

## THE ELDER DUMAS.



DUMAS the elder had not a few points of resemblance to Oliver Goldsmith. He could not help running into debt, giving alms largely to every one who demanded them without stopping to inquire whether the mendicant were an impostor or an honest man, being a prey to sharp dealers and parasites, and living from hand to mouth. He was also boastful, from a fear of being forgotten or underrated, though without a grain of envy in his genial soul; was fond of the excitement and adventures of the old-fashioned modes of traveling; and had an undying love for the place in which he spent his youth. Throughout his long and varied literary career he nursed the hope of ending his days in the forest-girdled town of Villers-Cotterets, in the ancient province of Valois, where he was born and reared. If ever the thought of saving any of his earnings traversed his brain, the father to it was his lifelong desire « to there return, and die at home at last.» He often talked of buying, when he had the means, the house in the Rue de Lormier in which he was born as day dawned on a July morning, in the second year of this century. Villers-Cotterets was written on his heart, and reacted on most of his after-life impressions. When he revisited the town he was lionized by great and small, and found that boyish escapades and venial sins of adolescence were still held in kindly remembrance by the old folks. Dumas was a man of warm and ready sympathies, jovial of temperament, and sparkling with ready wit. His impressions were vivacious, the fountains were near his eyes, and after laughing and crying, or rather blubbering, for sheer joy at the welcome he received, he lent himself to convivial demonstrations, and delighted all who sat down with him at table by his high spirits and the brilliancy of his conversation.

The works of Dumas the elder teem with his early reminiscences. Some of them glow often with the local color of the sylvan neighborhood in which he was brought up. It was also his persistent wish to be buried in the pretty cemetery, more rustic than urban, of Villers-Cotterets. There he now lies beside

his father and mother, and near his daughter Mme. Petel, his grandfather the innkeeper Labouret, and a number of other relatives on the maternal side.

The genius of the race inhabiting the Valois is humane and gentle and temperate in its highest manifestations. La Ferté-Milon, where Racine was born, and Château-Thierry, the place of La Fontaine's nativity, are in the same region as Villers-Cotterets. The sobriety of intellect which is a Valoisian quality greatly toned down the African exuberance of Dumas. He had tropical prolificness, but the savor of his literary works was delicate and essentially French. He was always natural, animated, sparkling, and original, and took as much pleasure in narrating as his readers took in following his narratives. When we think of the historical period which opened just after his father, Comte Davy de la Pailleterie, son of the marquis of that title and Louise Dumas, a colored woman of Santo Domingo, enlisted under his mother's name, and the epic events in which he was an actor, we can understand why his son related the prodigious adventures of «*Les Trois Mousquetaires*» as if they were ordinary events. General Dumas was born in 1762, near Cape Rose, in Santo Domingo. Whether his mother was negro or mulatto is not known; but as the marquis was so greatly attached to her that the island became unendurable when he lost her, she had probably that gift of beauty which often distinguishes colored women. Their child grew up to be a remarkably handsome man, with straight features, eyes as soft as velvet, a brown skin, laughing mouth, white, even teeth, a strong neck, powerful chest and shoulders, and hands and feet of such aristocratic smallness that he could wear the gloves and slippers of a woman. He had French sensibility and bravery, which, with his herculean strength and address in using arms, made him redoubtable on the field of battle and as a duelist.

The disposition of General Dumas had many African sides. His heart was impetuous and warm, his will inconstant, and he seldom troubled himself about the future. Brought up without religion, all those devotional instincts which he inherited from the Dark Continent ran in the direction of



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ALEXANDRE DUMAS THE ELDER.

the Republic when it was proclaimed, and placed him in opposition to Bonaparte in Egypt. The childish guilelessness of his character placed him at the mercy of intriguers, and disabled him from reaping the fruits of his military prowess, quickness, and divination. After being the Horatius Cocles of Napoleon's first two Italian campaigns, and foremost in the path of valor in Egypt, where he dared fanaticism by entering a mosque on horseback to put down a Mameluke revolt, he died a half-pay general at the age of forty-two, leaving an unpensioned widow, whose heritage was very slender, and two children, one of whom was a girl of ten and the other a boy of five, who never forgot his father, and kept his name from being forgotten. The African improvidence of the general was shown in his motto, « Dieu a donné; Dieu donnera, » and which the prodigal son indorsed. « God, having given, will go on giving, » was

a conclusion dictated by a fine heart. God has continued giving even to the third and fourth generations of the mulatto soldier's posterity.

