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A

5 It was near Christmas by the time all was settled: the season of general holiday approached. I now closed Morton school, taking care that the parting should not be barren on my side. Good fortune opens the hand as well as the heart wonderfully; and to give somewhat when we have largely received, is but to afford a vent to the unusual ebullition of the sensations. I had long felt with pleasure that many of my rustic scholars liked me, and when we parted, that consciousness was confirmed: they manifested their affection plainly and strongly. Deep was my gratification to find I had really a place in their unsophisticated hearts: I promised them that never a week should pass in future that I did not visit them, and give them an hour's teaching in their school.

10 Mr. Rivers came up as, having seen the classes, now numbering sixty girls, file out before me, and locked the door, I stood with the key in my hand, exchanging a few words of special farewell with some half-dozen of my best scholars: as decent, respectable, modest, and well-informed young women as could be found in the ranks of the British peasantry. And that is saying a great deal; for after all, the British peasantry are the best taught, best mannered, most self-respecting of any in Europe: since those days I have seen paysannes and Bauerinnen; and the best of them seemed to me ignorant, coarse, and besotted, compared with my Morton girls.

15 "Do you consider you have got your reward for a season of exertion?" asked Mr. Rivers, when they were gone. "Does not the consciousness of having done some real good in your day and generation give pleasure?"

20 "Doubtless."

"And you have only toiled a few months! Would not a life devoted to the task of regenerating your race be well spent?"

25 "Yes," I said; "but I could not go on for ever so: I want to enjoy my own faculties as well as to cultivate those of other people. I must enjoy them now; don't recall either my mind or body to the school; I am out of it and disposed for full holiday."

He looked grave. "What now? What sudden eagerness is this you evince? What are you going to do?"

30 "To be active: as active as I can. And first I must beg you to set Hannah at liberty, and get somebody else to wait on you."

"Do you want her?"

"Yes, to go with me to Moor House. Diana and Mary will be at home in a week, and I want to have everything in order against their arrival."

35 "I understand. I thought you were for flying off on some excursion. It is better so: Hannah shall go with you."

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"Tell her to be ready by to-morrow then; and here is the schoolroom key: I will give you the key of my cottage in the morning."

40 He took it. "You give it up very gleefully," said he; "I don't quite understand your light-heartedness, because I cannot tell what employment you propose to yourself as a substitute for the one you are relinquishing. What aim, what purpose, what ambition in life have you now?"

45 "My first aim will be to *clean down* (do you comprehend the full force of the expression?) — to *clean down* Moor House from chamber to cellar; my next to rub it up with bees-wax, oil, and an indefinite number of cloths, till it glitters again; my third, to arrange every chair, table, bed, carpet, with mathematical precision; afterwards I shall go near to ruin you in coals and peat to keep up good fires in every room; and lastly, the two days preceding that on which your sisters are expected will be devoted by Hannah and me to such a beating of eggs, sorting of currants, grating of spices, compounding of Christmas cakes, chopping up of materials for mince-pies, and solemnising of other culinary rites, as words can convey but an inadequate notion of to the uninitiated like you. My purpose, in short, is to have all things in an absolutely perfect state of readiness for Diana and Mary before next Thursday; and my ambition is to give them a beau-ideal of a welcome when they come."

50 St. John smiled slightly: still he was dissatisfied.

55 "It is all very well for the present," said he; "but seriously, I trust that when the first flush of vivacity is over, you will look a little higher than domestic endearments and household joys."

"The best things the world has!" I interrupted.

"No, Jane, no: this world is not the scene of fruition; do not attempt to make it so: nor of rest; do not turn slothful."

60 "I mean, on the contrary, to be busy."

65 "Jane, I excuse you for the present: two months' grace I allow you for the full enjoyment of your new position, and for pleasing yourself with this late-found charm of relationship; but *then*, I hope you will begin to look beyond Moor House and Morton, and sisterly society, and the selfish calm and sensual comfort of civilised affluence. I hope your energies will then once more trouble you with their strength."

I looked at him with surprise. "St. John," I said, "I think you are almost wicked to talk so. I am disposed to be as content as a queen, and you try to stir me up to restlessness! To what end?"

70 "To the end of turning to profit the talents which God has committed to your keeping; and of which He will surely one day demand a strict account. Jane, I shall watch you closely and anxiously — I warn you of that. And try to restrain the disproportionate fervour with which you throw yourself into commonplace home pleasures. Don't cling so tenaciously to ties of the flesh; save your constancy and ardour for an adequate cause; forbear to waste them on trite transient objects. Do you hear, Jane?"

75 "Yes; just as if you were speaking Greek. I feel I have adequate cause to be happy, and I *will* be happy. Goodbye!"

