birth, and though a friend of Evelyn’s and a highly educated woman, might easily be supposed to be a little oppressive in a young household where her relationship gave her a certain authority.

The prince was dull, the princess had not many resources. They settled down in homely virtue, close to the court with all its scandals and gaieties, but not quite of it; and nothing could be more natural than that Anne should eagerly avail herself of the always amusing, always lively companion who had been the friend of her youth. The Cockpit, which was Anne’s residence, had been built as a royal playhouse, first for the sport indicated by its name, then for the more refined amusements of the theater, but had been afterward turned into a private residence, and bought by Charles II. for his niece on her marriage. It formed part of the old palace of Whitehall, and must have been within sight and sound of the constant gaieties going on in that lawless household, in the best of which the princess and her attendant would have their natural share. No doubt to hear Lady Churchill’s lively satirical remarks upon all this, and the flow of her brilliant malice, must have kept the household lively, and brightened the dull days and tedious waitings of maternity, into which Anne was immediately plunged, drawing a laugh even from stupid George in the chimney-corner. And there was this peculiarity to make the whole more piquant; that it was virtue, irreproachable, and no doubt pleasantly self-conscious of its superiority, which thus got its fun out of vice. The two young couples on the other side of the way were immaculate, devoted exclusively to each other, thinking of neither man nor woman save their lawful mates. Probably neither the princess nor her lady in waiting were disgusted by gossip about the Portsmouths and Castlemaines, but took these ladies to pieces with indignant zest and spared no jibe. And though the remarks might be too broad for modern liking, and the fun somewhat unsavory, we cannot but think that amidst the noisy and picturesque life of that wild Restoration era, full of corruption, yet so gay and sparkling to the spectator, this little household of the Cockpit is not without its claims upon our attention. There was not in all Charles’s court so splendid a couple as the young Churchills: he already one of the most distinguished soldiers of the age, she a beautiful young woman overflowing with wit and energy. And Princess Anne was very young; in full possession of that *beauté de diable* which, so long as it lasts, has its own charm, the beauty of color and freshness and youthful contour. She had a beautiful voice, the prettiest hands, and the most affectionate heart. If she were not clever, that matters but little to a girl of twenty, taught by love to be receptive, and called upon for no effort of genius. Honest George behind backs was not much more than a piece of still life, but an

inoffensive and amiable one, taking nothing upon him. If there was calculation in the steadfastness with which the abler pair possessed themselves of the confidence, and held fast to the service of their royal friends, it would be hard to assert that there was not some affection too, at least on the part of Sarah, who had known every thought of her little princess's heart since she was a child, and could not but be flattered and pleased by the love showered upon her. At all events, in Anne there was no unworthy sentiment; everything about her appeals to our tenderness. When she attained what seems to have been the summit of her desires and secured her type of excellence, the admired and adored paragon of her childhood, for her daily companion, the formal titles and addresses which her rank made necessary became irksome beyond measure to the simple-hearted young woman whose hard fate it was to have been born a princess. The impetuosity of her affection, her rush, so to speak, into the arms of her friend, her pretty youthful sentiment, so fresh and natural, her humility and simplicity, are all pleasant to contemplate. Little more than a year after her marriage, after the closer union had begun, she writes thus:

If you will let me have the satisfaction of hearing from you again before I see you, let me beg of you not to call me "your highness" at every word, but to be as free with me as one friend ought to be with another. And you can never give me any greater proof of your friendship than in telling me your mind freely in all things, which I do beg of you to do: and if it ever were in my power to serve you, nobody would be more ready than myself. I am all impatience for Wednesday. Till then farewell.

Upon this there ensued a little sentimental bargain between the two young women. It was not according to the manners of the time that they should call each other Anne and Sarah, and the fashion of the Aramintas and Dorindas had not yet arrived from Paris. They managed the transformation necessary in a curiously matter-of-fact and English way:

She grew uneasy to be treated by me with the form and ceremony due to her rank; nor could she bear from me the sound of words which implied in them distance and superiority. It was this turn of mind which made her one day propose to me that whenever I should happen to be absent from her we might in all our letters write ourselves by feigned names, such as would import nothing of distinction of rank between us. Morley and Freeman were the names her fancy hit upon, and she left me to choose by which of them I should be called. My frank open temper led me naturally to pitch upon Freeman, and so the princess took the other; and from this time Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Freeman began to converse as equals, made so by affection and friendship.

Very likely these were the names in some young lady's book which had been in the princess's childish library,—something a generation before the "Spectator,"—in which rural virtues and the claims of friendship were the chief subjects. Morley is one of the typical names of sentimental literature in the eighteenth century, and might be originally introduced by some precursor of those proper little romances which have in all ages been considered the proper reading for "the fair."

Mrs. Morley could be no other than the gentle *ingénue*, the type of modest virtue, and Freeman was of all others the title most suitable for Sarah, the bright and brave. Historians have not been able to contain themselves for angry ridicule of this

little friendly treaty. To us it seems a pretty incident. The princess was twenty, the bedchamber woman twenty-four. Their friendly traffic had not to their own consciousness attained the importance of a historical fact.

The locality in which the royal houses in London stood was very different then from its appearance now. Whitehall at present is a great thoroughfare, full of life and movement, with but one remnant of the old palace,—once the banqueting-hall, now the chapel royal, where the window out of which Charles I. is supposed to have passed to the scaffold is pointed out to strangers,—and still presenting a bit of gloomy, stately front to the street.

St. James's Park opposite is screened off and separated now by the Horse Guards and other public buildings, a long and heavy line which forms one side of the way. But in those days there were neither public buildings nor busy street. The palace, straggling and irregular, with walls and roofs on

many different levels, stood like a sort of royal village between the river and the park, with the turrets of St. James twinkling in the distance, in the sunshine, over the trees of the Mall, where King Charles with all his dogs and gentlemen would stream forth daily for his saunter or his game. The Cockpit was one of the outlying portions of Whitehall upon the edge of the park.

