

## "PERSONAL INTELLIGENCE" FIFTY YEARS AGO.

BY ELLEN MACKAY HUTCHINSON.

IN March, 1839, Mr. N. P. Willis began the publication in New York of *The Corsair*, "a Gazette of Literature, Art, Dramatic Criticism, Fashion, and Novelty." While it had some special contributions of its own, it was chiefly used as the vehicle for conveying the cream of the foreign periodicals to the American public. It was, in fact, a saucy pirate, flying the black flag with the most admirable frankness and coolness. It was, for the short time it lived, a good thing of its kind—gay, gossiping, and tasteful. There are still a few bound volumes of the paper, hidden away in great libraries, but it is marked as "very scarce."

A journey through *The Corsair* of 1839-40 brings up the people of that time with picturesque vividness, for Willis was fond of personalities, and never hesitated about copying and writing them. Here in the first number stands Rachel "—, seventeen years old, rather tall, pale, and thin, with a striking though melancholy expression of countenance; she uses little action, rarely moves her arms, evinces the deepest emotions, and elicits deafening applause in passages where the ranting and gesticulation of other celebrated actresses have scarcely extorted an exclamation." In the next number poor L. E. L. rises from the pen of the editor. Looking for a slender, melancholy-eyed poetess in a London drawing-room, he approaches a table "where a smart, lively, gayly dressed girl seemed entertaining a half-dozen persons with some merry game. Her laugh was more hearty than refined, but I soon found it infectious, and though I had not the honor of an acquaintance with a single person of the circle, I could not resist a very keen enjoyment of the lady's wit and humor. She was telling fortunes with apple seeds, and after I had admired for some time the simplicity with which so fashionable a party found means of entertainment, our hostess accidentally approached and electrified me by addressing the merry fortune-teller as Miss Landon." The bright face bore no trace of melancholy; her lips were sharply cut, but still expressive of affectionateness, and nothing was striking in her countenance except that at a flash of wit there was a lift of her eyelids and a gleam of bright-

ness through her eyes, like the effect of a lighted window suddenly thrown open on the night. Her own repartee was expressed under a sort of appealing gravity and *espièglerie* infinitely amusing.

There is a glimpse near of the venerable Earl Grey, who, after dressing for dinner, sits down on the sofa in his dressing-room, whereupon the great picture of his wife and babies hanging over his head falls from its nail and wounds his forehead. Here is a pretty little paragraph from Paris concerning the King of Bavaria, who "lately made a decree that none in his dominions should wear mustaches except military men. The King, travelling into Italy under the *incognito* of Count d'Au, was stopped by his own guard at the frontiers, and ordered to shave off his own magnificent hirsute appendages. Nothing but a declaration of his rank saved him from the calamity."

The untold wealth of the Iron Duke is illustrated in the next item, referring to the *trousseau* of Lady Elizabeth Hay, the nineteen-year-old bride of the Marquis of Douro. "Wellington, having found in his cabinets quantities of diamonds which he had forgotten or never thought of till now, has declared that the bride shall have them all. Amongst them is an order given to his Grace by Louis XVIII., worth \$250,000." A great deal of wealth to forget!

By-and-by comes the announcement of Lady Bulwer's novel of *Cheveley*, and the editor writes: "Sir Edward married a pale, delicate, poetical, consumptive girl, who soon after marriage grew rosy, large, haughty, imperious, and splendid. A handsomer or more showy woman than Lady Bulwer could scarce be found in the world, but it would appear, by her own showing, that her temper did not improve with her health." The story of the marriage is told elsewhere in the volume. "Miss Wheeler was the daughter of a most worthy and respectable widow, living some three years ago in May Fair. Mrs. Wheeler was early left a widow with one daughter, a pale, handsome, slender girl, who chanced to attract the attention of Edward Bulwer, then fresh from college. The attachment was a romantic one, and soon discovered and strenuously



opposed by Mr. Bulwer's mother. We have many times listened to the story of their meeting to drink tea with a sympathizing lady who occupied a three pair of stairs back in Fleet Street, and who ultimately succeeded in marrying two persons who were neither, as she then thought, long for this world. The aristocratic mother was soon reconciled to the match, but, as the novel shows, the daughter-in-law continued to live at swords' points with every member of the family, her husband included. Bulwer bore her 'incompatibility' as long as he could in form, and finally bought a beautiful house in the country, not far from London, furnished it exquisitely, and supplying her every earthly want but that of his own society, left her to expend her eccentricities on her dogs, which, to the number of a round dozen, are her perpetual companions. They (the dogs) are immortalized, collectively and individually, in *Chevelley*."

