

which she warbles forth all the night, in a sort of frenzy and intoxication. The nightingale is summoned and acquitted by the wise king, because the bird assures him that his vehement love for the rose drives him to distraction, and causes him to break forth into those passionate and touching complaints which are laid to his charge.

INNOCENT AMUSEMENT.—It is doing some service to humanity to amuse innocently; and they know very little of life who think people can bear to be always employed either in duties or meditations without any relaxation.

JUDGING CHARACTER.—Friends and enemies are many-sided, and, while we may correctly see parts of their character, other parts are veiled from us. Everyone has her virtues and vices, her excellences and shortcomings, and while much we see in her may be actually there, there is much more of which we never dream.

HOPE AND SLEEP.—Take from man hope and sleep, and you will make him the most wretched being upon earth.—*Kant.*

WOMAN'S COUNSEL.—In allusion to women, an Eastern author says, "Consult them, and do the contrary of what they advise." But this is not to be done merely for the sake of opposing them, nor when other advice can be had. "It is desirable for a man," says a learned Arab writer, "before he enters upon any important undertaking to consult ten intelligent persons among his particular friends; or, if he have not more than five such friends, let him consult each of them twice; or, if he have not more than one friend, he should consult him ten times at ten different visits; if he have not one to consult, let him return to his wife and consult her; and whatever she advises him to do, let him do the contrary; so shall he proceed rightly in his affairs and attain his object."

KINDNESS REPAID.—She who acteth kindly amongst her fellows will be requited for it. Kindness is not lost with God nor with man.

LEARNING BY HEART.—The best way to commit to memory anything of any length is to divide it into small parts, and to learn each part thoroughly before going on to that which succeeds it. Of course, it will be seen that a logical arrangement of the matter is of great assistance to the recollection. The best time for learning by heart is at night before retiring to rest (provided no heavy supper has been taken). On rising the following morning the memory should be called to account.

EASY TALKING.—To talk without effort is after all the great charm of talking.

A WORD TO CRITICS.—Coleridge's golden rule "until you understand an author's ignorance presume yourself ignorant of his understanding"—should be borne in mind by all writers who feel an itching in their forefinger and thumb to be carping at their wisers and betters.

COCOA AS FOOD.—As an article of food cocoa differs essentially from both tea and coffee. While only an infusion of those substances is used, leaving a large proportion of their total weight unconsumed, the entire substance of the cocoa seeds is prepared as an emulsion for drinking, and the whole is thus utilised within the system. While the contents of a cup of tea or coffee can only be regarded as stimulant in its effect, and almost entirely destitute of essential nutritive properties, a cup of prepared cocoa is really a most nourishing article of diet, as, in addition to the value of the theobromine it contains,

it introduces into the system no inconsiderable proportion of valuable nitrogenous and oleaginous elements.—*Encyclopædia Britannica.*

WOMAN'S JUDGMENT.—Take the first advice of a woman and not the second; women judge better by instinct than by reflection.—*Bescherelle ainé.*

PASSING AWAY.

All things we mortals call our own
Are mortal too, and quickly flown;
But could they all for ever stay,
We soon from them must pass away.

From the Greek.

NOT AT ALL MUSICAL.

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,

Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils:
The motions of his spirit are as dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted.

Shakespeare: "Merchant of Venice."

HUMAN NATURE.—A word which would irritate a princess would not in the least shock a shepherdess. But once angry, the passion of the princess and that of the shepherdess would be much the same.

MEN AND WOMEN.—If men have more prudence than women, women have less egotism than men.

GIRLS AND BOYS.—As regards the general number of the sexes born, the average for Europe gives a hundred and six boys for every hundred girls.

NOT WANTED.—A king of Persia sent to a tribe of Bedouins the caliph Mustapha, a very celebrated physician, who inquired on his arrival how they lived. "We never eat till we are hungry, and then not to repletion," was the answer. "I may retire then," said the doctor; "I have no business here."

