AN ALPHABET
OF FAMOUS OR NOTEWORTHY WOMEN, FOR OUR YOUNG FRIENDS TO RECOGNISE.

A. The gracious wife of an uncooth and charlism
Who answered rudely all who dared to say a
He was as an angel of a mountain-chief did rest,
Who wore a fine feather and his household held the
Mark the wild's action prompton, her quick and
She rose at once the hostile chief in peace to
And offer him the rich supplies of food she brought,
It had been applied at his feet.
Her beauty charms her eye, her eloquence his ear;
She interminably saved her husband's life.
And when soon after he died, the mount
Brought to the lovely widow to become his wife.
To save her husband's fall, engaged in foreign
She made an offering of her hair at Venus;
Her treasures still are known amongst the brilliant
And, emblem of her faithful love, resplendent
C. There was a period of frenzy, guilt, and fear,
When no man's life was safe amongst his friends.
Held demagogues, demanding "Death," went far and
And cursed the people to the rage that madness
The stricken nation, paralysed, stood mute and
She thought of the first woman of the bereaved
Whose ready fingers shaped all garments for their need.
Was lying dead; and bitter lamentations told
Tired of courts and country life, the Saxon Queen
D. She dreaded the heart's friend of the bereaved
A story elegied, then came the savage Dane.
Whose course was marked by spoliation, fire, and
But since this rose there our glorious Gothic race
When once the sainted Queen's monastic
F. "Halt! who goes there? Your pass, ere you
Here is your passport, sign," the foremost rider
You said farewell, as well as for my servant John;
And with him, on the pillion, Betty Burko, my
They pass the troops unquestioned, but in silent
Lost some untoward chance should stay their progress
For Roger Betty Burko's thick mailer was a head
On which a price of Thirty Thousand Pounds
Came to the aid of his banner, Theit and her
To help the suffering sailors and to bring them
A vessel wholly wrecked lies yonder. You fast and
You have often faced our rough sea and felt it fear;
Fate, summons the boat, and let us go and try
To help the suffering sailors and to bring them
But at once the boat is launched: its brave but
Dash boldly through the waters of the seething
Now on the billow's crest, now down and lost to
Their struggle on to reach the point where they would be.
Upon aEEhing rock eight shipwrecked men are
Fear, horror, hopelessness, despair at all aid,
And scarce believing that they could really have come.
Thus rescued by one seaman and a youthful maid.
H. In ancient history a model wife we see
Performing willingly the good that she can do,
Provided, as she supposed, as she ought to be.
Above all, never speaking till she's spoken to by
The noble English lady of the town of
She gave the strange audience and his project heard.
Then granted what he craved... abundant, full supplies
Without a further story than his simple word.