On the next sheet is a story of Mr. Mathias, the queer little old author of the *Pursuits of Literature*. A few days before he had been dining at a Neapolitan café, and a violent shower beginning to fall, Sir William Gull observed that it was raining cats and dogs; as he spoke, a dog rushed in at one door of the café, and a frightened cat at the other. "God bless my soul," exclaimed Mathias, gravely, "so it does, so it does! Who would have believed it?" This exclamation excited no little merriment; and Mathias resented it by not speaking to the laughers for some days.

Will it not stir the memory of some ancient opera-goer to read in a Paris letter of that incomparable tenor who knew how to "charm the souls in purgatory"? Behold Mario, Chevalier de Candia, in his youth: a young man about twenty-two, with handsome features, large, black, sparkling eyes, well-shaped limbs, stature a little above the middle size, graceful and gentlemanly carriage, and a voice all that could be desired in compass, flexibility, melody, freshness, limpidness. The royal family of Naples go to the opera; and one reads that Princess Christine looked exceedingly pretty, and many a furtive glance was cast toward her—a homage that did not seem offensive to her feelings, if one might judge by her countenance, although it is strongly disapproved by the elders of the family. Curious sto-

ries are told on this subject at Naples; and it is asserted that more than one young noble has been advised to travel for his health because detected in looking too often toward the pretty Christine. For contrast comes a "personal" about Marie Louise, widow of Napoleon, who comes visiting Naples. A most uninteresting-looking woman is she; her face must always have been plain, for neither the features nor expression are such as constitute good looks. The first are truly Austrian—the nose rather flat, the forehead anything but intellectual, the eyes unmeaning, of a very light blue, and the mouth defective. Her figure is bad, and there is neither elegance nor dignity in her air or manner.

Another woman as disenchanting walks through the ballroom of the Tuileries on an evening of this same April—the Countess Guiccioli. "She was a woman to whom you would involuntarily apply the descriptive word 'dumpy.' She had not even the merit of an Italian black eye, for hers was of a light blue; and as for the hair, it was auburn horridly approaching to red. Her form was short and thickish, and as for her bearing, it was extremely unimpressive." In a column of personal news is a joke lately made by Sydney Smith. "On this witty clergyman observing Lord Brougham's one-horse carriage, he remarked to a friend, alluding to the 'B' surrounded by a coronet on the panel, 'There goes a carriage with a B outside and a *wasp* within.'"

Queen Victoria is pictured in many ways all through the year; oftenest as the "pretty young Queen," "her pretty Majesty of England," and "the high-born maiden." Mr. Sully's portrait of the royal girl comes to New York, and the editor goes to see it. "There she stands revealed before you," he says, "a maiden youth, of an aspect so lovely and innocent, and with a step so firm yet sylph-like, that, republicans as we are, we were half inclined to bow the knee in homage." In this year the young lady is married.

It is gravely related that Prince Albert is a tolerably comely youth, about the middle height, with mustaches in a very promising state of cultivation. In complexion he is neither very fair nor very dark. He is at present rather guarded in his attentions to the Queen, the only thing



very decided being that Prince Ernest, his elder brother, always takes an airing in a pony phaeton separately, leaving him to ride on horseback *tête-à-tête* with her Majesty, the suite, of course, keeping a respectable distance. Here is a gallant Frenchman's description of the Queen while still the unmarried ruler: “The Queen is charming; *petite*, it is true, but with pretty white shoulders, and a person that would make the most humble maiden lovely. Her head is noble and graceful; her pretty light hair was separated in bandeaux on her forehead, and surmounted by a coronet of diamonds. Her eyes, which are soft and large, have spirit and kindness in them; it is pretended that on some occasions they are severe. Her nose is slender and well-formed; her mouth small, and remains habitually open. It appeared to me several times that in smiling with her ladies at the mal-address of some of her subjects she was not deficient in archness.”

Mr. Willis meets at Almack's a pretty and titled English woman, who tells him some trifles about the young Queen. She thought Victoria fancied herself very beautiful, “which she was not,” and a very good horsewoman, “which she was not decidedly,” and that she was very impatient of a difference of opinion when in private with her ladies. She admitted, however, that “her pretty Majesty” was generous, forgiving, and cleverer than most girls of her age. When alone with two or three of her maids, she said, the Queen was “no more like a Queen than anybody else,” and was “very fond of a bit of fun or a bit of scandal, or anything that would not have done if other people were present.”