There was nothing that had such a cordial action on the elder Dumas as to trace the interventions of a good Providence in his career, and particularly in the trifling circumstances on which the great events of his life hinged. His mother had the Valoisian character. She was simple, amiable, just, affectionate, and of a tender heart and soul. In foul weather as in fine, for the eighteen years which she spent at Villers-Cotterets after the general's death, she daily visited his grave. The son, when he was little, accompanied her, and became so attached to the cemetery that in the most brilliant time of his manhood he looked forward with satisfaction to the prospect of lying there himself. Mme. Dumas *mère* worshiped her son, and he returned her love with his whole heart, but was

too heedless and unforeseeing not to cause her often deep affliction. The worst heart-aches that he occasioned were involuntary. When he was eleven years old all the mothers in France were hostile to Bonaparte; but when most of them expressed their hatred in execrations, the general's widow only wept and sighed. Shortly after the retreat from Moscow she clasped Alexandre to her breast in a

Dumas's statue by Carrier-Belleuse stands in the Place de la Fontaine. This image rests on a granite pedestal. It represents Dumas standing, and clad in a loose overcoat such as he often wore in lieu of a dressing-gown. The collar of his shirt is open. When that garment was fastened at the neck his brain was not at ease, if he were working. The first thing he did, therefore, in sitting down to



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ALEXANDRE DUMAS THE YOUNGER.

paroxysm of grief. «What ails you, mother?» he asked. «My poor dear child,» she cried, «I am thinking that in five years that man who has taken so much from us and given us nothing will seize you and send you to be killed on a field of battle.» «But,» as the novelist in telling of this incident said, «God, in the fulfilment of his designs, needed the fall of Napoleon, and so forsaking him, the generation born at the beginning of the century was not delivered over to the cannon's maw.»

write was to throw aside his cravat and to unbutton his shirt. A quill pen, with which he always wrote with copperplate regularity, but with few marks of punctuation, is in his right hand, and his left hand is placed on a pile of volumes, on the backs of which are inscribed the titles of his best works. The statue is just as Dumas looked when, more than twenty years ago, he stood up at the table of Gudin, the marine-painter, to return thanks for the justice which had been

done to a supper which he cooked. He said: «I am no orator [which was not the truth], because my pen has left my tongue so little to do. But if I could kiss you all for leaving nothing but empty dishes, I should gladly do so. However, as you are too numerous to be embraced, pray elect my gifted neighbor the Comtesse de Pepoli [Alboni] to be your proxy. If you do, I shall ask her to sing out my thanks in return for the fine appreciation you have shown of my culinary talents. . . .» Alboni received the kiss and sang the song.

The statue in the Place de la Fontaine was unveiled early in the summer of 1885 by Dumas the younger, of the success of whose cold, sharp analysis the author of «*Les Trois Mousquetaires*» was at first a little jealous. Perhaps jealousy is not the term to express his feeling. He rather felt like a person who, having given a brilliantly painted and gilded drum to a child, sees him break it up to ascertain whence the sound comes. Since Scheherazade entertained the Sultan during a thousand and one nights with her tales there had never been such a story-teller, in the best literary sense, as the elder Dumas. He had amused not only France, but the rest of the novel-reading world, for nearly a quarter of a century. The favor shown for his son's scalpel in 1852, when «*La Dame aux Camélias*» was a novelty, showed him that his intellectual play-toys were beginning to satiate the public palate, and that until a new class of readers sprung up they would be flung aside. When he got used to this painful idea he became inordinately proud of the vogue which the younger Dumas enjoyed.