Anne had been but two years married when King Charles died. And then the aspect of affairs changed. The mass in the private chapel, and the presence here and there of somebody who looked like a priest, at once started into prominence and began to alarm the gazers more than the dissolute amusements of the court had ever done. James was not virtuous any more than his brother. One of the first acts which the excellent Evelyn, one of the best of men, had to do as commissioner of the privy seal, was to affix that imperial stamp to a patent by which one of the new king's favorites was made Countess of Dorchester; but James's immoralities were not his chief characteristics. He was a more dangerous king than Charles, who was merely selfish, dissolute, and pleasure-loving. James was more; he was a bigoted Roman Catholic, eager to raise his faith to its old supremacy, and the mere thought that the door which had been so bolted and barred against popery was now set open filled all England with the wildest panic. The nation felt itself caught by the torrent which must carry it to destruction. Men saw the dungeons of the Inquisition, the fires of Smithfield, before them as soon as the proscribed priest was readmitted and mass once more openly said at an unconcealed altar. Never was there a more universal or all-influential sentiment. The terror, the unanimity, are things to wonder at. Sancroft and his bishops were not constitutionalists. The personal rule of the king had nothing in it that alarmed them; but the idea of the reintroduction of popery awoke such a panic in their bosoms as drove them, in spite of their own tenets, into resistance; and, for the first time absolutely unanimous, England was at their back. When we take history piecemeal, and read it through the individual lives of the chief actors, we perceive with the strangest sensations of surprise that at these great crises not one of the leaders of the nation was sure what he wanted or what he feared, or was even entirely sincere in his adherence to one party against another. They were the courtiers of James, and invited William; they were William's ministers, and kept up a correspondence with James. The best of them was not without a treacherous side. They were never certain which was safest, which would last; always liable to lend an ear to temptations from the other party, never sure that they might not to-morrow morning find themselves in open rebellion against the master of to-day. Yet, while almost every individual of note was subject to this strange uncertainty, this confused and troubled vacillation, there was such a sweep of national conviction, so strong a current of the general will, that the supposed leaders of opinion were carried away by it, and compelled to assume and act upon a conviction which was England's, but which individually they did not possess. Nothing can be made more remarkable, more unexplainable under any other interpretations, than the way in which his entire court, statesmen, soldiers, all who were worth counting, and so many who were not, abandoned King James—some with a sort of consternation, not knowing why they did it, driven by a force they could not resist. No example of this can be more remarkable than that of Clarendon, who received the news of his son's defection to the Prince of Orange with what seems to be a heartbroken cry: "O God! that my son should be a rebel!" yet, presently, ten days afterward, is drawn away himself in a kind of extraordinary confusion, like a man in a dream, like a subject of mesmeric influence, although in all the following negotiations he maintained James's cause as far as a man could who did not accept ruin as a consequence. Scarcely one of these men was whole-hearted or had any determined principle in the matter. But in the mass of the nation behind them was a force of conviction, of panic, of determination, that carried them off their feet. The chief names of England appear little more than straws upon the current, indicating its course, but forced along by its fierce sweep and impetus, and not by any impulse of their own.

The Princess Anne occupied a very different position from that of these bewildered statesmen. She had been brought up in the strictest sect of her religion, Protestant almost more than Christian, a churchwoman above all. To those who are capable of thinking about their faith it is always possible

to believe in the thoughts of other people, and conceive the likelihood, at least, that they, in their own esteem, if not in any one else's, may be right—which is the only true foundation of toleration. But it is the people who believe without thinking, who receive what they are taught without exercising any judgment of their own upon the subject, and cling to it in exactly the same form in which they received it, with a conviction that its least important detail is as necessary as its first principle, who furnish that *sancta simplicitas* which makes the cruelest persecution possible without turning the persecutors into fiends and barbarians. Though her mother had been a Roman Catholic, and her father was one, and though many of her relations belonged to the old church, Anne was a Protestant of the most unyielding kind. She was in herself as good a type of the England of her time as could have been found, far better than her abler and larger-minded advisers. The narrowness of her mind and the rigidity of her faith were above all reassurances of reason, all guarantees of possibility. She was as much dismayed by her father's determination to liberate and tolerate popery as the least enlightened of his subjects. "Methinks it has a very dismal prospect," she wrote as early as 1686, only the year after James's accession. "Attempts," Lady Marlborough tells us, "were made to draw his daughter into his designs. The king, indeed, used no harshness with her; he only discovered his wishes by putting into her hands some books and papers which he hoped might induce her to a change of religion, and had she had any inclination that way the chaplains about were such divines as could have said but little in defense of their own religion or to secure her against the pretenses of Popery recommended to her by a father and a king." This low estimate of the princess's spiritual advisers is whimsically supported by Evelyn's opinion of Anne's first religious preceptor,—Bishop Compton,—of whom the courtly philosopher declared after hearing a sermon from him that "this worthy person's talent is not preaching."

But Anne required no persuading to stimulate her in the fear of popery and narrow devotion to the church, outside of which she knew of no salvation. No doubt her father's popish tracts, things which in that age were held to possess many of the properties of the dynamite of to-day, scared the inflexible and unimaginative churchwoman as much as if they had been capable of exploding and doing her actual damage. Her training, so wisely adapted to please the Protestant party, had probably been thought by her father and uncle to be a matter of complete indifference on any other ground; but in this way they reckoned altogether without their princess. With both James's daughters the process was too successful. They feared popery more than they loved their father. There seems not the slightest reason to suppose that Anne was insincere in her anxiety for the church, or that the panic which she shared with the whole country was affected or unreal. It is impossible that she could expect her own position to be improved by the substitution of her sister and her sister's husband for the father who had always been kind to her. The Churchills, whose church principles were not perhaps so undeniable, and whose regard for their own interest was great, are more difficult to divine; and yet it appears an unnecessary thing to refer their action to unworthy motives. It is asserted by some that they had some visionary plan after they had overturned the existing economy by the help of William, of bringing in their princess by a side wind and reigning through her over the startled and subjugated nation. But granting that such an imagination might have been conceived in the fertile and restless brain of a young and sanguine woman, it seems impossible to imagine that Churchill—a man of some experience in the world, and some knowledge of William—could even for a moment have believed that the grave and ambitious prince, who was so near the throne, could have been persuaded or forced to waive his wife's claims, and those still more imperative ones which his position of Deliverer gave him, in order to advance the fortunes of any one else, least of all of the sister-in-law whom he despised.

It is half ludicrous, half pathetic, in the midst of all the tumult and confusion of the time, to note the constant allusions to the princess's condition, which recurs whenever she is mentioned. There were always reasons why it should be especially cruel to disturb her, and her state had constantly to be taken into account. It was very natural in such circumstances that she should more and more cling to her stronger friend, and find no comfort out of her presence. "Whatever changes there are in the world, I hope you will never forsake me, and I shall be happy," she writes during this period of

excitement and distress. She herself was weak and not very wise. In a sudden emergency neither she nor her husband were good for much. They could carry on the routine of life well enough, but when unforeseen necessities came they stood helpless and bewildered; but Lady Churchill was quick of wit and full of inexhaustible resource. To her it was always given to know what to do.

