

LETTER XXIII.

DEAR SISTER:--

The evening after our return from Windsor was spent with our kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. Gurney. Mr. Gurney is rector of Mary-le-Bone parish, one of the largest districts in London; and he is, I have been told, one of the court chaplains; a man of the most cultivated and agreeable manners, earnestly and devoutly engaged in the business of his calling. As one of the working men of the church establishment, I felt a strong interest in his views and opinions, and he seemed to take no less interest in mine, as coming from a country where there is and can be no church establishment. He asked many questions about America; the general style of our preaching; the character of our theology; our modes of religious action; our revivals of religion; our theories of sudden and instantaneous conversion, as distinguished from the gradual conversion of education; our temperance societies, and the stand taken by our clergy in behalf of temperance.

He wished to know how the English style of preaching appeared to me in comparison with that of America. I told him one principal difference that struck me was, that the English preaching did not recognize the existence of any element of inquiry or doubt in the popular mind; that it treated certain truths as axioms, which only needed to be stated to be believed; whereas in American sermons there is always more or less time employed in explaining, proving, and answering objections to, the

truths enforced. I quoted Baptist Noel's sermon in illustration of what I meant.

I asked him to what extent the element of scepticism, with regard to religious truth, had pervaded the mind of England? adding that I had inferred its existence there from such novels as those of Kingsley. He thought that there was much of this element, particularly in the working classes; that they were coming to regard the clergy with suspicion, and to be less under their influence than in former times; and said it was a matter of much solicitude to know how to reach them.

I told him that I had heard an American clergyman, who had travelled in England, say, that dissenters were treated much as free negroes were in America, and added that my experience must have been very exceptional, or the remark much overstated, as I had met dissenting clergymen in all circles of society. He admitted that there might be a good deal of bigotry in this respect, but added that the infrequency of association was more the result of those circumstances which would naturally draw the two parties to themselves, than to superciliousness on the side of the establishment, adding that where a court and aristocracy were in the established church, there would necessarily be a pressure of fashion in its favor, which might at times bring uncomfortable results.

The children were sitting by studying their evening lessons, and I begged Mrs. Gurney to allow me to look over their geographies and

atlases; and on her inquiring why, I told her that well-informed people in England sometimes made such unaccountable mistakes about the geography of our country as were quite surprising to me, and that I did not understand how it was that our children should know so much more about England than they about us. I found the children, however, in possession of a very excellent and authentic map of our country. I must say also that the most highly educated people I have met in England have never betrayed any want of information on this subject.

The next morning we had at breakfast two clergymen, members of the established church. They appeared to be most excellent, devout, practical men, anxious to do good, and thoughtfully seeking for suggestions from any quarter which might assist them in their labors. They renewed many of the inquiries which Mr. Gurney had made the evening before.

After breakfast I went with Mr. Gurney and Mr. S. to Richmond's studio to sit for a likeness, which is to be presented to Mr. S. by several friends. Richmond's name is one which in this London sphere has only to be announced to explain itself; not to know him argues yourself unknown. He is one of the most successful artists in a certain line of portrait painting that the present day affords. He devotes himself principally to crayon and water-color sketches. His crayon heads are generally the size of life; his water-colors of a small size. He often takes full-lengths in this way, which render not merely the features, but the figure, air, manner, and what is characteristic about the

dress. These latter sketches are finished up very highly, with the minuteness of a miniature. His forte consists in seizing and fixing those fleeting traits of countenance, air, and movement, which go so far towards making up our idea of a person's appearance. Many of the engravings of distinguished persons, with which we are familiar, have come from his designs, such as Wilberforce, Sir Powell Buxton, Elizabeth Fry, and others. I found his studio quite a gallery of notabilities, almost all the distingués of the day having sat to him; so I certainly had the satisfaction of feeling myself in good company. Mr. Richmond looks quite youthful, (but I never can judge of any one's age here,) is most agreeable in conversation, full of anecdote in regard to all the moving life of London. I presume his power of entertaining conversation is one secret of his successful likenesses. Some portrait painters keep calling on you for expression all the while, and say nothing in the world to awaken it.