When the son grew up, father and son hardly stood in a paternal and filial relation to each other. They were not wanting in affection, but the father was too much a man of instinct to compel respect, and the son was not prone to venerate anybody or anything except his mother, with whose hard, self-reliant character he was in sympathy. She was a Rouennaise, was married to a man who ill-used her, left him, came to Paris to support herself with her needle, and fell in with Dumas the elder when he was a clerk employed to address letters in the household of the Duc d'Orléans (afterward Louis Philippe). He had a salary of fifteen hundred francs a year from the future Citizen King, whose revenues from landed estates amounted to five million francs a year. The young woman earned a fairly good livelihood by contracting to sew for a ladies' outfitting shop. She was alone, and her good-natured neighbor inspired her

with sympathy. Being probably descended from some Gold Coast ancestor, he was polygamous, and did not seem alive to the social requirements of western Europe on the score of matrimony. He liked the fair sex, was inconstant in love, and jealous when he loved. The Rouennaise grass widow was intelligent, and seriously, indeed, heroically, discharged her duties to their son, who was born in 1824. When she discovered that her lover had a rich vein of literary genius she incited him to work with his pen as an author, and to form a style and complete his education by study.

The schooling of the elder Dumas had been given to him by an honest and antiquated priest, the Abbé Grégoire, who taught a score of boys history, Latin, and some Greek and arithmetic. The Sister Amée gave him writing-lessons, and he read whatever came in his way. A good-natured next-door neighbor, Mme. Darcourt, whose daughter Éléonore took compassion on the orphan boy and became his second mother, used, when they were both sewing in the long evenings, to let him amuse himself with an illustrated edition of Buffon. The pictures of beasts, birds, fishes, and reptiles awoke curiosity, and while most other children of his age were in the primer he had got through the natural history. Notions of geography were derived from «*Robinson Crusoe*,» and ideas of sacred history and theology from a magnificent pictorial Bible at the château of M. Collard, an old friend of General Dumas. Demoustier's «*Lettres à Emilie*» on the Greek mythology, «*La Mythologie de la Jeunesse*,» odd volumes of «*The Arabian Nights*,» of Fénelon's works, and of Rollin's history, completed his store of erudition. His great teachers were nature and the hard conditions of life in which he was placed. They acted on a brain of singular vigor and assimilative capacity. Like Shakspeare, a part of his education was obtained as a clerk in a provincial attorney's office, from which he was turned out when not quite eighteen for making, without leave, an excursion to Paris and staying there three days.

Dumas felt that he had stuff in him which in the great city would bring him to the top, and was enchanted at his dismissal, although he did not know what to do for the barest livelihood. General Foy, an old friend of his father and the head of the advanced liberals in the Chamber, with whom the Duc d'Orléans (Louis Philippe) was intriguing against Charles X., was appealed to by the scapegrace. He asked that prince to do him the favor of giving employment to Dumas, who