MONTHS ROLLED AWAY; she heard of him no more,
But thought that he was lost, with all his little
In triumph he returned from an unrecorded
To launch a new and richer empire at her feet.
Scarcely emerged from childhood she was made
Ignorant of that ambition which had wrought her rise,
And feeling no regret for what she might have seen;
She lamented and blameworthy on the scaffold dies.
And now we see you, any listener, the story
When, on a certain night, the King and Court
All locks, all bolts, all bars were torn from every
So that no hindrance should be given to their
The journey o'er, the King and Queen arrived,
And easily to enjoy the supper their attendants bring.
Perceiving he had cruel feet against him languid,
Till angry voices utter loudly, "Where's the King?"
Then did a high-born damsel of the Queen's own
CLING TO THE STAPLES OF THE DOOR TO HOLD IT FAST.
OH, TENDER ARM! WEAK HAND! I SELL-SACRIFICE HOW SAID.
Her arm is broken and the murderers rush forth.
The fearless, high-sounding of an invincible band,
Forced the invader's assailants patiently to bear,
Into the offering of the State, with lively hand,
She counts the last as yet she is able to wear.
Winning in voice and manner, beautiful as May,
Holstered by her people for her courage's sake,
Which prompts her against the unjust treachery to
Their timid, hesitating legislators mildly.
M. The monarch's only child, acknowledged as the
Queen; yet longings of the young no longer hold;
A foreign noble claimed the throne which she had been
Installed, with hommage paid, by those who now rebelled.
Battle succeeded battle with such waste of life,
That famine followed what the war had thus begun.
Till, after eight long years of never-ceasing strife,
A peaceful treaty gave the kingdom to her son.
N. A strange fantastic notion for a Queen to have—
She ordered an old historian's narrative.
Her body should not lie within a common grave,
But in a last resting place where she is safe.
With this inscription graven: "Here a treasure lies,
Let no successor seek it, save in dire need."
The conqueror broke the tomb to seize these great supplies.
And found a scroll of scornful scathing for his head.
D. Beside the Emperor, her brother, she reclines
To hear the latest poem that the poet wrote.
She weeps in silence at the sweet but mournful lines
That within her sorrow a responsive note.
Her son, of many virtues and of promise rare,
Chosen as the successor to the Imperial throne,
Is dead; and in her mother's grief and dull despair
She tells the poet's lamentations to her own.
Three times she noosed the poet, at the last.
Contrasts the youth's bright prospects, his career to bring.
But when he sadly utters, "Thou Marcellus, wise,
She speaks in bitter anguish and excessive grief.
P. The town is won! The victor's wondrous eyes of fire
Are fixed upon the prisoners before him placed
To hear their doom—that they like felons shall expire.
When through the throng a noble lady comes in haste;
Less known at the conqueror's knee, her voice is heard;
Banding her earnest accents, "Set thy capervs free!"
Yet brave men never dream; dishonour 'tis that's feared,
And that dishonour is not theirs but rests on thee.
Let not vindictive action trenched thus thy fame,
Surely our English laughers would have done the same.
Oh, let thy pity rest upon them! Spare their lives!
Q. Exemplary in every phase of womanhood—
As daughter, wife, and mother has she ever been;
Revered abroad as great, beloved at home as good.
Welcome reliefs rise whenever she is seen.
R. The faithful wife, his only friend in all that Court
Who dared to aid him in his great and urgent need.
Not his, but with pen in hand, she wrote the full
Report—of cautious, counsels, judicious, a true tale indeed.
S. A celebrated Queen, in very ancient days,
Whose grace and loveliness were held beyond compare.
She made her subjects by their skill and labour wise.
To snatch the cap from off your head in yonder
And after bearing it aloft once more he stopped
To list to the tale that XX was now about to
"We'll quit this paltry town, where nothing can be done;
And seek that busy city on the southern hills."
War—she followed the life of that poor lad they had
Put a solitary beacon on the high shelf
Her enterprise and energy good fortune bring;
He rises, step by step, to honour and renown,
Till in that city he is chosen for its king.
A young princess, living in St. Michael's
Desirous to preach the Gospel to a heathen race
With many maidens-in-waiting (more than one woman
She started on her way to find the appointed place.
Embarking in their summer vessels bright and gay,
They made a tedious voyage the foreign shore.
But when the fierce barbarians checked their onward way
"What is all this gentle messengery of peace was blase of
V. A famous poetess, some centuries ago
The friend of all the great and learned of her
Time;
Yet softened and inspired by pietie sublime.
Her days of married happiness were early over.
W. Her husband in a famous battle lost his life,
That battle where, "Excepting honour, all was lost."
W. Oh, wise and witty woman, did you not tell me
Those fine wits may take their time, and pass their
This is my wedding-day; the morning of my
Oh, Lord, do not bring me sorrow and despair.
When the day arrived the Earl that dress should wear,
He passed unnoticed by his barred and guarded door.
But late on, when evening came and guards were changed,
The royal Mistress Betty issued forth, and said—
"My lord would sleep, let none go in," was thus arranged.
So time was gained and his escape securely sealed.
X. For many generations I have been maligned
Because I disapproved my husband's careless ways.
Tis hard a married woman may not speak her mind.
For if she sometimes blames, yet also can be right.
I did my duty, as a wife should ever do—
Was not extravagant, my house was always clean.
Loved my husband—his way he loved me too—
Yet domesticated I had never been.
Tis true my hasty temper may have sometimes
To angry words against his passive nature may have
But is it, therefore, that my name goes down
As wise, discreet, and skilled to all the listening world?
The fair-hearted Queen, who held her foes at bay.
She fought for empire, for her people's sake.
But, overcome in battle, she was borne away
To adorn the victor's triumph through the streets of Rome.