From Richmond's, Mr. S., C., and I drove out to call upon Kossuth. We found him in an obscure lodging on the outskirts of London. I would that some of the editors in America, who have thrown out insinuations about his living in luxury, could have seen the utter bareness and plainness of the reception room, which had nothing in it beyond the simplest necessaries. Here dwells the man whose greatest fault is an undying love of his country. We all know that if Kossuth would have taken wealth and a secure retreat, with a life of ease for himself, America would gladly have laid all these at his feet. But because he could not acquiesce in the unmerited dishonor of his country, he lives

a life of obscurity, poverty, and labor. All this was written in his pale, worn face, and sad, thoughtful blue eye. But to me the unselfish patriot is more venerable for his poverty and his misfortunes.

Have we, among the thousands who speak loud of patriotism in America, many men, who, were she enfeebled, despised, and trampled, would forego self, and suffer as long, as patiently for her? It is even easier to die for a good cause, in some hour of high enthusiasm, when all that is noblest in us can be roused to one great venture, than to live for it amid wearing years of discouragement and hope delayed.

There are those even here in England who delight to get up slanders against Kossuth, and not long ago some most unfounded charges were thrown out against him in some public prints. By way of counterpoise an enthusiastic public meeting was held, in which he was presented with a splendid set of Shakspeare.

He entered into conversation with us with cheerfulness, speaking English well, though with the idioms of foreign languages. He seemed quite amused at the sensation which had been excited by Mr. S.'s cotton speech in Exeter Hall. C. asked him if he had still hopes for his cause. He answered, "I hope still, because I work still; my hope is in God and in man."

I inquired for Madame Kossuth, and he answered, "I have not yet seen her to-day," adding, "she has her family affairs, you know, madam; we

are poor exiles here;" and, fearing to cause embarrassment, I did not press an interview.

When we parted he took my hand kindly, and said, "God bless you, my child."

I would not lose my faith in such men for any thing the world could give me. There are some people who involve in themselves so many of the elements which go to make up our confidence in human nature generally, that to lose confidence in them seems to undermine our faith in human virtue. As Shakspeare says, their defection would be like "another fall of man."

We went back to Mr. Gurney's to lunch, and then, as the afternoon was fine, Mr. and Mrs. Gurney drove with us in their carriage to Pembroke Lodge, the country seat of Lord John Russell. It was an uncommonly beautiful afternoon, and the view from Richmond Hill was as perfect a specimen of an English landscape, seen under the most benignant auspices, as we could hope to enjoy. Orchards, gardens, villas, charming meadows enamelled with flowers, the silver windings of the Thames, the luxuriant outlines of the foliage, varied here and there by the graceful perpendicular of the poplars, all formed one of the richest of landscapes. The brow of the hill is beautifully laid out with tufts of trees, winding paths, diversified here and there with arbors and rustic seats.

Richmond Park is adorned with clumps of ancient trees, among which troops of deer were strolling. Pembroke Lodge is a plain, unostentatious building, rising in the midst of charming grounds. We were received in the drawing room by the young ladies, and were sorry to learn that Lady Russell was so unwell as to be unable to give us her company at dinner. Two charming little boys came in, and a few moments after, their father, Lord John. I had been much pleased with finding on the centre table a beautiful edition of that revered friend of my childhood, Dr. Watts's Divine Songs, finely illustrated. I remarked to Lord John that it was the face of an old friend. He said it was presented to his little boys by their godfather, Sir George Grey; and when, taking one of the little boys on his knee, he asked him if he could repeat me one of his hymns, the whole thing seemed so New England-like that I began to feel myself quite at home. I hope I shall some day see in America an edition of Dr. Watts, in which the illustrations do as much justice to the author's sentiments as in this, for in all our modern religious works for children there is nothing that excels these divine songs.

There were only a few guests; among them Sir George Grey and lady; he is nephew to Earl Grey, of reform memory, and she is the eldest daughter of the pious and learned Bishop Ryder, of Lichfield. Sir George is a man of great piety and worth, a liberal, and much interested in all benevolent movements. There was also the Earl of Albemarle, who is a colonel in the army, and has served many years

under Wellington, a particularly cheerful, entertaining, conversable man, full of anecdote. He told several very characteristic and comical stories about the Duke of Wellington.

