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Art. III.—LADY BLOOMFIELD'S REMINISCENCES.

Reminiscences of Court and Diplomatic Life. By Georgiana, Baroness Bloomfield. Two vols. Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co. 1883.

THE message from the Treasury Bench in the House of Commons, to representative men in the Upper House, requesting to be told—"in one word," as Bishop Wilberforce used to say—"What are the duties of an Archdeacon?" brought at last, as everybody knows, the epigrammatic answer, "The duties of an Archdeacon are strictly archidiaconal." Of those who have a fair stock of useful knowledge, few, probably, can answer offhand the question, "What are the duties of a Maid of Honour?" Lady Bloomfield tells us, in her "Reminiscences of Court Life," that the duties of Maids of Honour are very easy. Except at meals, or when the Queen sends for them, they may sit quietly in their rooms. Their chief duty, indeed, consists in placing a bouquet beside Her Majesty when she sits down to dinner, and even this only happens every other day. The "badge" is the Queen's picture, surrounded with brilliants on a red bow. Lady Bloomfield, who was a Maid of Honour at twenty, and an ambassadress at twenty-three, was the youngest child of the second Lord Ravensworth. It is said that one day her father (then Sir Thomas Liddell) was walking in Portland Place, when he met a nurse carrying a baby in her arms; and, being struck by the beauty of the infant, he asked whose it was. The nurse, much astonished, answered, "Your own, Sir Thomas!" When Miss Liddell was fifteen, she was confirmed in the Chapel Royal. She was only examined once before it, by a Fulham clergyman; "the preparation and instruction in those days," she remarks, "being very different from what they are now, and consisting literally in the knowledge of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Church Catechism." From her earlier years, however, her mother had impressed her with a sense of God's presence, and tried to instil religious motives into her mind. Her eldest sister, the Marchioness of Normanby, was one of the ladies-in-waiting; and a good story is told of a little scene at Court in the year 1840. "One day," says our author, "the Queen expressed a desire to hear me sing; so, in fear and trembling, I sang one of Grisi's famous airs, but omitted a shake at the end. The Queen's quick ear immediately detected the omission, and smiling, Her Majesty said, 'Does not your sister shake, Lady Normanby?' My sister immediately answered, 'Oh yes, ma'am; she is shaking all over.' The Queen, much amused, laughed heartily at the joke." That was the year of the famous "Bedchamber Plot,"

when, as Mr. McCarthy writes, "Sir Robert Peel could not govern with Lady Normanby, and Lord Melbourne could not govern without her." The following year, however, Sir Robert came into office, and the Duchess of Sutherland and Lady Normanby resigned. Lord and Lady Ravensworth were pleased and flattered by the Queen's desire that another of their daughters should be selected to wait upon Her Majesty, although, as she was the only daughter remaining at home, they did not like the idea of her leaving them for three months in the year. The young lady herself, however, was decidedly in favour of accepting the post.

In January, 1842, the King of Prussia arrived at Windsor Castle for the Prince of Wales's christening.[1] The Duke of Wellington, looking well, stood behind the Queen during the christening, bearing the great sword of state. The banquet was quite magnificent; the table reached from one end of St. George's Hall to the other, covered with gold plate and thousands of wax candles. Rundell's famous piece of work, "an immense gold vessel, more like a bath than anything else, containing thirty dozen of wine, was filled with mulled claret," and it surprised the Prussians greatly. The King of Prussia much enjoyed his visit. At the Duke of Sussex's, he "made a very pretty speech;" at the Archbishop of Canterbury's he gave the toast, "The Queen and the Church, for they can *never* be separated." His Majesty seemed to have got weary of the rigid etiquette of the English Court; for, as the Lord Chamberlain and attendants were backing and bowing in taking him to the carriage, he said, "De grâce ne faites donc pas cette cérémonie pour moi; allez-vous en, allez-vous en!"

In February, 1842, the Queen paid a visit to Brighton. Lady Bloomfield writes:—

We left Windsor a little after eight, and arrived here at twenty minutes before three. The roads were very heavy, but the Queen always travels with relays of her own horses, so we came a capital pace. We stopped at Reigate, and there I had a good opportunity of seeing the two children. The Princess Royal is very pretty, and the Prince of Wales is such a very fine baby. Crowds of people assembled, and we had to go a foot's pace from the entrance of the town; the windows and balconies were all filled with people waving and cheering, and a great many gentlemen came and met us a long way off, and joined the escort; the road for four miles was lined with carriages.

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[1] On the Sunday in the Castle, Bishop Blomfield, we read, "preached a beautiful sermon from John iii. 8. He impressed upon us the importance of the Sacrament of Baptism as the appointed means whereby we are admitted members of the Church of Christ on earth, which, we hope, will make us members of it hereafter in heaven." This sentence is far from clear.