was given the function of expeditionary clerk; that is to say, clerk to address letters which other secretaries wrote. Here he found his opening. The Palais Royal, where the Duc d'Orléans lived, was close to the Théâtre Français, and in the dull season tickets to see the plays there were often sent to the underlings of the ducal household. Dumas profited by them, and also by the theatrical relations of a young friend, De Leuven, who had had some success as a dramatic author, and whose example stimulated Dumas to try his hand at authorship. In this he was encouraged by his chum, who years later was manager of the Opéra Comique, and subsequently bequeathed a large fortune to Dumas the younger. There was also another factor in the shaping of Dumas's career. One of his fellow-clerks had been a good deal with the Duc d'Orléans in England, and was well versed in English literature, which he thought had then more vitality than French. He advised the undeveloped genius to study Scott and Shakspeare, but in the original language. By prodigious industry this was soon done. Those works opened a new world to the student, and set his mind in a state of violent fermentation. In his garret in the Place des Italiens his greatest expenditure was for the lamp-oil that he burned in familiarizing himself with the giants of English fiction, in whom he thought he had found models. In this he did himself injustice, for he never was a copyist. He and they had one common faculty: to every mummy that they found in history and chose to revive in a tale or drama they gave life. There is nothing more living than the male characters of Dumas. His women are more conventional; but they all give, nevertheless, the illusion of life. Their personality is stronger in his dramas than in his novels, and the most firmly portrayed are those who stood well out in history, such as Margaret of Valois, Anne of Austria, the Duchess of Guise, Queen Christina, Marie Antoinette, or simple, outspoken, kind-hearted village girls. Of his rustic types there are charming specimens in «La Tulipe Noire,» and Catherine, the farmer's daughter, in «Ange Pitou.» It was under the fresh impulsion of Scott and Shakspeare that he began to write for the stage. «La Reine Christine,» his maiden drama, was brought out at the Odéon, and «Henri III. et sa Cour» at the Français. They were produced before he was twenty-two. Thus Dumas was earlier afield than Victor Hugo as an author of historical and romantic plays. But though a poet in feeling and a writer of clear, graceful, and ani-

mated prose, he had not the accomplishment of verse. He was so rich in lovable qualities that he disarmed envy; but he could never command respect, and did not, therefore, take position as the initiator of a school. It may be said also that although he amused with an unflagging spirit, he did not unloose stormy passions or dive into the hidden recesses of the heart. With less driving force and staying power he would have had only a pretty talent; but with his sustained gaiety, invention, and unaffected literary graces he was unique. He was greatly afraid when he was dying that his fame would die with him; but as long as the French tongue lives and mankind wants easily digested and amusing books to read his works will be republished.

I did not meet the elder Dumas until he was on the wane, but was acquainted with him before he fell under the influence of Adah Isaacs Menken. When young, his hair was fair, then dark, but when I saw him it was gray, and in texture less woolly than the negro's. His lips were thick, and extended from ear to ear when he laughed, and his teeth were uneven and set apart from each other. He flattered himself that his nose was straight. It was, however, lumpy, with wide, strongly marked, and quivering nostrils. To the pride of life he was insensible. But he was a slave of the flesh, though in a fitful way; and the never-ending pressure of creditors obliged him to react against his conviviality. One saw that he was a force of nature and a child of nature. His small hands and feet, and his singularly acute though good-natured blue eyes, alone indicated blood derived from a long line of civilized Northern ancestors. There were traces of Africa in his speech. His laugh was a guffaw, but its hilarity was contagious. When a case of suffering was made known to him his face at once fell, and if he knew the sufferer the broad face contracted, and he howled until he had spent his grief. Mme. Dorval, whom he and Victor Hugo thought the greatest actress of her time, for emotional parts, used to call him her «bon chien» and her «gros chien.» In the hour of death she did not lay aside this term of endearment, which any one else would have resented. He was doggish in many respects, but of the generous, impulsive Newfoundland type.

The revolution of February, by transferring the drama from the stage to the streets, ruined the theaters of Paris, and among them Dumas's «Théâtre Historique.» Mme. Dorval, who was engaged in his troupe, had to seek provincial engagements. After a while she