It is unnecessary here to enter into the history of what is called the Great Revolution. It is the great modern turning-point of English history, and no doubt it is one of the reasons why we have been exempted in later days from the agitations of desperate and bloody revolutions which have shaken all neighboring nations. Glorious and happy, however, scarcely seem to be fit words to describe this extraordinary event. A more painful era does not exist in history. There is scarcely an individual in the front of affairs who was not guilty of treachery at one time or another. They betrayed one another on every hand; they were perplexed, uncertain, full of continual alarms. The king who went away was a gloomy bigot; the king who came was a cold and melancholy alien. Enthusiasm there was none, nor even conviction, except of the necessity of doing something of a wide-reaching and undeniable change. The part which the ladies at the Cockpit played brings the hurry and excitement of the movement to its crisis. Both in their way were anxious for their respective husbands, absent in the suite of James, and still in his power. When the report came that Lord Feversham had begged of James “on his knees two hours” to order the arrest of Churchill, Mrs. Freeman must have needed all her courage; while the faithful Morley wept, yet tried to emulate the braver woman, wondering in her excitement what her own heavy prince was doing, and eager for William’s advance, which, somehow or other, was to bring peace and quiet. That heavy prince meanwhile was mooning about with the perplexed and unhappy king, uttering out of his blond mustache with an atrocious accent his dull wonder, “Est il possible?” as every new desertion was announced, till mounting heavily one evening after dinner, warmed and encouraged by a good deal of King James’s wine, and riding through the cold and dark, in his turn he deserted too. When this event happened, the excitement at the Cockpit was overwhelming. The princess was “in a great fright.” “She sent for me,” says Lady Churchill, “told me her distress, and declared that rather than see her father, she would jump out of window.” King James was coming back to London, sad and wroth, and perhaps the rumor that he would have her arrested lent additional terrors to the idea of encountering his angry countenance. Lady Churchill went immediately to Bishop Compton, the princess’s early tutor and confidential adviser, and instant means were taken to secure her flight. That very night, after her attendants were in bed, Anne rose in the dark, and with her beloved Sarah’s arm and support stole down the back stairs to where the bishop, in a hackney coach, was waiting for her. Other princesses in similar situations have owned to a thrill of pleasure in such an adventure. No doubt at least she breathed the freer when she was out of the palace where King James with his dark countenance might have come any day to demand from her an account of her husband’s behavior, or to upbraid her with her own want of affection. Anyhow, the sweep of the current had now reached her tremulous feet, and she had no power any more than stronger persons of resisting it.

Anne’s position was very much changed by the Revolution. If any ambitious hopes had been entertained or plans formed by her household, they were speedily and very completely brought to an end. The dull royal pair with their two brilliant guides and counselors now found themselves confronted by another couple of very different mark: the serious, somewhat gloomy, determined, and self-concentrated Dutchman, and the new queen, Mary, a person far more attractive and imposing than Anne; two people full of character and power. We have no space here, however, to appropriate to these remarkable persons. William, in particular, belongs to larger annals and a history more important than these sketches. Mary has left an epitome of herself in her letters which is among the most wonderful of individual revelations; but this cannot now be our theme, though the subject is a most attractive one.

Two persons so remarkable threw into the shade even Churchill and Sarah, much more good Anne and George. We have no reason to suppose that Mary entertained any particular sentiment

whatever toward her sister, from whom she had been entirely separated for the greater part of her life, and the history of their relations is a painful one from beginning to end. No doubt the queen regarded the household of the princess with the contempt which a woman with so entirely different a code would naturally entertain for a family in which the heads were so lax and secondary, the counselors so prominent. There was nothing in Mary which would help her to understand the feeling with which Anne regarded her friend

Mary. She had herself made use of their influence in the time when it was all important to secure every power in England for William's service, but a proud distaste for the woman whom the princess trusted as her equal soon awoke in the bosom of the queen. The Churchills, however, served the new sovereigns signally by persuading the princess to yield her own rights, and consent to the conjoint reign, and to William's life sovereignty—no small concession on the part of the next heir, and one which only the passive character of Anne could have made to appear insignificant.

Had she been a stronger and more intellectual woman, this act would have borne the aspect of a magnanimous and noble sacrifice to the good of the country, of her own interests, and that of her children. As it was, her self-renunciation has got her very little credit, either then or now, and it has been considered rather an evidence of the discretion of the Churchills than of the generosity and patriotism of the princess. These, perhaps, are rather large words to use in speaking of Anne, but it must be remembered that a narrow mind is usually not less, but more, tenacious of personal honor and advantage than a great one, and that the dimmer an understanding may be, the less it is accessible to high reason and noble motive. This sacrifice accomplished, however, there commenced a petty war between Whitehall and the Cockpit, in which perhaps Mary and Lady Churchill (now Marlborough) were the chief combatants, but which from henceforward until her sister's death became the principal feature in Anne's life. Continued squabbling is never lovely even when it is between queens and princesses, but in this case the injured person has had no little injustice, and the offender so many partizans that it may not be amiss to make Anne's side of the question a little more apparent.

If her friend was to blame for embroiling Anne with the queen, it can scarcely be believed that the princess's case would have been more satisfactory had she been left in her helplessness to the tender mercies of William, and entirely dependent upon his kindness, which must have happened had there been no bold and strong adviser in the matter. There was no generosity in the treatment which Anne received from the royal pair. She had made a sacrifice to the security of their throne which deserved some grace in return. But her innocent fancy for the palace at Richmond, where the sisters had been brought up together, was not indulged, nor would there be much excuse even if she were in the wrong for the squabbings about her lodging at Whitehall. But she cannot be said to have been in the wrong in the next question which occurred, which was the settlement of her own income. This she had previously drawn from her father, according to the existing custom in the royal family, and James had been always liberal and kind to her. But it was a different thing to depend upon the somewhat grudging hand of an economical brother-in-law, who had a number of foreign dependents to provide for, and a great deal to do with the money granted to him. He alarmed her friends on this point at once by a remark made to Clarendon as to what the princess could want with so large an income as thirty thousand a year; and he does not seem at any time or in any particular to have shown consideration for her. Perhaps the Churchills were afraid that their mistress would be less able than usual to help and further their own fortunes, as is universally alleged against them; but, had they been the most disinterested couple in the world, it would still have been their duty to do what they could to secure her against any caprice of the new king, who had no right to be the arbiter of her fate. Lady Marlborough's strenuous action to bring the question to the decision of Parliament was nothing less than her mistress's interests demanded. And the sense of the country was so far with them that the princess's income was settled with very little difficulty upon a more liberal basis than her father's allowance; which, considering that she, and the children of whom she was every year becoming the mother, were the only acknowledged heirs of the throne, was a perfectly natural and just arrangement.

But the king and queen did not see it in this light. “Friends! what friends have you but the king and me?” Queen Mary asked with indignation. It is not to be supposed that she meant any harm to her sister, but with also a sufficiently natural sentiment could not see what Anne’s objection was to dependence upon herself.

The position on both sides is so clearly comprehensible that the strength of party feeling which makes Lord Macaulay defend the somewhat petty attitude of his favorite monarch on the occasion is very extraordinary. It requires no very subtle penetration to see the difference between an allowance that comes from a father and that which depends upon the doubtful friendship of a brother-in-law. Anne had fully proved her capacity to consider the public weal above her own, and it was unworthy of William even to wish to keep in the position of a hanger-on a woman who had so greatly promoted the harmony of his own settlement.

Parliament finally voted her a revenue of fifty thousand pounds a year, as a sort of compromise between the thirty thousand pounds which King William grudged her and the unreasonably large sum which some of her supporters hoped to obtain; but the king and queen never forgave her, and still less her advisers, for what they chose to consider a want of confidence in themselves.

But William was always impatient of the incapable, and the permission was absolutely denied to him. In all these claims and refusals the position of Lady Marlborough as the princess’s right hand had been completely acknowledged by Queen Mary and her husband, who indeed attempted secret negotiations with her on more than one occasion to induce her to moderate Anne’s claims and to persuade her into compliance with their wishes. “She [the queen] sent a great lord to me to desire I would persuade the Princess to keep the Prince from going to sea; and this I was to compass without letting the Princess know it was the Queen’s desire ... after this the Queen sent Lord Rochester to me to desire much the same thing. The Prince was not to go to sea, and this not going was to appear his own choice.”