The Queen had not been at Brighton since her marriage; and it may have amused Her Majesty to show the Prince so curious a palace. Lord Jocelyn, who had lately returned from China, said the Pavilion was a perfect specimen of a Chinese house. But the garden was "odious;" there was neither pleasure nor privacy to be had there. "The whole place was a strange specimen of royal eccentricity," adds Lady Bloomfield, "and a most uncomfortable, dull residence, so I never wondered at the Queen's getting rid of it." Mention is made of the well-known clergyman, Robert Anderson. "I went to hear Mr. R. Anderson, who preaches extempore, and gave us an excellent and uncommon sermon; he has great command of language, and remarkable facility." The Incumbent of Trinity Chapel, we may add, was a son-in-law of John Shore, first Lord Teignmouth.

On May 29th of the same year our author was in waiting at Buckingham Palace, and had attended Divine service on Sunday at the Chapel Royal, with the Queen and Prince Albert. The following day—

I was not a little disappointed when, about six o'clock, we saw the Queen drive off in an open carriage with Prince Albert. I remarked that it was very hard to keep us in the whole afternoon when we were not wanted, and I went off grumbling to take a walk in the Palace gardens. I was much horrified to learn on my return that the Queen had been shot at by a lad of the name of Francis. That evening the Queen was talking to Sir Robert Peel, who was then Prime Minister, and who was much affected at the risk Her Majesty had run, when the Queen turned to me and said, "I dare say, Georgy, you were surprised at not driving with me this afternoon; but the fact was that, as we returned from church yesterday, a man presented a pistol at the carriage-window, which flashed in the pan; we were so taken by surprise that he had time to escape; so I knew what was hanging over me, and was determined to expose no life but my own."

Some amusing anecdotes are related concerning the little Princess Royal. Whilst they were driving, one day, the Queen called her, as she often did, "Missy." The Princess took no notice the first time, but the next she looked up very indignantly, and said to her mother, "I'm not Missy; I'm the Princess Royal." When three years old, she spoke French fluently, and she was reading, one day, when Lady Lyttelton went up to her; she motioned her away with her hand, and said, "N'approchez pas moi, moi ne veut pas vous."[1]

In October, 1844, the Queen paid a visit to the City, and the

[1] On another occasion, when driving in the Great Park, she took a fancy to some heather at the side of the road, and asked Lady Dunmore to get her some. Lady Dunmore observed she could not do that, as we were driving too fast; so the Princess answered, "No, *you* can't; but *those girls* might get out and get me some"—meaning Miss Paget and Miss Liddell.

procession was magnificent. Our author went in a state carriage with Lady Gardiner (the bedchamber woman-in-waiting), the Duke of Norfolk (Earl Marshal), and Lord Anglesea (Gold-stick). The Lord Mayor, who met the Queen at Temple Bar, had put on a huge pair of jack-boots over his shoes and stockings to keep the mud off. Unfortunately, the boots were too tight; and in spite of tremendous tuggings, one would not come off. The Queen's carriage was drawing nearer and nearer, and the poor Lord Mayor was obliged to put the big boot on again. At breakfast, at Windsor Castle, two days later, Sir Robert Peel was most amusing. He told the ladies how, at a Guildhall dinner, he heard Alderman Flower remark to Mr. Canning, "My Lord Ellenborough (the Lord Chief Justice) was a man of uncommon sagacity." Mr. Canning bowed assent, and said he believed he was; but asked what gave rise to that observation at that moment. Upon which the alderman answered: "Why, sir, had he been here he would have told me by a single glance of his eye which is the best of these five haunches of venison." About this time Lady Bloomfield wrote: "It always strikes me as so odd when I come back into waiting; everything else changes, but the life here never does, and is always exactly the same from day to day, and from year to year." In conversation with Lady Sale, the Maid of Honour learned many details of the tragic tale of Cabul. The prisoners were often twenty-four hours without food; they usually slept in the open air on the snow, each having one sheepskin. In 1845 the author resigned her appointment at Court, in consequence of her mother's state of health. Shortly afterwards she was engaged to the Hon. John (afterwards second Lord) Bloomfield, who was Ambassador at the Court of St. Petersburg. She received a letter of congratulation from the Queen, which is worth quoting, as it pleasingly shows Her Majesty's kindness and sympathy:—

Osborne, July 29, 1845.

MY DEAREST GEORGIANA,—I received this morning your kind letter announcing your marriage with Mr. Bloomfield, which has surprised us most agreeably. I do not think you guilty of any inconsistency, and we only hope you will be *as* happy through a long life as *we are;* I *cannot* wish you *more* than this. I highly approve your choice, having a high opinion of Mr. Bloomfield, and I shall be much pleased to have, as the wife of my representative at St. Peterburg, a person who has been about me, whom I am so partial to, and who, I am sure, will perform the duties of her position extremely well. I pity you much for the painful separation from Mr. Bloomfield to which you will be subjected. Once more repeating our sincere wishes for your happiness, and with our kind regards to your parents, who we hope are better,

Believe me,

Always yours affectionately,

VICTORIA R.