A shuddering story is to be found on another page, one that the present disturbances in Russia make doubly interesting. When the Emperor Nicholas ascended the throne, among those punished for attempting to proclaim his elder brother Emperor were three gentlemen, by name Pestel, Bylejeff, and Bestuzeff; they were hanged and quartered. A few weeks before the issue of this particular *Corsair* the Grand Duke—the son and successor of Nicholas—had visited Paris, and was called upon by a large number of gentlemen. Three, apparently persons of rank and fortune, came in a carriage, and wrote down their names like others in the visiting book. Great was the dismay

of the aide-de-camp, who in the evening began to read the list of visitors aloud to the Grand Duke, to find in it these three names written in succession: Pestel, Bylejeff, Bestuzeff! Who were they? This paper bears date June 22, 1839.

Here is a sketch of Nicholas, then reigning with military severity. In person the Emperor is tall and well made. Few men of his height—six feet two inches—display such graceful freedom of carriage. He is called by many “the handsomest man in Europe.” He is seen to special advantage in the saddle. He has the air and mien of majesty more completely than any sovereign of the age; his eye has a singular power; its fierce glance, it is said, has disarmed the assassin. Where he wishes to please, nothing can be more charming and winning than his manners. He is deeply attached to his children, and very kind and playful with them. To an English guest he said one evening, with a stamp of his foot as the unpleasant thought rose in his mind: “I know that I am unpopular in England. They hate me, because they think me a tyrant; but if they knew me they would not call me so. They should see me in the bosom of my family.” And he was delightful there; but that did not keep him from being, as a ruler, the hardest of the hard.

In an article on “Recollections of Germany” there is this little sketch of Goethe: “From a private door came forward Goethe at a slow, majestic pace,” an old man “with a costume doubtless modern, yet which notwithstanding looked perversely antique, owing perhaps to the powdered hair of the wearer and a gross mismanagement of the neck-cloth. His figure was tall and gaunt, and his attire a long blue surtout, considerably too wide—in fact, it fitted no better than a dressing-gown. His features in their cast generally had considerable resemblance to those of the late John Kemble, though with a very different expression, Goethe's being much more grave and stern. As to his own works and literary fame he would not utter one syllable, and seemed wholly immovable either by praise or blame.”

A visitor at the grave of Byron asks the clerk who keeps the key whether he has seen there either the poet's widow or his daughter. “Not to my knowledge,” answers the clerk. “The Duke of Orleans,



and, I rather think, the Duke of Sussex, asked me the same question. His sister, Mrs. Leigh, visited his grave soon after the erection of the tablet, and wept over him long and silently. She loved him fondly, sir; and so does Colonel Wildman, of the Abbey (Newstead). He buried old Joe Murray, the boatman, an old retainer of my lord's, very near him, because he recollected my lord's partiality for old Joe."

Further on is a charming little anecdote of Lamb as recorded by Hood, which will assuredly bear repetition. Lamb was a sound hater of carping, evil-speaking, and petty scandal. Some Mrs. Candor telling him, in expectation of an ill-natured comment, that Miss —, the teacher at the Ladies' School, had married a publican, "Has she so?" said Lamb. "Then I'll have my beer there."

Mr. Willis went to the National Gallery — new then — and sat upon a bench with an acquaintance, who pointed out to him a portrait of Lord Lyndhurst in his Chancellor's wig and robes, a very fine picture of a man of sixty or thereabouts. "When this dandy gets out of the way with his eye-glass," said Willis, "I shall be able to see the picture." His friend smiled. "Whom do you take the dandy to be?" It was a well-formed man, dressed in the top of the fashion, with a very straight back, curling brown hair, and the look of perhaps thirty years of age. It was Lord Lyndhurst himself, rejuvenated by a new brown wig and a very youthful hat and neck-cloth! On his arm leaned his new wife, formerly Miss Goldsmith, a small pale woman, dressed very gaudily. The noble couple might have passed for a comedian from the Surrey pleasuring with the tragic heroine.