Similar attempts were made in the matter of the allowance. And it is scarcely possible to believe that Mary, a queen who was not without some of the absolutism of the Stuart mind, should have failed to feel a certain exasperation with the bold woman who thus upheld her sister’s little separate court and interest, and was neither to be flattered nor frightened into subservience. And very likely this little separate court was a thorn in the side of the royal pair, keeping constant watch upon all their actions, maintaining a perpetual criticism, no doubt leveling many a jibe at the Dutch retainers, and still more at the Dutch master. Good-natured friends, even in the capacity of courtiers, were no doubt found to whisper in the presence-chamber the witticisms with which Sarah of Marlborough would entertain her mistress—utterances not very brilliant, perhaps, but sharp enough. It would not sweeten the temper of the queen if she found out, for instance, that her great William was known as Caliban in the correspondence of Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Freeman. A hundred petty irritations always come in in such circumstances to increase a breach. What the precise occurrence was which brought about the final explosion is not known, but one day after a stormy scene, in which the queen had in vain demanded from her sister the dismissal of Lady Marlborough, an event occurred which took away everybody’s breath.

This was the sudden dismissal, without reason assigned, at least so far as the public knew, of Lord Marlborough from all his offices. He was lieutenant-general of the army, and he was a gentleman of the king’s bedchamber. Up to this time there had been nothing to find fault with in his conduct. William was too good a soldier himself not to appreciate Marlborough’s military talents, and he had behaved, if not with any enthusiasm for the new order of affairs, with good taste at least in very difficult circumstances. His desertion of James and his powerful presence and influence on the opposite side had contributed much to the bloodless victory of the Prince of Orange; but except so far as this went, Marlborough had shown no hostility to his old master. In the convention he had voted for a regency, and when it became evident that William’s terms must be accepted unconditionally or not at all, he had refrained from voting altogether; so that his support might be considered lukewarm.

But, on the other hand, he had served with great distinction abroad, acting with perfect loyalty to his new chief while in command of the English forces. In short, his public aspect up to this time would seem on the face of it to have been irrefragable.

This being the case, his sudden dismissal from court filled his friends with astonishment and dismay. Nobody understood its why or wherefore. “An incident happened which I unwillingly mention,” says Bishop Burnet, “because it cannot be told without some reflection on the memory of the queen, whom I always honored beyond all the persons whom I have ever known.” This regretful preface affords an excellent guarantee of the bishop’s sincerity; but Lord Macaulay omits his statement of the case altogether while quoting passages from the then unpublished manuscript which seemed to support his own views. “The Earl of Nottingham,” Burnet continues, “came to the Earl of Marlborough with a message from the King telling him that he had no more use for his services, and therefore he demanded all his commissions. What drew so sudden and hard a message was not known, for he had been with the King that morning and had parted with him in the ordinary manner. It seemed some letter was intercepted that gave suspicions: it is certain that he thought he was too little considered, and that he had upon many occasions censured the King’s conduct and reflected on the Dutch.” Lord Macaulay, on the other hand, ignoring this statement, assures his readers that the real ground of the dismissal had been communicated to Anne on the previous night (notwithstanding that the great general had been privileged to put on the king’s shirt next morning as if nothing had happened), and that it was in reality the discovery of a plot for James’s restoration, conceived by Marlborough, and in which the princess herself was implicated. It was reported to be Marlborough’s intention to move in the House of Lords an address to William, requesting him to dismiss the foreign servants who surrounded him, and of whom the English were bitterly jealous. Such a scheme of reprisals would have had a certain humor in its summary reversal of the position, and no doubt must Sarah herself have had some hand in its construction, if it ever existed. William was as little likely to give up Bentinck and Keppel as Anne was to sacrifice the friends whom she loved, and a breach between the Parliament and the king would have been, it was hoped, the natural result—to be followed by a *coup d’état*, in which James might be replaced under stringent conditions upon the throne. The sole evidence for this plot is King James himself, who describes it in his diary. Lord Macaulay adds that it is strongly confirmed by Burnet, but this, we take leave to think, is not the case. At the same time there seems no reason to doubt King James, who adds that the plan was defeated by the indiscreet zeal of some of his own *fidèles*, who feared that Marlborough, were he once master of the situation, would put Anne on the throne instead of her father.

Whether, however, this supposed proposal was, or was not, the reason of Marlborough’s dismissal, it is clear enough that he had resumed a secret correspondence with the banished king at St.-Germain, whom, not very long before, he had deserted. But so had most of the statesmen who surrounded William, even the admiral in whose hands the English reputation at sea was soon to be placed. The sins of the others were winked at while Maryborough was thus made an example of: perhaps because he was the most dangerous; perhaps because he had involved the princess in his treachery, persuading her to send a letter and make affectionate overtures to her father. Is it possible that it was this very letter which Burnet says was intercepted, inclosed most likely in one from Marlborough more distinct in its offers? Here is Anne’s simple performance, a thing not calculated to do either harm or good:

I have been very desirous of some safe opportunity to make you a sincere and humble offer of my duty and submission, and to beg you will be assured that I am both truly concerned for the misfortunes of your condition, and sensible as I ought to be of my own unhappiness: as to what you may think I have contributed to it, if wishes could recall what is past, I had long since redeemed my fault. I am sensible that it would have been a great relief to me if I could have found means to have acquainted you earlier with my repentant thoughts, but I hope they may find the advantage of coming late—of being less suspected of insincerity than perhaps they would have been at any time before.

It will be a great addition to the ease I propose to my own mind by this plain confession, if I am so happy as to find that it brings any real satisfaction to yours, and that you are as indulgent and easy to receive my humble submissions as I am to make them in a free disinterested acknowledgment of my fault, for no other end but to deserve and receive your pardon.

These involved and halting sentences by themselves could afford but little satisfaction to the anxious banished court at St.-Germain. To say so much, yet to say so little, though easy to a confused intelligence, not knowing very well what it meant, is a thing which would have taxed the powers of the most astute conspirators. But there could be little doubt that a penitent princess thus ready to implore her father's pardon, would be a powerful auxiliary, with the country just then in the stage of natural disappointment which is prone to follow a great crisis, and that Marlborough was doubly dangerous with such a card in his hands to play.