Lady Bloomfield's residence at St. Petersburg, which extended from 1845 to 1850,[1] was interrupted by several absences; the climate was very trying to her health, and she rejoiced greatly to hear at length that the Queen had been pleased to request Lord Palmerston to give them another post. Some of her reminiscences of society in the metropolis, and of the Emperor Nicholas, are vivid and full of interest. The Russian ladies at that time never appeared to occupy themselves; their chief interest was the theatre. In all the splendidly furnished rooms our author was struck by the apparent want of occupation, books, &c. English nurses, it seems, were greatly preferred. Princess B—— gave her nurse £70 a year, besides quantities of presents; and one day, when an English lady was calling on the Princess, the nurse sent in to say she wished to have the carriage-and-four to take the child an airing! This request was immediately acceded to, and she was met walking down the great staircase attended by a footman! On one occasion, wrote Lady Bloomfield—

> We were rather amused to hear that a party had been invited to dine with the Grand Duke Michael, to eat some English mutton, which is considered a great delicacy at St. Petersburg. This turned out to be a poor sheep my father sent me, which broke its leg on the voyage from England, and had to be killed immediately; but which we could not use because the meat was bad, so it was sold by our cook to the Grand Duke's, as a great favour, but of course when the meat came to the table it was not eatable.

The Russian Court at that time was not much given to hospitality, as regards the diplomatic body; but the Empress, whose health was very delicate, showed much kindness to the English Ambassador's wife. When she was first summoned to Tzarskoe Selo, Lord and Lady Bloomfield left St. Petersburg in their chariot, with four horses abreast, at twelve o'clock, reaching the Palace at two. On arriving, they were shown to their apartments, which were handsome as to size, but wretchedly furnished, with just a bare table, a few chairs, and a very stiff, uncomfortable sofa placed against the wall. Though they had been offered beds, the offer was evidently a mere formal courtesy, as there was only one small bed in the ante-room. By asking, they "succeeded in getting washhand-stands." After dinner there was an interval; then a play. As soon as supper was over they took leave, getting home again at three o'clock in the morning. The servants were all serfs; and

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[1] In the year 1850, Dr. Gutzlaff, the famous Chinese missionary, dined with Lord and Lady Bloomfield; and his conversation, we read, "was extremely interesting and amusing. He had lived twenty-three years in China, and looked exactly like a Chinese."

some of them paid as much as 200 roubles a year poll-tax to their owners. Lady Bloomfield wrote :—

The Moujiks lived altogether apart from the foreign servants ; in our house they had a small *entre sol*, which they kept excessively hot, never admitting a breath of fresh air during the winter, but they went out into the open air when there were many degrees of cold. The Moujiks' rooms were never furnished, and I believe they slept on the floor wrapped up in their sheepskins. Their food consisted of cabbage, frozen fish, dried mushrooms, or rather toad-stools, called gribuï, stale eggs, and very bad oil. They mix these ingredients together in a pot and boil them, and this mess they greatly preferred to good food. When Lord Stuart de Rothesay was Ambassador, he wished to feed his Moujiks like his other servants, but they declined eating the food the cook prepared for them. They wore a red shirt, loose cotton trousers, boots outside their trousers, a jacket and an apron ; and they never undressed except once a week when they went to their bath, which was described to me as a large sort of flat oven, which is heated as much as possible, and then water is thrown over it, which causes a great steam.

The English Ambassador's footman, Foky, it seems, was a very good man, "better than most Russian servants;" he always grew ostensibly thinner during the Lent and Advent fasts. He was in the habit of reading the Bible in Slavonic.

Several items of information as to religious matters are well worth quoting. For instance, on one Easter Day, when the Czar came out of the chapel at the Winter Palace, saying, "*Christus vos Krest*" ("Christ is risen"), which is the Russian salutation on that festival, he greeted the sentinel, who responded, "That is a lie." It turned out that he was a Jew. We have heard this story, but with the sentinel's contradiction in a more courteous form. Again, Lady Bloomfield writes :—

As late as the reign of the Emperor Alexander, an ukase was printed forbidding a blessing to be carried in a hat. It seems that formerly when a Pope (priest) was sent for to administer extreme unction, if anything hindered his going to the dying man, he whispered a blessing in the messenger's hat, which was covered in his presence, and uncovered before the sick man ; and this was supposed to convey a special blessing equivalent to the sacrament of extreme unction.