A LADY-IN-WAITING IN AN IMPERIAL PALACE.

By NANETTE MASON.



one of the Ladies-in-Waiting to the Empress Josephine. I do not call her a genius, but she was an able woman, enthusiastic and romantic, of sterling principle and elevated sentiments, and in her "Memoirs" and "Letters," which have been published, there are so many shrewd observations and, indirectly, so many wholesome

lessons, that we may well talk for a little about who she was and about what she saw of the inner life of an Imperial Court.

Madame de Rémusat came of an aristocratic family—a family which, during the terrible years of the French Revolution, shared in the common lot and was involved in great anxiety and misfortune. She was born in 1780, and when barely sixteen years of age married M. de Rémusat, who belonged to the legal profession, a man twice her age. It was a happy marriage, blessed with two children, and for some years she led a quiet and enviable life, full of home affection.

From pleasant retirement she and her husband were at last drawn, and willingly enough it appears, for what with the confiscation of the property of Madame de Rémusat's father and the loss of a place in the magistracy held by M. de Rémusat, they had been reduced to rather narrow circumstances. It happened that they had grown intimate with Madame de Beauharnais, who, in 1796, became the wife of Bonaparte, and was afterwards known in history as the Empress Josephine. This led, in 1802, when Bonaparte was First Consul, to M. de Rémusat being appointed Prefect of the Palace and his wife Lady-in-Waiting to Madame Bonaparte.

The two were more Royalist than Republican in sympathies, and it at first seems odd that they should have readily cast in their lot with the new régime. But the clearest heads will be led astray sometimes; it was the case with the heads of most people in those exciting times. Both husband and wife were dazzled by the splendid achievements of Bonaparte. Madame de Rémusat records that she was deceived as to his character, and very happy to be deceived. Her youthful imagination—she was then only twenty-two—arrayed him in those qualities which she desired him to possess: we all, indeed, do the same with our own heroes.

She was a little flattered, too, by the attention paid to her by the First Consul. Being a good listener—a quality much admired by a man who was not given to pausing for a reply—he proclaimed her a woman of intellect before she had addressed to him two consecutive sentences, and she was almost the only lady at Court with whom he really took the trouble to converse.

Here is her portrait drawn by herself:—"I was twenty-two when I first came to Court; not pretty, yet not altogether unattractive, and I looked well in full dress. My eyes were fine, my hair was black, and I had good teeth; my nose and face were too large in proportion to my figure, which was good, but small. I had the reputation of being a clever woman, which was almost a reproach at Court. In point of fact, I wanted neither wit nor sense, but my warmth of feeling and of thought leads me to speak and act impulsively, and makes me commit errors which a cooler, even though less wise person would avoid."

The Court of the First Consul was not a numerous one, but little by little it grew in numbers and importance, Bonaparte gradually introducing novelties into his way of life that made his abode at last resemble the palace of a sovereign.

With these changes a change came over Madame de Rémusat's sentiments. She recovered the balance of her judgment and soon ceased to be satisfied with her lot. One thing after another occurred to disgust her with Court life, and it was impossible, she found, to take an interest in the trifles of what is called the great world.

After the death of the Duc d'Enghien—of which everyone has read—she first began to blush in secret at the chain she wore, and a little more experience landed her in weariness and disgust. "The older I grow," she wrote

to her husband, "the more I lean to a simple and quiet life," and she looked back with regret to the delights which had been showered by heaven on her early days. "Oh, happy, happy time of our youth," she exclaimed, "that flies so fast and that we waste so recklessly."

Her husband felt with her the sharp pain of vanishing illusions. He was a quiet man, slightly indolent, devoid of ambition, and free from any disposition to intrigue—a defect, says his wife, in every man who lives at Court.