A little pause occurred after his dismissal. The court by this time had gone to Kensington, out of sight and hearing of the Cockpit, Whitehall having been burned in the previous year. The princess continued, no doubt in no very friendly mood, to take her way to the suburban palace in the evenings and make one at her sister's game of basset, showing by her abstraction, and the traces of tears about her eyes, her state of depression yet revolt. But about three weeks after that great event, something suggested to Lady Marlborough the idea of accompanying her princess to the royal presence. It was strictly within her right to do so, in attendance on her mistress, and perhaps it was considered in the family council at the Cockpit that the existing state of affairs could not go on, and that it was best to end it one way or another. One can imagine the stir in the ante-chambers, the suppressed excitement in the drawing-room, when the princess, less subdued than for some weeks past, her eyes no longer red, nor the corners of her mouth drooping, came suddenly in out of the night, with the well-known buoyant figure after her, proud head erect and eyes aflame, her mistress's train upon her arm, but the air of a triumphant queen on her countenance. There would be a pause of consternation—and for a moment it would seem as if Mary, thus defied, must burst forth in wrath upon the culprit. What glances must have passed between the court ladies behind their fans! What whispers in the

corners! The queen, in the midst, pale with anger, restraining herself with difficulty; the princess, perhaps beginning to quake; but Sarah, undaunted, knowing no reason why she should not be there—“since to attend the princess was only paying her duty where it was owing.”

But next morning brought, as they must have foreseen it would bring, a royal missive, meant to carry dismay and terror, in which Mary commanded her sister to dismiss her friend and make instant submission. “I tell you plainly Lady Marlborough must not continue with you in the circumstances in which her lord is,” the queen wrote; “never anybody was suffered to live at court in my Lord Marlborough's circumstances.” There is nothing undignified in Mary's letter. She was in all respects more capable of expressing herself than her sister, and she had so far right on her side that Lady Marlborough's appearance at court was little less than a deliberate insult to her. “I have all the reason imaginable to look upon you bringing her here as the strangest thing that ever was done, nor could all my kindness for you have hindered me showing you that moment, but I considered your condition, and that made me master of myself so far as not to take notice of it there,” the queen said. The princess's condition had often to be taken into consideration, and perhaps she was not unwilling that her superiority in this respect to her childless sister should be fully evident. She was then within a few weeks of her confinement—not a moment when an affectionate and very dependent woman could lightly be parted from her bosom friend.

Thus the situation was brought to a climax. It was not to be expected, however, that Anne could have submitted to a mandate which in reality would have taken from her all power to choose her own friends; and her affections were so firmly fixed upon her beloved companion that it is evident life without Sarah would have been a blank to her. She answered in a letter studiously compiled in defense both of herself and her retainer. “I am satisfied she cannot have been guilty of any fault to you, and it would be extremely to her advantage if I could here repeat every word that ever she had

said to me of you in her whole life,” says the princess; and she ends entreating her sister to “recall your severe command,” and declaring that there is no misery “that I cannot readily resolve to suffer rather than the thought of parting with her.” But things had gone too far to be stopped by any such appeal. The letter was answered by the lord chamberlain in person with a message forbidding Lady Marlborough to continue at the Cockpit. This was arbitrary in the highest degree, for the house was Anne’s private property, bought for and settled upon her by Charles III.; and it was unreasonable, for Whitehall was lying in ruins, and Queen Mary’s sight at Kensington could not be offended by the spectacle of the couple who had so annoyed her. The princess’s spirit was roused. She wrote to her sister that she herself would be “obliged to retire,” since such were the terms of her continuance, and sent immediately to the Duke of Somerset to ask for a lease of Sion House. It is said that William so far interfered in the squabble—in which indeed he had been influential all along—as to ask the duke to refuse this trifling favor. But of all English noble houses the proud Somersets were the last to be dictated to; and Anne established herself triumphantly in her banishment on the banks of the Thames with her favorite at her side.

A child was born a little later, and the queen paid Anne an angry visit of ceremony a day or two after the event, saying nothing to her but on the vexed subject. “I have made the first step by coming to you,” Mary said, approaching the bed where the poor princess lay, sad and suffering, for her baby had died soon after its birth, “and I now expect you should make the next by removing Lady Marlborough.” The princess, “trembling, and as white as her sheet,” stammered forth her plaintive protest that this was the only thing in which she had disobliged her sister, and that “it was unreasonable to ask it of her,” whereupon Mary, without another word, left the room and the house. It was the last time they ever met, unlikely as such a thing seemed. Anne made various overtures of reconciliation, but as unconditional obedience was promised in none, Mary’s heart was not softened.

The only justification that can be offered for the queen’s behavior was that they had been long separated and had little but the formal tie of relationship to bind them to each other. Anne had been but a child when Mary left England. They were both married and surrounded by other affections when they met again. They had so much resemblance of nature that each seems to have been capable of but one passion. It was Mary’s good fortune to love her husband with all her heart—but to all appearance no one else. She had not a friend among all the ladies who had shared her life for years—no intimate or companion who could give her any solace when he was absent. Natural affection was not strong in their family. They had no mother, nor bond of common relationship except the father whom they both superseded. All this explains to a certain extent her coldness to Anne, and it is very likely she thought she was doing the best thing possible for her sister in endeavoring to separate her from an evil influence, an inferior who was her mistress. But this does not excuse the paltry and cruel persecution to which the younger sister was henceforward exposed. Every honor that belonged to her rank was taken from her, from the sentry at her door to the text upon her cushion at church. She was allowed no guard; when she went into the country the rural mayors were forbidden to present addresses to her and pay the usual honors which mayors delight to pay. The great court ladies were given to understand that whoever visited her would not be received by the queen. A more irritating and miserable persecution could not be, nor one more lowering to the character of the chief performer in it.

Anne was but recovering from the illness that followed her confinement, and with which her sister’s angry visit was supposed to have something to do, when another blow fell upon the band of friends. Marlborough was suddenly arrested and sent to the Tower. There was reason enough perhaps for his previous disgrace in the secret relations with St.-Germain which he was known to have resumed; but the charge afterward made was a purely fictitious one, and he and the other great personages involved had little difficulty in proving this innocence. The correspondence which took place while Lady Marlborough was in town with her husband on this occasion reveals Anne very clearly in her affectionate simplicity.

I hear Lord Marlborough is sent to the Tower; and though I am certain they have nothing against him, and expected by your letter it would be so, yet I was struck when I was told it; for methinks it is a dismal thing to have one's friends sent to that place. I have a thousand melancholy thoughts, and cannot help fearing they hinder you from coming to me; though how they can do that without making you a prisoner, I cannot imagine. I am just told by pretty good hands that as soon as the wind turns westerly there will be a guard set upon the prince and me. If you hear there is any such thing designed and that 'tis easy to you, pray let me see you before the wind changes: for afterward one does not know whether they will let one have opportunities of speaking to one another. But let them do what they please, nothing shall ever vex me, so I can have the satisfaction of seeing dear Mrs. Freeman; and I swear I would live on bread and water between four walls with her without repining; for so long as you continue kind, nothing can ever be a real mortification to your faithful Mrs. Morley, who wishes she may never enjoy a moment's happiness in this world or the next if ever she proves false to you.

