

THE QUEEN OF SWEDEN.

By MADAME DE BUNSEN.



HE present Queen of Sweden, formerly Princess Sophia of Nassau, was born at Biebrich July 9, 1836, being daughter of Duke Wilhelm of Nassau and Princess Pauline of Würtemberg. Prince Oscar, Crown Prince of Sweden, became acquainted with her in 1856 during his first journey through the Continent of Europe. He had been in 1853 flag-captain of the combined squadron of Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish ships, which reminded Europe of that combination of the three Northern States which is known as the Calmaric Union, lasting from 1397 to 1523. After the wedding at Biebrich on the 6th of June, 1857, Oscar Frederic, Duke of Ostrogotha, brought his young bride to Stockholm. She was then quite unknown to the country of her adoption, whose future Queen she was destined to be. Those who saw the princess could not fail to observe that her features expressed dignity, intelligence, and nobleness of heart. This first impression time has confirmed in every way. Yet Queen Sophia's character is not of that superficial kind as to be at once understood by all. To appreciate her full value, time and favourable opportunities are required. Being by nature shy and reserved, she has occasionally been misunderstood by those who are unable to judge of inward merit. During some years owing to her serious illness she has had intercourse with few beyond the members of her own family. But long before she became Queen her rare qualities as wife, mother, and princess had been discerned by all who had the opportunities of forming a correct opinion. Warm sympathy and love soon greeted her everywhere.

A marked trait of the Queen's character is her strong sense of duty. Her aim has always been to benefit others and to deny herself. Her pleasure is the pleasure of others. It is no indiscretion to say that as a faithful and loving wife she has been a never-failing friend of her consort, sharing his joys and sorrows. As a mother she has indeed been a true model, watching over her sons' education with great judgment, as also with the most tender and devoted care. She knew how to make their life at home unusually happy and instructive. Other predominating qualities in the Queen's character are her deep humility of soul, her patience in bodily and mental sufferings, and her active and ever ready sympathy. Thus she was enabled to bear and to make the best of the long trial of sufferings she had to undergo, being strongly

aided by her conviction that she derived her strength and consolation from above. She was never heard to murmur or to complain, but bore her cross with submission, praising and glorifying the Lord. She was full of thankfulness that He had spared her from a still heavier cross, and she felt happy that it was herself and not her consort or her children who suffered.

Perhaps no feature in the Queen's character is more remarkable than her strict truthfulness—her love of truth for the truth's sake. In all things she wishes to know the exact truth, and she therefore listens willingly to the expression of opinions different from her own. On such occasions she tries to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good." Her attendants are not required to give up their individualities, as is often the case at Court. She wishes all to remain true to themselves. No wonder that all her servants, from the highest to the lowest, are deeply attached to their royal mistress, and feel bound to her by the strongest ties of esteem and devoted affection.

As a mother to her country, Queen Sophia is a worthy successor of those Queens of Sweden whose memory is blessed. Without the least aim at being noticed, she exercises in secret an extensive and judicious benevolence. She founded an orphan home at Christiania, and at Stockholm a home for discharged female prisoners.

Before commencing the Home for Discharged Prisoners, the Queen wrote to England, to gain every information respecting similar institutions here, adding in her letter, "I am really very curious to collect everything tending the least to enlighten me on the subject, as it is so important to the success of the institution to do the thing rightly at the beginning."

All persons who in any way have made it their object to work for the benefit of their fellow-creatures, always find an active support in the Queen, and will never address her in vain.

Queen Sophia is a decided Christian, always ready to confess and act upon her faith. She is a faithful member of the church, but tolerant and liberal. She takes a warm interest in the progress of the Kingdom of God, and every faithful work in the vineyard of the Lord is sure to meet with her ready sympathy, whether carried out by the clergy or the laity.

As to the outward life of Queen Sophia, it has not been very rich in what are called events. From her marriage in 1857 to 1872, when with her consort she ascended the throne of the united kingdoms of Sweden and Norway, her life was passed principally in the education of her children. In winter she lived at the ducal palace in Gustaf-Adolphs Square, in summer at Sophiero on the Sound, occasionally making excursions to Kreuth and Ems, and to her half-sister the Princess of Wied, at Monrepos, near Neu-Wied. After her coronation at Stockholm in May, 1873, she accompanied the King to the coronation at Drontheim in the same year. In the years 1877 and 1878 she went to Heidelberg to consult Dr. Friedrich. Although relieved by the treatment of this eminent physician, serious relapses followed, which were especially painful in 1880. The Queen then undertook the journey to Amsterdam, and under the treatment of the famous Dr. Metzger she was restored to her usual health.

During her stay at Bournemouth in 1880 her health increased daily, and in 1881, after her return to Sweden, she was able to be present at the festivities in Baden connected with the festive occasion of the Crown Prince's marriage with Princess Victoria of Baden, whose mother is the only daughter of the Emperor of Germany, and thus sister-in-law to the Princess Royal of Great Britain, the

Crown Princess of Germany. Thus were again united the two royal families of Sweden and Baden, the grandmother of one bride having been the daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden. Those who were privileged to see the King and Queen of Sweden on this occasion—when, also, the silver wedding of the Grand Duke and the Grand Duchess of Baden was solemnised—those who saw the welcome given by high and low to the royal family of Sweden, must have carried with them the conviction that these honours were well deserved by such a royal pair and the noble family to which they have given birth.

Her Majesty's last act before leaving England was to enroll herself as a life-member of the British and Foreign Bible Society and of the Religious Tract Society. The reports of these societies testify to the great work performed in Sweden by their agency.

THE DOG VIOLET.

BLUE, modest, but deceitful flower,
We learn of life from thee,
Deluding all thy little hour
With semblance fair to see.

For, culling thee, we seek in vain
The violet's scented *breath*,
And cast thee on the sod again,
Unpitied in thy death.

Like thee, deceitful violet,
The world's false friends are fair;
We view them, and awhile forget
That perfume dwells not there.

For many live on this bright earth,
Most lovely to the eye,
In whom we often find a dearth
Of Christian charity.

The sun unto the mountain height
May lend his rays of gold,
But when his radiant beams take flight,
The mount is grey and cold.

So round the lips sweet smiles may
dwell,
The eye, as thine, be blue;
But softest smiles can scarcely tell
If the deep heart be true.

'Tis not the bland and courtly air
That proves the inward mind;
But deeds that speak, and hearts that
share
The sorrows of mankind.

These, like the perfumes that exhale
From thy sweet sister's sigh,
Are wafted far upon the gale
In blessings ere they die.

ANNE BEALE.