Madame de Rémusat remained at Court till the divorce of the Empress, when she cast in her lot with Josephine, and accompanied her into her retirement. She rarely saw the Emperor after the divorce. The Empress died in 1814, and Madame de Rémusat survived her for seven years. She died on the 16th of December, 1821.

So long as the character and career of Bonaparte are of interest to the human race, Madame de Rémusat is likely to be remembered for her "Memoirs" and "Letters." To speak first of the "Letters;" these were mostly all written to her husband when, in the train of the Emperor, he was absent from Paris.

They are characterised by deep affection; indeed, expressions of tenderness are perhaps too frequent to please the ordinary reader. But we must always remember the relation of the writer to her correspondent, and the circumstances in which they were written, and that we ourselves are never wearied of either hearing or of saying, "I love you" over and over again.

A greater objection to the letters is that, so far as the doings of the world were concerned, they were written under reserve. Circumstances are suppressed, and a gloss is sometimes put upon them which they are hardly entitled to bear. This arose from the fact that, under the Emperor, letters were tacitly considered to be sent open. People in those days were obliged to be almost unbearably discreet, and none dared to write freely lest their epistles should fall into the hands of the authorities and so land them in trouble.

The letters show us the capital in the absence of Bonaparte. We see Paris in low spirits and financial difficulties. The city is dull and unoccupied. The conscription has proved a source of irritation, and all are alarmed for the future. Then there are special and personal cares. People with sons in the army tremble for the fate of those dear to them. Wives are anxious for their husbands. "Glory," writes Madame de Rémusat, "is a poor solace for headache, and the tears of women record the triumphs of masculine pride."

The war makes a rise in prices, and money is hard to get. "I don't know," she writes, "how I shall pay my debts." In 1805 she has to pay ninety francs to obtain gold for a thousand franc banknote. The great Court officials have their salaries paid with irregularity and delay almost incredible: they alternate between splendour and poverty. Every day seems to increase the general reserve and suspicion. In the history of the campaigns of Bonaparte we have glory enough; in the "Letters" of Madame de Rémusat we see the price that was paid for it.

Madame de Rémusat's "Memoirs" are of a more plain-spoken order than her "Letters." With her woman's pen she had been in the habit of taking notes at Court of all that was going on, and these notes might have been published for the benefit of posterity, but, unfortunately, after the return of the Emperor from Elba, in a moment of fear lest the manuscript should be discovered and used to the disadvantage of her husband and herself, she destroyed it.

In 1818, however, a strong desire took hold of her to record her impressions again, and she set about the composition of her "Memoirs." In writing these she says, "I am like a person who having spent ten years at the galleys is asked to write an account of how he passed his time." The "Memoirs" were published a few years ago, edited by her grandson. It is a pity that she was prevented by death from continuing them beyond 1808, for one would have liked much to have had from her at least the narrative of the divorce of Josephine. As it is, they are full of piquant revelations, and of these we shall try to give the reader some idea in the following paragraphs.

The central figure naturally is Bonaparte, the necessary man of his time, and one of the most remarkable characters who ever played a part on the stage of the world.

Madame de Rémusat does justice to his strength of will, his art of management, his vast mental capacity, but makes it quite clear that as regards true greatness and nobility of soul he was mean and contemptible. "I have never known him," she says, "to admire, I have never known him to comprehend a fine action. He always regarded every indication of a good feeling with suspicion, and did not hesitate to say that he recognised the superiority of a man by the greater or less dexterity with which he practised the art of lying." To goodness he paid very little attention, his firm conviction being that to take advantage of the evil in the world is by far the best way to get on. In his contemptuous view of humanity he held that there are only two springs of action—vanity and self-interest—higher motives he could not understand.

Selishness was at the bottom of his character. Everything had to give way to his will, and with the words "My policy," he crushed the thoughts, feelings, and inclinations of all about him. "I am not an ordinary man," he used to say, "and the laws of morals and of custom were not made for me." "I am a person apart: I will not be dictated to by any one."