Whether the wind proving "westerly" was a phrase understood between the correspondents, or if it had anything to do with the event of the impending battle on which the fate of England was hanging, it is difficult to tell. If it was used in the latter sense, the victorious battle of La Hogue, by which all recent discomfitures were redeemed, soon restored the government to calm and the consciousness of triumph, and made conspiracy comparatively insignificant. Before this great deliverance was known, Anne had written a submissive letter to her sister, informing her that she had now recovered her strength "well enough to go abroad," and asking leave to pay her respects to the queen. To which Mary returned a stern answer declaring that such civilities were unnecessary as long as her sister declined to do the thing required of her. Anne sent a copy of this letter to Lady Marlborough, announcing, as she was now "at liberty to go where I please by the queen refusing to see me," her intention of coming to London to see her friend, but this intention does not seem to have been carried out. "I am very sensibly touched with the misfortune that my dear Mrs. Freeman has had in losing her son, knowing very well what it is to lose a child," the princess writes, "but she, knowing my heart so well and how great a share I have in all her concerns, I will not say any more on this subject for fear of renewing her passion too much." Throughout this separation these little billets were continually coming and going, and we cannot do better than transcribe for the reader some of those innocent letters, so natural and full of the writer's heart.

Though I have nothing to say to my dear Mrs. Freeman I cannot help inquiring how she and her Lord does. If it be not convenient for you to write when you receive this, either keep the bearer till it is, or let me have a word from you by the next opportunity when it is easy to you, for I would not be a constraint to you at any time, much less now when you have so many things to do and think of. All I desire to hear from you at such a time is that you and yours are well, which next to having my Lord Marlborough out of his enemies' power, is the best news that can come to her, who to the last moment of her life will be dear to Mrs. Freeman's....

I give dear Mrs. Freeman a thousand thanks for her letter which gives me an account of her concerns; and that is what I desire more to know than other news. I shall reckon the days and hours and think it very long till the time is out, both for your sake and my Lord Marlborough's, and that he may be at liberty and your mind at ease. And, dear Mrs. Freeman, don't say when I can see you if I come to town, therefore I ask which day will be most convenient for you. I confess I long to see you, but am not so unreasonable to desire that satisfaction till it is easy to you. I wish with all my soul that you may not be a true prophetess, and that it may soon be in our power to enjoy one another's company more than it has been of late, which is all I covet in this world....

I am sorry with all my heart Mrs. Freeman meets with so many delays, but it is a comfort they cannot keep my Lord Marlborough in the Tower longer than the end of the term, and I hope when the Parliament sits care will be taken that people may not be clapt up for nothing, or else there will be no living in quiet for anybody but insolent Dutch and sneaking mercenary Englishmen. Dear Mrs. Freeman, farewell—be assured your faithful Mrs. Morley can never change, and I hope you do not in

the least doubt of her kindness, which, if it be possible, increases every day, and that can never have an end but with her life. Mrs. Morley hopes her dear Mrs. Freeman will let her have the satisfaction of hearing again from her to-morrow....

Dear Mrs. Freeman may easily imagine I cannot have much to say since I saw her. However, I must write two words, for though I believe she does not doubt of my constancy, feeling how base and false all the world is, I am of that temper I think I can never say enough to assure you of it. Therefore give me leave to assure you they can never change me. And there is no misery I cannot readily resolve to suffer rather than the thoughts of parting from you. And I do swear I would sooner be torn in pieces than alter this my resolution. My dear Mrs. Freeman, I long to hear from you.

This pretty correspondence changed a little, but only to grow more impassioned, when the princess had gone to Bath and the friends were less near each other.

Anne was, however, pursued by the royal displeasure even in her invalid journey to Bath, and no less a person than Lord Nottingham, the lord chamberlain, was employed to warn the mayor of that city that his civilities to the princess were ill-timed. Such a disclosure of the family quarrel evinced a determination and bitterness which perhaps frightened even Lady Marlborough, courageous as she was; and she seems to have offered and even pressed her resignation as a means of making peace. But nothing altered the devotion of her faithful princess.

I really long to know how my dear Mrs. Freeman got home, and now I have this opportunity of writing she must give me leave to tell her if she should ever be so cruel as to leave her faithful Mrs. Morley she will rob her of all the joy and quiet of her life; for if that day should come, I could never enjoy a happy minute, and I swear to you I would shut myself up and never see a creature. If you do but remember what the queen said to me the night before your lord was turned out of all; then she began to pick quarrels; and if they should take off twenty or thirty thousand pounds, have I not lived upon as little before? When I was first married we had but twenty (it is true indeed the king was so kind to pay my debts) and if it should come to that again what retrenchment is there in my family I would not willingly make and be glad of that pretence to do it? Never fancy, my dear Mrs. Freeman, if what you fear should happen, that you are the occasion; no, I am very well satisfied, and so is the prince, too, that it would have been so however, for Caliban is capable of doing nothing but injustice; therefore rest satisfied you are noways the cause, and let me beg once more for God's sake that you would not mention parting more, no, not so much as think of it, and if you should ever leave me, be assured it would break your faithful Mrs. Morley's heart.

A still stronger expression of the same sentiment, with a little gleam of self-assertion and sense of injured dignity, follows, after the princess had, as would seem, taken counsel with her George. That heavy prince fully acquiesced at least, if nothing more, in his wife's devotion.

In obedience to dear Mrs. Freeman I have told the prince all she desired me, and he is so far from being of another opinion, if there had been occasion, he would have strengthened me in my resolutions, and we both beg you would never mention so cruel a thing again. Can you think either of us so wretched that for the sake of twenty thousand pounds, and to be tormented from morning to night with flattering knaves and fools, we should forsake those we have such obligations to, and that we are so certain we are the occasion of all their misfortunes? Besides, will you believe we will truckle to Caliban, who from the first moment of his coming has used us at that rate as we are sensible he has done, and that all the world can witness that will not let their interest weigh more with them than their reason? But suppose I did submit, and that the king could change his nature so much as to use me with humanity, how would all reasonable people despise me? How would that Dutch monster laugh at me, and please himself with having got the better! and which is much more, how would my conscience reproach me for having sacrificed it—my honor, reputation, and all the substantial comforts of this life—for transitory interest, which even to those who make it their idol, can never afford any real satisfaction, much less to a virtuous mind? No, my dear Mrs. Freeman, never believe that your faithful Mrs. Morley will ever submit. She can wait with patience for a sunshine day, and

if she does not live to see it, yet she hopes England will flourish again. Once more give me leave to beg you would be so kind never to speak of parting more, for, let what will happen, that is the only thing that can make me miserable.

Such are the letters which Lord Macaulay describes as expressing “the sentiments of a fury in the style of a fish-woman.” It was not indeed pretty to call great William Caliban, but Anne was fond of nicknames, and the king’s personal appearance was not his strong point. To us the above outburst of indignation seems both natural and allowable. She had been subject to an inveterate and petty persecution—her little magnanimities had been answered by exactions. We are all so ready to believe that when a woman is involved she must be the offender, that most readers will have set down the insults to which Anne was subject to the account of Mary. But it is curious to note that in these letters all the blame is thrown upon the harsh brother-in-law, the Dutch monster, the alien, who had made so many strangers into English noblemen, and who identified Marlborough, among all the other courtiers who had been as

little steadfast to him, as the object of a pertinacious persecution. The princess says nothing of her sister. It is Caliban who is capable of nothing but injustice. It is he who will laugh if he gets the better of her. Anne’s style is perhaps not quite worthy of the Augustan age, but it is at least very intelligible and full of little individual turns which are more characteristic than the smoother graces. That she loved her friend with her whole heart, that she had a generous contempt for interested motives, and, humble as she was, a just sense of her own dignity, are all abundantly and very simply manifest in them. They will give to the impartial reader the impression of a natural and artless character, with much generous feeling and much tender affectionateness: tenacious of her rank and its observances, yet willing to throw all these trifles down at the feet of her friend. Poor young lady! When we recollect how constantly the princess’s “condition” had to be thought of, how her long patience and many pains ended constantly in the little waxen image of a dead baby and nothing more, who can wonder that the world seemed falling to pieces about her when she was threatened with the loss of the one strong sustaining prop upon which she had hung from her childhood—the friend who had helped her through all the first experiences of life, the companion who had amused so many weary days and made the time pass as no one else could do!