Count Nesselrode[1] . . . looked rather Jewish . . . He was christened on board an English frigate in the Tagus, and always considered himself a member of the Church of England. In Russia no official can receive his salary till he can prove that he has received the Holy Communion in whatever Church he belongs to. Consequently, once a year, generally

[1] Shrewd statesman and diplomatist as he was, Count Nesselrode's forecast was not always correct. Dining at the English Ambassador's, January, 1848, he remarked that no political event seemed of any importance in those days—"Quand tout va comme un papier de musique!" Within a few weeks Europe was in a blaze, and Louis Philippe was a fugitive.

on Holy Thursday, Count Nesselrode, when Chancellor of the Empire and Minister for Foreign Affairs, used to attend the English Chapel on the English Quay, and receive the Holy Communion according to the forms of the Church of England, which, however, he never attended on other occasions, or, I believe, any other place of worship, though he had, of course, to be officially present at all the great ceremonies of the Greek Church.

The Czar was keen and severe; police espionage was everywhere strict; yet bribery, and deceit, and robbery, tainted every department. When General Count Beckendorff was Minister of Police, on returning home one night from his club, he found his pocket-book, which was full of rouble-notes, missing. He accordingly gave the police notice of the fact, stating the sum he had lost. A few days after the sum was returned to him without the pocket-book, which was reported lost; but in the meantime it had been found, notes and all, in his fur pelisse, having slipped down between the lining and the cloth. The police, to show their zeal and activity, had collected the money all themselves, and presented it to their superior officer.

Several anecdotes are told about the Emperor's strictness in military matters. Thus, once at a review, when Lord Bloomfield was present:—

The officer in command made an egregious mistake by leading his men up a hill in the face of a strong force of artillery, which was blazing away like fury. The Emperor's quick eye speedily detected the error, and, in a perfect fury, he drew his sword, and rode at the wretched officer in command; and my husband said he hardly knew what would happen, but thought the Emperor was going to cut off the culprit's epaulettes. After, however, giving him a severe reprimand, the Emperor turned round to the suite, and said, "Gentlemen, after the humiliating spectacle we have just witnessed, I think the review had better conclude; so adieu!" and he turned his horse's head and galloped off the field.

By removing from St. Petersburg, Lord Bloomfield escaped the trials which Sir Hamilton Seymour had to endure. Yet Berlin, after a time (during the Crimean War), was not a pleasant place for the English, as the Queen was a bitter partisan for Russia. In the spring of 1854 parties were running so very high that "the town was divided into two camps, and those who were well with Russia, which included the Queen and the whole of the 'Kreuz-Zeitung' party, almost cut us and our French colleagues," while the Princess of Prussia (now Empress of Germany) found her residence in Berlin "very trying." Lady Bloomfield at this period gave a State ball, and the Queen said in public that "she was not sure she should go," to which the King replied, "You must" (Du musz). "Lord Bloomfield and I went down to the hall-

door to receive their Majesties; and the Queen took my husband's arm; but the only remark she made was, 'Votre escalier est bien roide, Milord.'"

In justice to Frederic William IV. (the King Cliquot of *Punch*), one remark of our author should be quoted: "The King," wrote Lady Bloomfield, "was beginning to show symptoms of the fatal malady"—a softening of the brain—"which developed rapidly the following year; his walk was uncertain, which gave rise to the report that he was drunk, instead of which he was a remarkably sober and moral man in all his habits."

There are many other interesting passages in the volumes before us, from which, had we space, we should gladly quote. The great charm of the work is its simplicity. These "Reminiscences," are entirely free from the faults of Greville's "Memoirs," and—we must add—of the third volume of the "Life of Bishop Wilberforce."

Art. IV.—JOHN BUNYAN.[1]

THE author of the immortal allegory, "The Pilgrim's Progress," lived in an age of great excitement. The human mind was agitated by the great events that were happening, and, indeed, was stirred to its very depths. John Bunyan was born in rough times, days of revolution and reconstruction; years of tumult, and yet of advance, when some of the most striking events of history took place, and some of the most noted men England has produced gave a page to her annals.

The period of Bunyan's life comprises such events as the Star Chamber and the High Commission; Edgehill, and Naseby, and Marston Moor; and such names as Laud and Strafford, Charles I., Cromwell, and Charles II. The Parliamentary ability of that time was of the highest order; and among the most distinguished members of the House of Commons were Falkland and Hyde, Digby and Harry Vane, and Oliver St. John. But the two foremost men were Pym and Hampden, and by universal consent of friends and enemies, the first place belonged to Hampden. It was a day not only of eminent politicians, but also of great divines. And now it was that such

[1] "The Works of John Bunyan," edited by George Offor, Esq. (Blackie & Son, Edinburgh). "English Men of Letters," edited by John Morley; "Bunyan," by James Anthony Froude (Macmillan).