There is a pretty description of that queen of dancers, Taglioni, in the *ca-chucha*. In it is a succession of flying movements expressive of alarm, in the midst of which "she alights, and stands poised upon the points of her feet, with a look over her shoulder of *fierté* and animation possible to no other face. It was like a deer standing, with expanded nostril and neck uplifted to its loftiest height, at the first scent of his pursuers in the breeze. It was the very soul of swiftness embodied in a look." Looking on at the fairy creature is Lord Brougham, "dressed very young, with a black stock and no collar, and rattling away at the operatic

gossip very brilliantly and gayly, evidently quite forgetting the wooolsack. There are Bulwer and D'Orsay too, the only men in the opera-house wearing a white cravat. D'Orsay has a look of melancholy, but he is still beautiful, his complexion as clear and faultless as a boy's. He drinks milk, and goes to bed now at ten o'clock." Mr. Webster is at this time in England, and Willis mentions the sensation produced in London society by the American's magnificent head. "I do not say 'by his reputation,'" adds Willis, "because three persons out of four who have spoken to me of him take him to be the Noah Webster of the Dictionary." They meet at Hallam's in a group of distinguished men, and a lady is heard to say of Webster to two others who were discussing him phrenologically: "Well, I should never think of wasting time at the top of his head. He is the handsomest man I ever saw, bumps or no bumps! Look at his smile!" There are many American ladies in London in this summer of '39, and they are very much in the fashion. Mrs. Van Buren's quiet and high-bred manners are much talked of, and the major himself, like his brother, has been received quite as a prince royal — admitted to the floor of the House of Lords, etc. Miss Sedgwick is in London, but she seems to require a trumpeter.

Here is a glimpse of Milman, the poet: "A man a little above the middle size, plump, and of a very dark Jewish physiognomy. His eye is fine, his nose more aquiline than that of that literary Jew, Hayward, the translator; but Hayward is all a Hebrew in expression, which Milman is not." Below is a picture of the orator O'Connell. The great Dan looked like a rollicking Irish Boniface. He was dressed in an entire suit of black, with no shirt visible; his cravat very loose about his neck, accommodating itself to a full and rather unctuous-looking dewlap, his foxy wig a little askew, and on the side of his head a broad-brimmed, cheap, long-napped black hat. His eyes were very oily and sly, but his mouth looked the seat of fun and good-nature.

In August Mr. Willis sends a letter, the first paragraph of which announces the engagement of Mr. William Makepeace Thackeray as Paris correspondent of *The Corsair*. "Thackeray is a tall, athletic man of about thirty-five," writes



Mr. Willis, "with a look of talent that could never be mistaken. He has taken to literature after having spent a very large inheritance, but in throwing away the gifts of fortune he had cultivated his natural talents very highly, and is one of the most accomplished draughtsmen in England, as well as the cleverest and most brilliant of periodical writers. He has been the principal critic for *The Times*, and writes for *Fraser* and *Blackwood*." Mr. Thackeray does proceed thereafter to write regularly for *The Corsair* "letters from London, Paris, Pekin, Petersburg, etc."—the letters which in the shape of sketches are published in *The Paris Sketch-Book*. The same letter in which Mr. Willis announces his acquisition mentions also that Disraeli is to be married in a few days to Mrs. Wyndham Lewis, a very fashionable and rather pretty widow. One of the first things he proposes to himself after his marriage "is a trip to Niagara," a journey which he never made. "Mrs. Wyndham Lewis has been one of the most distinguished party-givers in May Fair for several years, and living on Hyde Park, in one of the most superb houses in London, her breakfasts on review days were very celebrated. She knows the world and is a very prudent person, and Disraeli's horoscope, on the whole, promises very brightly from the conjunction." This lady was, before her first marriage, Marian Evans, daughter of Captain Viney Evans, R.N. On another page a groundless social rumor is chronicled—that of the proposed marriage of Miss Burdett-Coutts to Mr. J. Gibson Lockhart.

Lady Hester Stanhope died in obscurity and loneliness in July of 1839, and a biographical sketch appears in which this picture of her in Syria is given: "Her head was covered with a turban made of red and white cashmere. She wore a long tunic, with open, loose sleeves; large Turkish trousers, the folds of which hung over yellow morocco boots, embroidered with silk. Her shoulders were covered with a sort of burnous, and a yataghan hung to her waist. Lady Hester Stanhope had a serious and imposing countenance; her noble and mild features had a majestic expression, which her high stature and the dignity of her movements enhanced."