All these miserable disputes, however, were ended in a moment when brought into the cold twilight of a death-chamber, where even kings and queens are constrained to see things at their true value. Of all the royal personages in the kingdom, Mary’s would have seemed to any outside spectator the soundest and safest life. William had never been healthy, and was consumed by the responsibilities and troubles into which he had plunged. Anne had these ever-succeeding maternities to keep her at a low level; but Mary was young, vigorous, and happy—happy at least in her devotion to her husband and his love for her. It was she, however, who, to the awe and consternation of the world, was cut down in her prime after a few days’ illness, in the midst of her greatness. Such a catastrophe no one could behold without the profoundest impulse of pity. Whatever she had done a week before, there she lay now helpless, all her splendors gone from her, the promise of a long career ended, and her partner left heartbroken upon the solitary throne to which she had given him the first right.

The sight of so forlorn a man,—so powerful, yet as impotent when his happiness was concerned as the meanest,—left thus heartbroken without courage or strength, his sole companion gone, and nothing but strangers, alien minds, and doubtful counselors round, is enough to touch any heart. Anne, like the rest of the world, was shocked and startled by the sudden calamity. She sent anxious messages asking to be admitted to her sister’s bedside; and, when all was over, partly no doubt from policy, but we may be at least permitted to believe partly from good feeling, presented herself at Kensington Palace to show at least that rancor was not in her heart. Unfortunately, there was no reconciliation between the sisters: the breach continued to the end of the queen’s life, Burnet informs us. But when the forlorn and solitary king was roused in his misery to receive his sister-in-law’s message, a sort of peace was patched up between them over that unthought-of grave. There was no longer any public

quarrel or manifestation of animosity—and with this melancholy event the first half of Anne's history may be brought to an end.

Chapter II

THE QUEEN AND THE DUCHESS

A YEAR after the accession of William and Mary, and before any of the bitternesses and conflicts above recorded had openly begun, the only child of Anne on whose life any hopes could be built was born. Her many babies had died at birth or immediately after, and their quick and constant succession, as has been said, was the distinguishing feature of her personal life. But after the Revolution, when everything was settling out of the confusion of the crisis, and when as yet no further family troubles had disclosed the family rancors and disagreements, in the country air of Hampton Court, where the new king and queen were living, a little prince was born. Though he was sickly at first, like all the rest, he survived the dangers of infancy, and, called William after the king, and bearing from the first day of his life the title of Duke of Gloucester, was received joyfully by the nation at large and everybody concerned as the authentic heir to the crown. This child kept, it would seem, a little hold on the affections of the childless Mary during the whole course of the quarrel with his mother, bitter as it was, and continued an object of interest and kindness to William as long as he lived. The interposition of the quaint and precocious boy, with his big head, his premature enlightenment as to what it was and was not prudent to say, his sparkle of childish ambition, and all his old-fashioned ways, made a curious and welcome diversion in the troubled scene where nothing was happy, not even the child. He was the chief occupation of Anne's life when comparative peace followed the warlike interval above related, and a cold and forced civility replaced the active hostilities which for years had been raging between the court and the household of the princess.

Anne has never got much credit for her forbearance and self-effacement at the critical moments of her career. But it is certain that she might have given William a great deal of trouble had she asserted her rights as Mary's successor, as she might also have done at the time of the first settlement. No doubt he would on both occasions have carried the day, and with this certainty the historians have been satisfied, without considering that a woman who was not of a lofty character, and who was a Stuart, must have felt it doubly bitter to find herself the subject of a gloomy brother-in-law who slighted her, and who, her rasher partizans did not hesitate to say, ought to have been her subject so long as he remained in England after her sister's death, and not she his. The absence of any attempt on her part to disturb or molest, nay, her little advances, her letters of condolence, and of congratulation the first time that a victory gave occasion for it, showed no inconsiderable magnanimity on the part of the prosaic princess—all the more that she had not been in the habit, as is usual among women, of putting the scorns she had suffered to another woman's account, and holding Mary responsible, but had uniformly attributed to the "Dutch monster," the Caliban of her correspondence, all the slights that were put on her—all the more that William did very little to encourage any overtures of friendship. He received her after his wife's death, and they are said by one of her attendants to have wept together when the unwieldy princess, then unable to walk, was carried in her chair into the very presence-chamber. But if a common emotion drew them together at this moment, it did not last; and in the diminished

ceremonial of the bereaved court, Anne had but scant respect and no welcome. But she made no further complaint, and did what she could to keep on terms of civility at least with her brother-in-law, writing to him little letters of politeness, notwithstanding the disapproval of Lady Marlborough, who was of no such gentle temper, and the absence of all response from William. He, with all his foreign wars and home troubles, solitary, sad, broken in health and in life, had little heart, we may suppose, for those commonplace advances from a woman he had never been able to tolerate. But though Anne's relations with the king were scarcely improved, her position in respect to the courtiers

who had abandoned her in her sister's lifetime was different indeed. Lady Marlborough describes this with her usual force.

And now it being quickly known that the quarrel was made up, nothing was to be seen but crowds of people of all sorts flocking to Berkeley House to pay their respects to the prince and princess; a sudden alteration which I remember occasioned the half-witted Lord Carnarvon to say one night to the princess as he stood close by her in the circle, "I hope your highness will remember that I came to wait upon you when none of this company did," which caused a great deal of mirth.