went back to Paris to die. She was in poverty, and was tormented by the fear of being buried in the paupers' trench and separated from her grandchildren. She thought of her old friend, bankrupt Dumas, and a messenger from her found him at the Français directing the rehearsal of the «Testament of Cæsar.» He threw down his manuscript and went with all speed to the other side of the town, where she lodged. She told him she should die of despair if she could not have a private grave. It would cost seven hundred francs for five years. Dumas promised her that it should be as she wished, and when she expired went to seek the money for the grave. There were two hundred francs in his desk. Where in the world was he to get the rest? He ordered the coachman to drive to the Minister of Public Instruction, M. de Falloux, whom he did not know personally, and who was clerical and monarchical, while he was republican. «Excuse me, M. le Ministre,» he said when he was announced, «if an instinctive sympathy prompts me to request a service of you.» M. de Falloux bowed. «Mme. Dorval is dead, but in such poverty that her friends and admirers must give her a grave and pay for her funeral. I am both a friend and admirer and debtor, but am now in difficulties, so that I can pay only a third.» The minister handed his visitor a hundred-franc note. Hugo was next tried, and subscribed two hundred francs. Dumas overcame his repugnance to the Prince President, and went to call at the Élysée. Napoleon was as impecunious as the novelist, and made all sorts of promises and apologies. «What a fool I am!» thought Dumas. «Have I not the grand diamond star of the Order of Nischam, which the Sultan gave me when I was in Constantinople?» This token of the Grand Turk's favor was taken to the mont-de-piété to be pawned. Two thousand francs were advanced on it, out of which the owner took five hundred francs for immediate expenses and to stop the mouth of a dun. M. Camille Doucet represented the Ministry of the Fine Arts at the grave, and made a farewell speech. Dumas went in his turn to address the mourners, but his sobs prevented him. He could only pick a flower from a crown on the coffin, kiss it, and throw it into the open grave.

Dumas never found anybody to whom he could attach himself and whom he could revere as a master until he fell in with Garibaldi in Sicily. But the jealousy of the Neapolitan lazzaroni because the dictator gave him the unsalaried post of director of museums and a *palazzino* for a residence disgusted him with Italy and the Italians, and prompted him to go

back to Paris to resume neglected tasks. He was a poor courtier and a very sincere republican; but when he suddenly became a lion, and was raised by the Duc d'Orléans to the post of his librarian, he contracted a friendship for the Duc de Chartres. After 1830, when the son took his father's title and became prince royal, he and Dumas remained on terms of charming familiarity. The author's lodging was then in the Rue de Rivoli, facing the end of the Tuileries, in which the heir apparent and his wife resided. The two men used to signal to each other from their windows. No friend expressed such deep and consoling sympathy as the eldest son of Louis Philippe when Dumas's mother was struck down with paralysis and carried off. The blow was a severe one. It came in the midst of a theatrical rehearsal which presaged a triumph. For three days he was inert and morally prostrate. The day after the funeral he was busy preparing to make a journey.

Dumas does not seem at any time to have thought seriously of matrimony. Perhaps, had the Rouennaise seamstress been free to marry him, his relations with her would have been legalized and the current of his life would have run in a less zigzag channel. She was a person of rare constancy of purpose and dignity of character, living always by her work, and carefully watching over her son. When she and Dumas quarreled, the filiation of the younger Alexandre was «recognized» by the elder, a legal formality which gave him paternal rights and enabled the father to take him from his mother and place him as a boarder in the Collège Chaptal. But as the father's anger was evanescent and his heart soft and righteous, the maternal claims were not long denied. The woman urging them sought and obtained, to be near her child, the direction of the linen and the shirt-mending department in the college, and not only lived on her salary, but made provision to help her son forward when he grew up, and for her own old age. The son cherished her in her life and revered her memory. As he married a Russian lady of high rank, his mother would not live with him when he was rich and renowned until she felt she was dying. This was in 1868. The prodigal father, who hardly deserved the name of Dumas *père*, was then broken in health and falling into the state of permanent somnolency which took hold of him before his death. His daughter, Mme. Petel, with impulsive generosity, asked him to make her half-brother legitimate by marrying his mother *in extremis*, and this he did.