XIMENA.
NOTES TO THE ALPHABET OF CELEBRATED WOMEN.

A. Abigail. See 1 Samuel, xxv.

B. Berenice, wife of Polyemus Eutyches, King of Erythrae. The astrologers foretold her the flattery of naming a constellation
Coma Berenice, in rememberance of the beauty of her beautiful hair.

C. Charlotte Corday, the French patriot, as the bloodthirsty tyrant, Marat, by stabbing him while in his bath, July 14th, 1793.
She was guillotined July 17th.

D. Dorcas. See Acts xi. 38-40.

E. Etheldreda, wife of Oswy, King of Northumbria, founded a monastery building in the Isle of Ely, 673, and became the first Abbess. In 870 it was destroyed by the Danes, and in 970 re-founded as a Benedictine Abbey. The present church was commenced in 1085 and made the cathedral in 1100.

F. Flora MacDonald, who accomplished the escape of Prince Charles from the island of South Uist, where he was surrounded by the English soldiery seeking him. In Sir Walter Scott’s Tales of a Grandfather is a most interesting narrative of the Prince’s subsequent wanderings.

G. Grace Darling, daughter of the lighthouses keeper on the Longstone, one of the Farne Islands. In September, 1838, the Forfarshire, bound from Hull to Dundee, struck on another of the rocks. Of sixty-three persons on board fifty-five were drowned, and only by the heroic efforts of Darling and his daughter were the other eight saved from the same fate.

H. Hadassah (myrtle). See the Book of Esther.

I. Isabella of Castile, wife of Ferdinand of Aragon. By her liberality only was Columbus enabled to discover the New World.

J. Lady Jane Grey.

K. Katherine Douglas, who thus endeavoured to save herself against the conspirators led by Sir Robert Graham, who had assembled to murder James I. in the Dominican monastery at Perth. February 16, 1567.

L. Louise, Queen of Prussia during the war against Napoleon. The patriotic gift of her jewels as a contribution towards the national defences was an example followed by all the ladies of Prussia, and led to the manufacture of the artistic ornaments in wrought from as memorial of their public spirit, which are known as “Berlin ornaments.”

M. The Empress Maud, or Matilda.

N. Nicnosis, Queen of Babylon. Herodotus relates that Cyrus caused her tomb to be opened, expecting to find great treasure; he found a scroll bearing these words, “Had not thine averce been insatiable thou wouldst not have violated the monuments of the dead.”

O. Octavia, the sister of the Emperor Augustus, and mother of Marcullus.

P. Philopolis of Hauran, wife of Edward III, before Calais.

Q. The Countess.

R. Lady Rachel Russell, who acted as secretary to her husband, Lord William Russell, during his trial, falsely accused of being concerned in the Rye House Plot and condemned to death.

S. Semiramis.

T. Tansquil, wife of Lucas Tarquinious Priscus, the fifth King of Rome.

U. Saint Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins.

V. Vittoria Colonna, the friend of Michael Angelo, admired by Ariosto, and the most famous poetess of Italy.

W. Winifred, Countess of Pembroke, who accomplished her husband’s escape from the Tower after the Jacobiterising of 1715. Having chosen the tallest woman of her acquaintance for her attendant, she carried out her plan by familiarising the guards with their appearance, constantly entering the prison or issuing from it, sometimes together, sometimes singly, bestowing large gifts of money among the men and bewitching their sympathy in her affection, for the Earl lay under sentence of death. It was therefore only natural when he, disguised as Mrs. Betty Mills, followed the Countess past the guards on the very day previous to that appointed for his execution, they both should cover their faces as it in bitter grief for a coach was waiting to convey them to the vessel ready to sail, and on board of her they reached safety in France. Meanwhile Mrs. Betty had not been idle, but collecting all materials that she could find, she so arranged the bed as to convey to the mind of the officer on the guard, when he made his nightly round, that the prisoner was safely asleep.

X. Xantippe, the wife of Socrates.

Z. Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, conquered by the Emperor Aurelianus.