Meanwhile, the little boy, the heir of England, interposes his quaint little figure with that touch of nature which always belongs to a child, in the midst of all the excitement and dullness, awakening a certain interest even in the solitary and bereaved life of William, and filling his mother's house with tender anxieties and pleasures. He was sickly and feeble from his childhood, but early learned the royal lesson of self-concealment, and was cuffed and hustled by the anxious cruelty of love into the use of his poor little legs years after his contemporaries had been in full enjoyment of their liberty. It is characteristic of the self-absorbed and belligerent chronicler of the princess's household, whose narrative of all the quarrels and struggles of royal personages is so vivid, that she has very little to say about either the living or dying of the only child who was of such importance both to her mistress and to the country. His little existence is pushed aside in Lady Marlborough's record, and but for a little squabble over the appointment of the duke's "family," which she gives with great detail, we should scarcely have known from her that Anne had tasted that happiness of maternity which is so largely weighted with pains and cares. But the story of little Gloucester's life, as found in the more familiar record of his waiting-gentleman, Lewis Jenkins, is both attractive and entertaining. The little fellow seems to have been full of lively spirit and observation, active and restless in spite of his feebleness, full of a child's interest in everything about him, and of precocious judgment and criticism. Some of the stories that are told of him put these gifts in a startling light. "Who has taught you to say such words?" his mother asks him when the child has been betrayed into innocent repetition of the oaths he had heard from his attendants. The boy pauses before he replies. "If I say Dick Dewey," he whispers to a favorite lady, "he will be sent down-stairs. Mama, I invented them myself," he adds aloud. The little being moving among worlds not realized, learning to play his little part, taking his cue from the countenances round him, forming his little policy in the twinkling of an eye, could not have had a better representative. His careless indifference to his chaplain's religious services, but happy learning of little prayers and verses with the old lady to whom he takes a fancy, his weariness of lessons, yet eager interest in the diagrams that drop from Lewis Jenkins's pocket-book, and in all the bits of history he can induce his Welsh usher to tell him, and all the rest of his innocent childlike perversities, awaken in us an amused yet pathetic interest. A troublesome, lovable, perverse, delightful child, not always easy to manage, constantly asking the most awkward questions, full of ambition and energy and spirit and foolishness, the dull prince's somewhat tedious house brightens into hope and sweetness so long as he is there.

In every respect this was the brightest moment of Anne's life. There was no longer any possibility of treating the next heir to the crown, the mother of the only prince in whom the imagination of England could take pleasure, with slighting or contumely. She was permitted to have her share of the honors and comforts of English royalty. St. James's old red-brick palace was given over to her as became her position; and, what was more wonderful, Windsor Castle, one of the noblest of royal dwellings, became the country-house of Anne and her boy. King William preferred Hampton Court, with its Dutch gardens, in which he could imagine himself at home: the great feudal castle, erecting its massive towers from the crest of the gentle hill which has the value of a much greater eminence in the midst of the broad plain that sweeps forth in every direction round, was not, apparently, to his taste. And few prettier or more innocent scenes have been associated with its long history than those in which little Gloucester was the chief actor. He had a little regiment of boys of his own age whom it was his delight to drill and lead through a hundred mock battles

and rapid skirmishings, mischievous little urchins who called themselves the Duke of Gloucester's men, and played their little pranks like their elders, as favorites will. When he went to Windsor, four Eton boys were sent for to be his playmates, one of them being young Churchill, the son of Lady Marlborough. The little prince chose St. George's Hall for the scene of his mimic battles, and there the little army stormed and besieged one another to their hearts' content. When his mother's marriage-day was celebrated, he received his parents with salvos of his small artillery, and, stepping forth in his little birthday-suit, paid them his compliment: "Papa, I wish you and Mama unity, peace, and concord, not for a time, but forever," said the serious little hero. One can fancy Anne, smiling and triumphant in her joy of motherhood, with her beautiful chestnut curls and sweet complexion and placid roundness, leaning on good George's arm,—her peaceful companion, with whom she had never a quarrel,—and admiring her son's infant wisdom. It was their happy time: no cares of state upon their heads, no quarrels on hand, Sarah of Marlborough, let us hope, smiling too, and at peace with everybody, her own boy taking part in the ceremonial.

The little smoke and whiff of gunpowder, the little gunners at their toy artillery, the great hall still slightly athrill with the mimic salute, add something still to the boundless hopefulness of the scene; for why should not this little English William grow up as great a soldier and more fortunate than his grim godfather, and subdue France under the feet of England, and be the conqueror of the world? All this was possible in those pleasant days.

On another occasion there was a great chapter of Knights of the Garter to witness the installation of little Gloucester in knightly state as one of the order. The little figure, seven years old, seated under the noble canopywork in St. George's beautiful chapel, scarcely visible over the desk upon which his prayer-book was spread out, gazing with blue eyes intent, in all the gravity of a child, upon the great English nobles in their stalls around him, listening to the voices of the choristers pealing high into space, makes another touching picture. King William himself had buckled the garter round the child's knee and hung the jewel about his neck,—St. George slaying his dragon, that immemorial emblem of the victory over evil; and no doubt in the vague grandeur of childish anticipation, the boy felt himself ready to emulate the feat of the patron saint. He was a little patriot too, eager to lend the aid of his small squadron to his uncle when William went away to the wars, and bringing a

smile even upon that worn and melancholy face as he manœvered his little company and showed how they would fight in Flanders when the moment came. When William was threatened with assassination and the country woke up to feel that though she did not love him it would be much amiss to lose him, little Gloucester, at eight, was one of the most loyal. Taking counsel with his little regiment, he drew up a memorial, written out, no doubt, by the best master of the pen among them, with much shedding of ink, if not of more precious fluid. "We, your Majesty's subjects, will stand by you while we have a drop of blood," was the address to which the Duke of Gloucester's men set all their tiny fists. The little duke himself, not content with this, added to it another address of his own:

I, your Majesty's most dutiful subject, had rather lose my life in your Majesty's cause than in any man's else; and I hope it will not be long ere you conquer France.

Gloucester.

Heroic little prince!—a Protestant William, yet a gallant and gentle Stuart. With this heart of enthusiasm and generous valor in him, what might he not have done had he ever lived to be king? These marred possibilities, which are so common in life, are almost the saddest things in it, and that must be a heart very strong in faith that is not struck dumb by the withdrawal from earth's extreme need of so much faculty that seemed created for her help and succor. It certainly awoke a smile, and might have drawn an iron tear down William's cheek, to see this faithful little warrior ready to "lose his life" in his defense. And the good pair behind, George and Anne, who had evidently suffered no treacherous suggestion to get to the ear of the boy,—no hint that William was a usurper, and little Gloucester had more right than he to be uppermost,—how radiant they stand in the light of their happiness and hope! The spectator is reluctant to turn the page to the coming gloom.

“When the Duke of Gloucester was arrived at an age to be put into men’s hands,” William’s relenting and change of mind was proved by the fact that Marlborough, who had been in disgrace all these years, and whom only the constant favor of Anne had kept out of entire obscurity, was recalled into the front of affairs in order to be made “governor” of the young prince. It is true that this gracious act was partially neutralized by the appointment of Bishop Burnet as little Gloucester’s tutor, a choice which was supposed to be as disagreeable to Anne as the other was happy. No distinct reason appears for this sudden and extraordinary change. Marlborough’s connection with the family of the princess made him indeed peculiarly suitable to have the charge of her son, but William had not hitherto shown any desire to honor her likings; and this was not reason enough for all the other marks of favor bestowed upon him, bringing him back at once from private life and political disgrace to a position as high as any in the kingdom. Burnet himself did by no means relish the honor thus thrust upon him. He was almost disposed, he tells us, “to retire from the court and town,” much as that would have cost him, rather than take upon him such a charge. But the pleasure of believing that “the king would trust that care only to me,” and also an unexpected “encouragement” received from the princess, decided him to make the experiment. The little pupil was about nine when he came into the bishop’s hands, and he gives the following account of his charge:

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