In October a report runs through England that Lord Brougham has been killed

in a carriage accident. Before its falsity can be ascertained, the London papers break out into spasms of regret and eulogy, and the noble lord has an opportunity of reading countless agreeable obituaries of himself. Even *The Morning Chronicle*, who surely does not love him, speaks in grievous fashion of his "variety of attainment," his "facility of expression," "energy of purpose," "grandeur of forensic eloquence," and his "untiring continuance of intellectual labor." Elsewhere in the volume appears an amusing story of his lordship during a political tour in Scotland a few years before. He had stopped in his journey at the Highland residence of the Duke of B—. The Duchess, always full of fun and frolic, got up a dance on the green, at which all the Donalds and Janets of the district figured in their best. Brougham was tired, and being an early riser, slipped off soon to bed. He was missed, upon which one of the party, whose word could not be gained, insisted that they should all go and see how he looked in his nightcap. A procession was formed. Mr. Edward E— led the way, carrying two large lighted candles, and the dormitory of the Chancellor was fairly stormed and carried. He bore the siege with good-humor. A mock deed was drawn up, constituting the fair Duchess governor of some imaginary island, and Brougham was forced, after a good deal of bantering, to tell his secretary to unpack the great seal (which he kept in his bedroom), and affix it to the document. The party then retreated amidst peals of laughter.

Here is a picture of Dr. Lyman Beecher in Boston: "In the pulpit he is all action—angular, abrupt, graceless, forcible. His arms, head, feet, spectacles all in motion, with 'apostolic blows and knocks' he fells whole platoons of adversaries at once. Dr. B. is very careless of facts and statistics, hating the drudgery of their collection. On his way some years since to a public meeting of one of our benevolent societies, where he and a plodding scrap-book friend in company with him were to deliver addresses, said the doctor to him, 'You gather the facts into a pile, and I'll set them on fire.'"

These be the days of Palmerston; and "Palmerston," says a critic, "is a man made to be laughed at, but not to be despised. Tall, handsome, dark, and well dressed, he thinks himself still. In the



House of Commons Palmerston is an idle man; he does not inflict his eloquence indiscriminately, and when he is obliged to get up and defend some bungling collegiate about some matter upon which he is profoundly ignorant, he hammers and stammers in a most exemplary manner."

A rambler up the Thames visits Eel-pie Island, a place near Twickenham, which was the favorite resort of Edmund Kean for a few months before his death. The boatman the rambler hires is the one generally employed by the great actor, and the fellow relates that after the fatigues of the night were over at the theatre he often caused himself to be rowed to Eel-pie Island, and there left to wander about by moonlight till two or three o'clock in the morning. The tavern used at that time to be frequented by a poetical sawyer of Twickenham, whose poetry Kean greatly admired. The first time he heard the sawyer's rhymes he was so delighted that he made him a present of two sovereigns, and urged him to venture upon the dangerous seas of authorship. By his advice the sawyer rushed into print, and published a twopenny volume upon the beauties of Eel-pie Island, the delights of pie-eating, and various other matters of local and general interest. Kean at this time was so weak that it was necessary to lift him in and out of the wherry, a circumstance which excited the boatman's curiosity to go and see him in *Richard the Third* at the Richmond Theatre. "There was some difference there, I reckon," says the honest fellow to the rambler; "so much so that I was almost frightened at him. He seemed on the stage to be as strong as a giant, and strutted about so bravely that I could scarcely believe it was the same man. Next morning he would come into my boat, with a bottle of brandy in his coat pocket, as weak as a child until he had drunk almost half the brandy, when he plucked up a little. Many's the time that I have carried him in my arms in and out of the boat, as if he were a baby. But he wasn't particularly kind. He always paid me my fare, and never grumbled at it, and was very familiar and free like. But all the watermen were fond of him. He gave a new boat and a purse of sovereigns to be rowed for every year." When Kean died a great many of these watermen contributed toward his monument.

Thus looked Charles Dickens in the summer of 1839: "In person he is a little above the standard height, though not tall. His figure is slight without being meagre, and is well-proportioned. His face is peculiar, though not remarkable. An ample forehead is displayed under a quantity of light hair, worn in a mass on one side of his head rather jauntily, and this is the only semblance of dandyism in his appearance. His brow is marked; his eye, though not large, bright and expressive. The most regular feature is the nose, which may be called handsome—an epithet not applicable to his lips, which are too large. Taken altogether, the countenance, which is pale without sickness, is in repose extremely agreeable, and indicative of refinement and intelligence. Mr. Dickens's manner and conversation, except perhaps to the *abandon* among his familiars, have no exhibition of particular wit, much less of humor. He is mild in the tones of his voice and quiescent, evincing habitual attention to the etiquette and conventionalisms of polished circles. His society is much sought after, and possibly to avoid the invitations pressed upon him he does not reside in London, but with a lovely wife and two charming children he has a retreat in the vicinity."