Dumas the younger saw through the flatterers and false friends who preyed on Dumas the elder, and the latter often hid them when he received a call from his son. When he was on the wane one of the parasites got fifty thousand francs out of him. This is how he did it. He called on the novelist, and in a melancholy tone related how, through undeserved misfortunes, he had lost his patrimony, and, indeed, all in the world except the clothes on his back and the watch in his pocket. He would be obliged to sell the chronometer at once. As it was a family relic, he thought of asking a glorious writer to buy it, for it would be painful to him to dispose of it to a grasping jeweler. «How much do you want?» asked Dumas, who was in no need of a watch. «Three hundred francs,» replied the caller. «That's nothing for it, but I shall be proud to think you own it.» On searching in his desk and pockets, the author found he had only five francs, which he handed to the distressed visitor, whom he told to call again in a few days and he would pay the rest. This was done, but the house was nearly bare of money. «Would a bill payable in a month do for you?» asked Dumas. «Certainly,» cried the young man, who was of Oriental race; «and I know a usurer who will discount it at a loss of only fifty francs.» The visitor was retiring when he was called back. «Since you know a money-lender who would discount my signature, could you get him to let me have one thousand francs for three months?» «Certainly.» «I see you are an intelligent fellow, and as I want a confidential secretary, perhaps you would like the place. You will have board and lodging, and not much to do beyond answering creditors and settling money affairs.» The vender of the watch accepted the offer. Interest and compound interest went on accumulating on the three hundred francs. Finally, on the day on which Dumas sold the copyright of all his works to Michel Lévy for twenty years, he gave the vender of the chronometer an order on that publisher for 300 francs plus 49,700 francs for accumulated compound interest. It is needless to add that the obliging person who took such high rates of usance was the secretary himself.

When he was for a summer at the Villa Catinat at Enghien, working morning, noon, and night for newspapers, publishers, and theaters, his house was an inn for amateur musicians. When one starved musician had appeased his hunger he told another of his luck, and that other passed on the tidings to another. Dumas did not enjoy the compan-

ionship of this mob. When credit was low and the cook had resigned, Dumas had often to prepare repasts himself. A great dish of his was rice with tomatoes, which he once improvised when the larder was nearly empty and about twenty musical parasites were waiting for *déjeuner* in the grounds of his villa. He had made a search for provisions, in the course of which he came upon a basket of tomatoes freshly culled in the garden, a bag of rice, and some ham. The tomatoes were quickly transformed into a scarlet gravy, in which the rice was then boiled. When it was dished it was garnished with rashers of the ham and hard-boiled eggs. There was excellent wine in the cellar, and the lake yielded some eels. In culinary matters Dumas's invention was as great as in writing novels. When he shot game or bought it, his cook always asked if he or she was to dress it. Dumas had often to break up his establishment and go traveling abroad to get rid of parasites who quartered themselves on him, and to keep out of a debtors' prison—an institution suppressed in France only toward the end of the Second Empire. But as soon as he was out of Paris he forgot all about his embarrassments. At his architectural folly of Monte Cristo, near St.-Germain-en-Laye, which he built at a cost of upward of 700,000 francs, and sold for 36,000 francs in 1848, Dumas had uninclosed grounds and gardens, which, with the house, afforded lodgings and entertainment not only to a host of Bohemian «sponges,» but to all the dogs, cats, and donkeys that chose to quarter themselves in the place. It was called by the neighbors «la maison de Bon Dieu.» There was a menagerie in the park, peopled by three apes; Jugurtha, the vulture, whose transport from Africa, whence Dumas fetched him, cost 40,000 francs (it would be too long to tell why); a big parrot called Duval; a macaw named Papa and another christened Everard; Lucullus, the golden pheasant; Cæsar, the game-cock; a pea-fowl and a guinea-fowl; Mysouf II., the Angora cat; and the Scotch pointer Pritchard. This dog was a character. He was fond of canine society, and used to sit in the road looking out for other dogs to invite them to keep him company at Monte Cristo. He was taken by his master to Ham to visit Louis Napoleon when a prisoner there. The latter wished to keep Pritchard, but counted without the intelligence of the animal in asking Dumas before his face to leave him behind. The pointer set up a howl so piteous that the governor of the prison withdrew the authorization he had given his captive to retain him.