B

June 29th, 1838

5 The Coronation (which, thank God, is over) went off very well. The day was fine,
 without heat or rain—the innumerable multitude which thronged the streets orderly and
 satisfied. The appearance of the Abbey was beautiful, particularly the benches of the
 Peeresses, who were blazing with diamonds. The entry of Soult was striking. He was saluted
 10 with a murmur of curiosity and applause as he passed through the nave, and nearly the same,
 as he advanced along the choir. His appearance is that of a veteran warrior, and he walked
 alone, with his numerous suite following at a respectful distance, preceded by heralds and
 ushers, who received him with marked attention, more certainly than any of the other
 Ambassadors. The Queen looked very diminutive, and the effect of the procession itself was
 15 spoilt by being too crowded; there was not interval enough between the Queen and the Lords
 and others going before her. The Bishop of London (Blomfield) preached a very good sermon.
 The different actors in the ceremonial were very imperfect in their parts, and had neglected to
 rehearse them. Lord John Thynne, who officiated for the Dean of Westminster, told me that
 nobody knew what was to be done except the Archbishop and himself (who had rehearsed),
 20 Lord Willoughby (who is experienced in these matters), and the Duke of Wellington, and
 consequently there was a continual difficulty and embarrassment, and the Queen never knew
 what she was to do next. They made her leave her chair and enter into St. Edward's Chapel
 before the prayers were concluded, much to the discomfiture of the Archbishop. She said to
 John Thynne, 'Pray tell me what I am to do, for they don't know;' and at the end, when the
 orb was put into her hand, she said to him, 'What am I to do with it?' 'Your Majesty is to
 25 carry it, if you please, in your hand.' 'Am I?' she said; 'it is very heavy.' The ruby ring was
 made for her little finger instead of the fourth, on which the rubric prescribes that it should be
 put. When the Archbishop was to put it on, she extended the former, but he said it must be on
 the latter. She said it was too small, and she could not get it on. He said it was right to put it
 30 there, and, as he insisted, she yielded, but had first to take off her other rings, and then this
 was forced on, but it hurt her very much, and as soon as the ceremony was over she was
 obliged to bathe her finger in iced water in order to get it off. The noise and confusion were
 very great when the medals were thrown about by Lord Surrey, everybody scrambling with all
 their might and main to get them, and none more vigorously than the Maids of Honour. There
 35 was a great demonstration of applause when the Duke of Wellington did homage. Lord Rolle,
 who is between eighty and ninety, fell down as he was getting up the steps of the throne. Her
 first impulse was to rise, and when afterwards he came again to do homage she said, 'May I
 not get up and meet him?' and then rose from the throne and advanced down one or two of the
 steps to prevent his coming up, an act of graciousness and kindness which made a great
 40 sensation.* It is, in fact, the remarkable union of *naïveté*, kindness, nature, good nature, with
 propriety and dignity, which makes her so admirable and so endearing to those about her, as
 she certainly is. I have been repeatedly told that they are all warmly attached to her, but that
 all feel the impossibility of for a moment losing sight of the respect which they owe her. She
 never ceases to be a Queen, but is always the most charming, cheerful, obliging, unaffected
 Queen in the world. The procession was very handsome, and the Extraordinary Ambassadors
 produced some gorgeous equipages. This sort of procession is incomparably better than the
 old ceremonial which so much fuss was made about, for the banquet would only have
 benefited the privileged few and the rich, and for one person who would have witnessed the

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45 procession on the platform five hundred enjoyed a sight of this. In fact, the thing best worth
seeing was the town itself, and the countless multitudes through which the procession passed.
The Chancellor of the Exchequer told me that he had been informed 200,000£ had been paid
for seats alone, and the number of people who have flocked into London has been estimated at
50 five hundred thousand. It is said that a million have had a sight of the show in one way or
another. These numbers are possibly exaggerated, but they really were prodigious. From
Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey, by the way they took, which must be two or three
miles in length, there was a dense mass of people; the seats and benches were all full, every
window was occupied, the roofs of the houses were covered with spectators, for the most part
well dressed, and, from the great space through which they were distributed, there was no
55 extraordinary pressure, and consequently no room for violence or ill-humour. In the evening I
met Prince Esterhazy, and asked him what the foreigners said. He replied that they admired it
all very much: 'Strogonoff and the others don't like you, but they feel it, and it makes a great
impression on them; in fact, nothing can be seen like it in any other country.' I went into the
park, where the fair was going on; a vast multitude, but all of the lower orders; not very
60 amusing. The great merit of this Coronation is, that so much has been done for the people: to
amuse and interest *them* seems to have been the principal object.

* She sent in the evening to inquire after Lord Rolle.

Charles C. F. Greville, Esq.,
A journal of the Reign of Queen Victoria, From 1837 to 1852, 1885

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C

Marie Spartali Stillman, *Madonna Pietra degli Scrovigni*, 1884 (watercolor, gouache and gum arabic; 30.9 × 24.1 in)