Mr. Willis gives expression to a poetical admiration for Mrs. Caroline Norton, whom he meets at Lady Morgan's. She is above, he says, even the *beau ideal* of fancy. "No engraving has ever done justice to this lady, because the mere light and shade of the burin cannot give the purity of that opaque white, magnolia-leaf complexion, which, in contrast with her raven-black hair, forms one striking peculiarity of her face. Hers is a countenance, too, which, with all the perfection of the features, is more radiant in intellect and expression even than in feature and complexion."

The romance of Guizot's marriage is related in one of the numbers of that summer. Mlle. Pauline de Meulan was a woman of brilliant and original mind, to whose editorship the *Publiciste* owed most of its well-merited reputation. Her work was long and severe, and her health failing, her doctors ordered absolute idleness. Her pen was the only support of herself and her old parents, who had once enjoyed an immense fortune. In the midst of all this agony of poverty, debt,



and illness, Mlle. de Meulan received an anonymous letter offering in the most respectful fashion to supply her regularly with articles for the *Publiciste* until her health could be restored. The letter was accompanied by an article so much in her own style that she did not hesitate to add her initial and to publish it. The contributions of the unknown continued to arrive until the fair writer was again able to take up her pen. Mademoiselle and all the members of her literary circle lost themselves in conjectures as to the authorship of the articles, but none suspected the grave young orator who listened to their suppositions with an air of perfect indifference. At last Pauline, through the *Publiciste*, begged her unknown friend to present himself to her. The twenty-year-old Guizot obeyed, and five years after, the pair, in spite of the disparity of their ages, were married. It was a beautiful union; and when, after fifteen years, the devoted wife died, she begged, though a Catholic, to be buried as a Protestant, that she might die with the belief of being reunited to her beloved husband in another world. Quietly "her soul passed" as Guizot sat reading to her a sermon of Bossuet's.

In November, 1839, Horace Vernet goes to Egypt, and is presented to the famous Pasha Mehemet Ali. The French painter makes, in a letter home, this sketch of the Egyptian ruler: "Mehemet Ali is short, his beard is white, his complexion brown, his skin tanned, his eye lively, his movement prompt, his speech brief, his look witty, and very malicious. He laughs outright when he has uttered some sarcasm—an amusement in which he frequently indulged in our presence whenever the conversation turned upon politics." A pleasanter picture of the Pasha is given by another writer, to whom the old man said one day: "I have been very happy in my children; there is not one of them who does not treat me with the utmost deference and respect—except," he added, laughing outright, "that little fellow, the last and least, Mehemet Ali." The boy was then five or six years old, and called by his father's name—the son of his old age, his Benjamin, his best-beloved. "I see how it is," said the visitor; "your Highness spoils the boy. You encourage the little rogue." Mehemet Ali laughed again. It was an acknowledgment of a little paternal weakness. Not

long after, the Pasha's friend found him in the centre of his divan, surrounded by all his sons and grandsons; he had been listening to the accounts of their studies, their amusements, and their employments. At last he told them that they might withdraw, and one after another they rose, knelt before him, kissed the hem of his garment, and retired. Little Mehemet Ali came last; he was dressed in military costume, with a tiny golden-cased cimeter dangling at his side. He advanced toward his father, looking in his face; he saw the accustomed, the involuntary smile; and when he was about a yard from the Pasha, instead of bending or saluting him, he turned on his heels and laughingly scampered away like a young colt. The old man shook his head, looked grave for a moment, another smile passed over his countenance—"Peki, peki!" said he, in a low tone (Well, well!). It is good to remember in the renowned warrior this graceful bit of fatherly pride and fondness.