When she comes to speak of his heart, Madame de Rémusat says she almost imagines that in his case the heart was left out. Perhaps, the truth was that he succeeded in suppressing it completely. He was always too much taken up with himself to be influenced by sentiments of affection, no matter of what kind. "What is love?" he said one day. "A passion which sets all the universe on one side, and on the other the beloved object. I certainly am not of a nature to give myself up to anything so exclusive."

The Emperor despised women, and beginning with contempt one very seldom ends with love. Measuring everything by brute force, he regarded the weakness of women as an unanswerable proof of their inferiority, and the power they have acquired in society he held to be an intolerable usurpation. He was convinced that their influence had been harmful to the Kings of France, and made up his mind that at his Court they should be strictly ornamental. No women ever ruled there.

Often he was very rude to the ladies of his Court, saying things in the worst possible taste, and in the most offensive manner. Madame de Chévreuse, one of the ladies-in-waiting, for example, was rudely taunted by him with having red hair.

"Very likely," she answered, "but no man ever complained of it before."

His personal habits were peculiar. When dressing, if a garment did not please him, he would sometimes throw it into the fire. He never made use of any perfume except Eau de Cologne, but of that he would get through sixty bottles a month. To sprinkle himself

thoroughly with Eau de Cologne he thought a very healthy practice. At dinner he had all the courses placed before him at once, and ate paying no attention to his food, but helping himself to whatever was at hand, sometimes taking preserves or creams before touching the more substantial dishes.

Of the Empress Josephine, Madame de Rémusat says that, without being precisely pretty, she possessed many personal charms, and to these were united extreme kindness of heart, a remarkably even temper, and great readiness to forget any injury that had been done to her. She was not a person of remarkable intelligence, and her education had been a good deal neglected, but she possessed true natural tact and readily found pleasant things to say, and her memory was good—"a useful quality for those in high station."

"Unhappily," says Madame de Rémusat, "she was deficient in depth of feeling and education of mind. She was fickle, easy to move and easy to appease, incapable of lasting feeling, of sustained attention, and although her greatness did not turn her head, neither did it educate her. Bonaparte exercised an evil influence over her, for he inspired her with contempt for morality, with a large share of his own characteristic suspicion, and he taught her the art of lying, which they both practised with skill and effect."

Her time was passed with great regularity. Dulness seemed unknown to her, and yet she never opened a book, never took up a pen, and hardly worked at anything. Love of dress in her case might almost be called a passion, and a great deal of time was devoted to minute personal embellishments, including paint.

She changed every article of her attire three times a day, and never wore a pair of stockings twice. Of shawls she possessed three or four hundred, keeping one round her shoulders all the morning, and "wearing it," says Madame de Rémusat, "with a grace I have never seen equalled." The quietest party, the smallest dance, furnished an excuse for ordering a new dress, in spite of the quantity of finery stored in each of the palaces, for she had a mania for hoarding.

This devotion to the toilet one might have expected would have died out after the divorce, but it lasted to the end. "On the day of her death, thinking that the Emperor of Russia would perhaps come to see her, she desired her attendants to dress her in an elegant mourning gown. She breathed her last sigh arrayed in pink satin and with ribbons of the same colour."

The insight we obtain, both in Madame de Rémusat's "Memoirs" and "Letters," into the life of the Imperial Court, is most interesting. It was a troublesome, restless, not to say ridiculous, existence, and she came, as we have seen, to be very wearied of it.

She was an observant spectator, and had no sort of sympathy with those who were most successful as courtiers—those who had studied the art of making themselves necessary, and never suffered any feeling to divert their attention from the minutiae which constituted their duties. "Anyone," she says, "who dwelling in a palace wishes to exercise her faculties of thinking or feeling must be unhappy. Nothing is so fatal to success there as being actuated by conscientious scruples which one takes no trouble to conceal."