Some of the dogs that Pritchard invited in stayed altogether; others remained only for a meal. One day Michel, the gardener, said to his employer, «Does monsieur know how many dogs there are in his property?» «No, Michel; I don't.» «Well, there are thirteen.» «An unlucky number. Take care that they don't all eat together, for if they did one would be sure to die in the year.» «Oh, it's not that that troubles me,» pursued Michel. «What is it, then?» «I'm thinking that all these brutes are able to devour in one day a whole ox, horns and all.» «You don't mean to say that they'd eat the horns?» «Oh, if monsieur takes the matter as a joke, I have nothing more to say.» «But I don't see any joke in it.» «Well, then, just let me lay the whip on twelve of them, and the house will be rid of them right away.» «Wait a bit, Michel. You see that all these dogs, in quartering themselves here, pay a compliment to the house. Give them a grand dinner to-morrow, and at the end of the dessert tell them to clear out. If they don't go, show severity.» Michel was withdrawing when Dumas relented. «Hold!» he cried. «You see, when the *bon Dieu* gives us riches, a fine house, and position, he also imposes charges upon us. Since the dogs—which, after all, are his creatures too—are in the house, I prefer that they stay. I don't believe that any one was yet ruined by what poor brutes ate. However, see that the number of thirteen is changed.» «Will monsieur let me turn one away, and then there will be only twelve?» «No; encourage Pritchard to invite another, which will bring them up to fourteen.» «But it will then be a pack.» «With all my heart, provided the dogs don't quarrel and go mad.» They never did bark and bite, but lived in fraternal kindness until Monte Cristo was sold. Dumas, before he left it, got thirteen friends to take as many dogs, and kept Pritchard, who died with him of old age.

Dumas could be pathetic only for a moment, and while describing an impression that wrung his own heart. If his facility of authorship had been less phenomenal he might have pondered more, dived deeper into the secret springs of human action, and become one of the greatest masters of fiction that ever lived. As it is, he is only a master entertainer. A convalescent whose brain is unequal to an effort of any kind, an idler on a wet day, a jaded

man of business, will find in most of Dumas's novels entertainment from beginning to end. His heroes were hereditary survivals of his father's military adventures and impressions subjectively produced. They are gay, venturesome, bereft of moral perceptions, yet in the main capital fellows and for the most part soldiers of the Revolution in the picturesque dress of the seventeenth-century cavaliers.

Dumas believed in apparitions, spirits, and unseen influences, but he respected other-worldliness too much to make them agents in his novels. He always believed that his father's spirit came, just after it had quitted the body, to say farewell to him in the house of a neighbor to which he was sent to pass the night. He felt warm breath on his face, and heard a voice say: «Alexandre, I have come to bid you adieu. Be a good boy and love your mother.» When his strength was sinking he told Mme. Petel that he felt the presence of both his parents, and that they were anxious for him to be done with life, he having exhausted everything that was worth living for. After the death of Adah Isaacs Menken in 1868, Dumas fell into a state of torpor, which went on increasing until he became chronically inert. The last year of his life was a continual sleep. One of his last remarks, on seeing a twenty-franc piece which had been taken out of his waistcoat pocket by his son, was: «How can they say I am a prodigal? I came to Paris with a napoleon in my pocket, and there it has been kept for nearly forty years.»

Dumas the elder had a mental nature that brought forth spontaneously and abundantly. He had the genius of strong dramatic situations, and there was a fine efflorescence of life in his characters. But it was not real life: it was something entirely evolved from the author's brain. He received his mental impetus from Scott, toyed with history, saw its pageantry, and penetrated into none of its philosophy. His works did not outlive him; that is to say,—except on the stage,—they do not interest this analytical generation. In literature nothing can bear the test of time that is not deeply thought as well as deeply felt and closely observed. Dumas did none of these three things. The man was much greater than his works, and he was a most interesting type of semi-tropical humanity and good-natured, genial savagery.

*Emily Crauford.*