Those were the days in which much fun was made of that amiable and ingenious person whom Mrs. Oliphant calls the "Pecksniff of monarchs"—Louis Philippe. An anecdote which drifted from Germany and France into *The Corsair* shows that the fat king was not without admirers. "There is living at Dessau an old gardener of the ducal court who in his youth was employed at Versailles, where he was in the habit of presenting his finest fruits to the young prince now King of France, who in thanking him always addressed him as his dear cousin. This gardener, having a grandson who wished also to be a gardener, recalled to mind his illustrious relationship to Louis Philippe, and lately wrote to the King to entreat him to give a place to his grandson in one of the royal gardens. The King has replied to the old gardener in his own hand and in German, beginning his letter with 'My dear cousin,' and ending with 'Your affectionate cousin, Louis Philippe,' informing him that he has a place of 2000 francs a year and a lodging for his grandson. The old gardener shows the letter to everybody who wishes to see it, but holds it fast with both hands lest the precious missive should be lost."

The reigning royalties of Naples were in 1839 a picturesque pair. An English writer attending a reception at court describes the King as a tall, stout man, who,



though not quite thirty, had a circumference that few men of sixty could equal. The Queen, on the contrary, was a minute creature, her height not being more than that of most young ladies of twelve or thirteen. Her expression was pretty; her eyes splendid. But the contrast between the royal couple was amusing as remarkable. During the ceremony of having his hand kissed by his loving subjects the apparently disgusted King wore the expression of one who is approached by some revolting spectacle. The Queen's hand was held out and touched without her being, it seemed, the least aware of the fact. When the foreigners were presented the King bowed, but not a word did he speak. The Queen was talkative enough; but when at last she took her husband's offered hand and retired, she made a grimace at him expressive of "Thank goodness, it is all over!" Her Majesty was then only nineteen.

It was in the latter part of this year that the papers printed startling reports of the alarming illness of the Duke of Wellington. Properly sifted, these reports proved to be the result of an attempt by the old soldier to cure a cold after the fashion of the Dr. Tanner who lately tried in New York the dangers of starvation. His Grace went without food for two whole days, and finding himself better, mounted his horse to follow the hounds. He returned home after a day's sport to faint on the door-step from inanition. So Great Britain went straightway into an uproar over his "attack of apoplexy" in large letters, while the Iron Duke was calmly bathing his feet and placidly going off to sleep.

It was during the last weeks of '39 that Knowles brought out his play of *Love*, and Bulwer his drama of the *Sea-Captain*.

Mr. Willis attends the third performance of the *Sea-Captain*, and finds the house not more than half filled, in spite of the popular liking for the piece and for Helen Faucit and Macready, who play the heroine and hero. He gives an odd statement of Bulwer's position at the time. "Why, Bulwer is but thirty-two, I believe, and without one word of praise from the great tribunals of criticism, he stands in the very plenitude of renown and popularity; his plays depreciated by every magazine and newspaper of the day, yet perfectly successful; his novels received in killing silence by the reviewers, yet

seized on and read by all classes with the greatest avidity; his person and his character and his family the subjects of constant detraction, yet himself courted in society and honored by his sovereign with a baronetcy, and living in a charmed circle of luxury, admiration, and literary emolument."

As a writer of personal "intelligence," Mr. Willis has had few rivals. Perhaps he modelled himself somewhat after Walpole. But it must be said that if his notes were not invariably in perfect taste, they were never malicious. It is worth while to quote here what he himself says about the "personal" in one of his *Corsair* letters:

"There is no question, I believe, that pictures of living society where society is in very high perfection, and of living persons where they are 'persons of mark,' are both interesting to ourselves and valuable to posterity. What would we not give for a description of a dinner with Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, of a dance with the maids of Queen Elizabeth, of a chat with Milton in a morning call? We should say the man was a churl who, when he had the power, should have refused to 'leave the world a copy' of such precious hours. Posterity will decide who are the great of our time, but they are at least *among* those I have heard talk, and have described and quoted. And who would read without interest a hundred years hence a character of the second Virgin Queen, caught as it was uttered in a ballroom of her time; or a description of her loveliest maid of honor by one who had stood opposite her in a dance, and wrote it before he slept; or a conversation with Moore or Bulwer, when the Queen and her fairest maid and Moore and Bulwer have had their splendid funerals, and are dust like Elizabeth and Shakespeare?"

"The harm, if harm there be in such sketches, is in the spirit in which they are done. If they are ill-natured and untrue, or if the author says aught to injure the feelings of those who have admitted him to their confidence or hospitality, he is to blame, and it is easy, since he publishes while his subjects are living, to correct his misrepresentations, and to visit upon him his infidelities of friendship. For myself I have the best reason to know that I have never offended either host or acquaintance."