

bridal dress to appear in, for she knew its spotless white became her.

Buckingham gazed a long look on her as he led her to the presence of her husband. She trembled violently, and buried her face in her veil, as though to hide her husband's face from her view till the last minute; but, as she approached closer, her knees refused to support her, and she sank trembling into outstretched arms, and those arms were King Charles's!

"Henrietta, our consort, look up!" said a voice that seemed to act as magic on her; for she opened her eyes, and fixed them, 'midst the sweetest blushes, on him.

She looked from Buckingham to Maguire, and then on her consort; and tears, but different from what she had lately shed, fell thickly from her eyes, and they were kissed away by her disguised lover, Prince Charles, and King Charles I.

"Maguire, thou naughty one! I will punish thee: tell me, now, where is thy lover?"

"That was him, my Queen; but I throw him from me: I would not now accept him;" and a tear trickled from beneath her long silken lashes.

"Right, right, girl!" said Henrietta; but Buckingham, the usual haughty smile curling his mouth, repeated—"Right," and turned on his heel.

Charles was not in the humour to sue for an explanation, and the scene passed.

"We will be crowned to-morrow, Buckingham," said he; and he sealed the promise on the lips of his wife. Maguire soon after became the bride of one of the King's gentlemen, and continued in her loved Queen's train; and her simple, light-hearted manner soothed the unfortunate Henrietta's soul in more trying moments than had yet passed over her youthful head.*

* It is in the recollection of every reader of history, that at the period in which the above little sketch is laid, Prince Charles and Buckingham travelled through France in disguise, under the names of Jack and Tom Smith—that they went to a ball at Paris, where the Prince first saw the Princess Henrietta—that they were received at the court of Spain with all possible demonstrations of respect—and that Buckingham filled the whole city of Madrid with adventures, serenades, challenges, and jealousy. D'Israeli, in his *Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles the First*, throws considerable light on the secret history of the proposed Spanish match, and also on that of the courtship and marriage of Prince Charles with the royal Henrietta. D'Israeli, too, is, in some respects, an apologist for Buckingham. "A royal favourite," he observes, "whatever he may be, has the two great divisions of mankind arrayed in hostility against him: the great, into which class he has been obtruded; and the obscure, which he has forever abandoned—and still his most formidable enemy has usually been found in himself. Many have been torn to pieces by the triumphant people; for whether the unhappy man be a Sejanus, a Marshal d'Ancre, or the Pensionary De Witt, the populace in every age, agitated by the same hatred of the abuses of power, imagine that they are satiating their vengeance on the single state-victim which has been cast out to them. We may, however, be struck by this curious fact, that there is hardly one of these renowned favourites but has found an unimpassioned apologist: and on a calmer investigation than their contemporaries were capable of exercising, they have been considerably exculpated from the errors, the crimes imputed to them, and some better designs have been manifested in these condemned men, than the passions of their enemies could discover.

Good manners is the art of making easy those people with whom we converse—whoever makes the fewest persons uneasy, is the best bred in the company.

HINDOO PASTIMES.

AMONGST the various pastimes resorted to for the purpose of wiling away the hours which the sultry heats of Hindoostan doom the inhabitants to pass, in what might otherwise prove wearisome confinement, within doors, there is none of which the natives, particularly of the higher classes both male and female, Mussulman and Hindoo, seem more fond than that of listening to entertaining stories. Of these, under the several names of *Charitra*, *Keest'hee*, and *K'hannic*, many are legends of the devout lives, austere practices, and instructive discourses of celebrated Durweish, Fakirs, and other religious characters; many relate the adventures of the most remarkable personages—rulers, warriors, and statesmen—who figure in their annals; some partake of the romantic cast, which distinguishes the well-known "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," while others are simple fables, or mere tales, which serve the purpose of lighter amusement. Scarcely is there a zennannah in which one or more women companions are not entertained, whose chief business is to tell such stories and fables to their lady employer, while she is composing herself to sleep; and, among persons of rank and opulence, the males also pretty generally indulge in the same practice, of being talked to sleep by their male attendants; and it is a certain recommendation to the favour of the employer, of either sex, when one of these dependants has acquired the happy knack of "telling the k'hannic"—fable—with an agreeable voice and manner. There are, also, many individuals who practise this species of story-telling as a profession, deriving their means of subsistence, principally from the exercise of their powers of amusing in this way; parties assembled on festive occasions, in the private residences of persons in easy circumstances, or in the inns, and places of entertainment for travellers, or at the great public fairs: and the more they embellish the narrative with brilliant flights of their own creative genius, the greater their merit in the judgment of their hearers."

GROTTO OF SAMOUN.

NOT far from Manfalout, and towards the end of the long marsh which closes Upper Egypt, on the plateau of the Arabic chain, and close to the surface of the ground, is the entrance to this grotto, still but little known to Europeans, and excavated in the centre of the mountain by the unaided hand of nature. It consists of a suite of vast and lofty saloons, connected with passages so narrow, that you are forced to crawl on your knees, and separated from one another by partitions of stalactites, which are now blackened by the smoke of the torches, and the soot which accumulated during a long conflagration; but which originally must have shone with all the brilliancy of crystal. It is a serious and profound retreat, of which the termination, after a four or five hours' investigation, has not yet been discovered. At a period too remote to be known, the mummies of crocodiles, of all sizes, have been carried into this gloomy cavern; the largest are ranged in successive layers, from the ground to the roof of the immense halls; those of middling size in separate packages of fifty and sixty, intermingled here and there with human mummies which were once gilt, and large strata of rosin, in which are piled up, in all directions, millions of small crocodiles. A curious circumstance is the enormous quantity of linen in which these animals are wrapped; several vessels might be loaded with it. These melancholy remains are clothed better than the Egyptian peasantry of our days. Whether from accident or design, fire was set to these dried linens, and burnt slowly for several years. At the sight of the heap of ashes which the fire has left, we conclude all has been destroyed; on looking at what remains, we imagine that nothing has been lost.