The intrigue of the Court saddened her; so did the jealousy, the longing to supplant others, the fear of being stopped on the road, or of finding others preferred to oneself. She was shocked, as every sensible woman would have been, at the heartlessness, the skilful and unskilful adulation, the flattery, the dissimula-

tion, the vindictiveness, the self-seeking, the ingratitude, the suspicions, the disputes about precedence, and the falsehoods on a gigantic scale which marked this little world. No action was supposed by anyone belonging to it to be without a motive, and the worst motives were the most firmly believed in.

Things were not so bad before Bonaparte became Emperor, but after that event one could see to perfection the effect which a sudden rise produces on minds of a certain class. Vanity, then, became the ruling passion of everyone belonging to the Court, of both sexes and all ages. Everyone hoped to rise still higher, and was in good or bad spirits according as his or her newborn projects of ambition were fulfilled or disappointed.

A fever of etiquette seized on all in the Imperial Palace. This was a pleasing subject with the Emperor, especially when he invented the etiquette himself. A code was drawn up for the use of the new Court, and that code was enforced with the strictness of martial law. "Ceremonies," says Madame de Rémusat, "were gone through as 'by beat of drum; everything was done at double-quick time; and the perpetual hurry, the constant fear that Bonaparte inspired, added to the unfamiliarity of a good half of his courtiers

with formalities of the kind, rendered the Court dull rather than dignified."

No one found the routine of the palace at all diverting. On one occasion, during a residence at Fontainebleau—one of the most interesting episodes of Court life under the Empire—all seemed to suffer from *ennui*. The Emperor did so himself, and often complained of the fact, resenting the dull and constrained silence, which, in reality, no other than he had imposed. Madame de Rémusat heard him say, "It is very odd; I have brought together a lot of people at Fontainebleau; I wanted them to amuse themselves. I arranged every sort of pleasure for them, and here they are with long faces, all looking dull and tired."

"That," replied M. de Talleyrand, who was present, "is because pleasure cannot be summoned by beat of drum, and here, just as you are with the army, you always seem to be saying, 'Come! ladies and gentlemen! Forward! march!'"

The idleness of their existence made every day seem a hundred hours long, as it would to any of us if we had nothing to do but wait till it should please a great man to come in or go out. Nothing tires like waiting, and the patience of the energetic is soon exhausted.

The more energy, the less patience, as a rule.

No wonder Madame de Rémusat looked on the restraints of Court life as a sad infliction. She saw clearly enough that happiness is to be found only in a position which allows of the complete development of one's feelings and in the freedom of all one's thoughts.

She had a fine position. "The gifts of the Emperor," she says, "which were sold rather than freely bestowed, had surrounded us with luxury on which he insisted. I was still young, and I found myself able to gratify the tastes of youth, and to enjoy the pleasures of a brilliant station. I had a beautiful house; I had fine diamonds; every day I might vary my elegant dress; a chosen circle of friends dined at my table, and every theatre was open to me; there was no *fête* given in Paris to which I was not invited, and yet even then an inexplicable cloud hung over me."

When the great catastrophe came, she and her husband were in a sense ruined, but it set their hearts and minds at liberty. They could think as they pleased, and act as they pleased, and that, girls, is more often the privilege of the obscure than of those who make a great show, and are reckoned among the favoured ones of the earth.

HER OWN CHOICE.

By RUTH LAMB.

CHAPTER XX.

DURING the conversation between Hilda and her uncle on the subject of using the trust money to keep the Brinnington workpeople employed, Mrs. Oakley had remained silent. She was no uninterested listener. On the contrary, her ears were strained to catch every word, her thoughts wholly occupied with the discussion. She knew, even far better than did Hilda, how great a trial the present state of business was to her husband. She could estimate, as no other person could, the strength of the temptation presented to him by the girl from without, and seconded from within by the pleadings of his own kindly heart.

The silence was broken



VISITING THE HOMES OF THE UNEMPLOYED.