At dinner, among other things, the conversation turned upon hunting. It always seemed to me a curious thing, that in the height of English civilization this vestige of the savage state should still remain. I told Lord Albemarle that I thought the idea of a whole concourse of strong men turning out to hunt a poor fox or hare, creatures so feeble and insignificant, and who can do nothing to defend themselves, was hardly consistent with manliness; that if they had some of our American buffaloes, or a Bengal tiger, the affair would be something more dignified and generous. Thereupon they only laughed, and told stories about fox hunters. It seems that killing a fox, except in the way of hunting, is deemed among hunters an unpardonable offence, and a man who has the misfortune to do it would be almost as unwilling to let it be known as if he had killed a man.

They also told about deer stalking in the highlands, in which exercise I inferred Lord John had been a proficient. The conversation reminded me of the hunting stories I had heard in the log cabins in Indiana, and I amused myself with thinking how some of the narrators would appear among my high-bred friends. There is such a quaint vivacity and droll-cry about that half-savage western life, as always gives it a charm in my recollection. I thought of the jolly old hunter who always concluded the operations of the day by discharging his rifle at his



candle after he had snugly ensconced himself in bed; and of the celebrated scene in which Henry Clay won an old hunter's vote in an election, by his aptness in turning into a political simile some points in the management of a rifle.

Now there is, to my mind, something infinitely more sublime about hunting in real earnest amid the solemn shadows of our interminable forests, than in making believe hunt in parks.

It is undoubtedly the fact, that these out-of-door sports of England have a great deal to do with the firm health which men here enjoy. Speaking of this subject, I could not help expressing my surprise to Lord John at the apparently perfect health enjoyed by members of Parliament, notwithstanding their protracted night labors. He thinks that the session of Parliament this year will extend nearly to August. Speaking of breakfasts, he said they often had delightful breakfasts about three o'clock in the day; this is a total reverse of all our ideas in regard to time.

After dinner Lord and Lady Ribblesdale came in, connections of Lord John by a former marriage. I sat by Lord John on the sofa, and listened with great interest to a conversation between him and Lady Grey, on the working of the educational system in England; a subject which has particularly engaged the attention of the English government since the reign of the present queen. I found a difficulty in understanding many of the terms they used, though I learned much that

interested me.

After a while I went to Lady Russell's apartment, and had an hour of very pleasant conversation with her. It greatly enlarges our confidence in human nature to find such identity of feeling and opinion among the really good of different countries, and of all different circles in those countries. I have never been more impressed with this idea than during my sojourn here in England. Different as the institutions of England and America are, they do not prevent the formation of a very general basis of agreement in so far as radical ideas of practical morality and religion are concerned; and I am increasingly certain that there is a foundation for a lasting unity between the two countries which shall increase constantly, as the increasing facilities of communication lessen the distance between us.

Lady Russell inquired with a good deal of interest after Prescott, our historian, and expressed the pleasure which she and Lord John had derived from his writings.

We left early, after a most agreeable evening. The next day at eleven o'clock we went to an engagement at Lambeth Palace, where we had been invited by a kind note from its venerable master, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Lambeth is a stately pile of quaint, antique buildings, rising most magnificently on the banks of the Thames. It is surrounded by beautiful grounds, laid out with choice gardening. Through an ancient hall, lighted by stained-glass windows, we were ushered into

the drawing room, where the guests were assembling. There was quite a number of people there, among others the lady and eldest son of the Bishop of London, the Earl and Countess Waldegrave, and the family friends of the archbishop.

The good archbishop was kind and benign, as usual, and gave me his arm while we explored the curiosities of the palace. Now, my dear, if you will please to recollect that the guide book says, "this palace contains all the gradations of architecture from early English to late perpendicular," you will certainly not expect me to describe it in one letter. It has been the residence of the archbishops of Canterbury from time immemorial, both in the days before the reformation and since.

The chapel was built between the years 1200 and 1300, and there used to be painted windows in it, as Archbishop Laud says, which contained the whole history of the world, from the creation to the day of judgment. Unfortunately these comprehensive windows were destroyed in the civil wars.

The part called the Lollards' Tower is celebrated as having been the reputed prison of the Lollards. These Lollards, perhaps you will remember, were the followers of John Wickliffe, called Lollards as Christ was called a "Nazarene," simply because the word was a term of reproach. Wickliffe himself was summoned here to Lambeth to give an account of his teachings, and in 1382, William Courtnay, Archbishop of

Canterbury, called a council, which condemned his doctrines. The tradition is, that at various times these Lollards were imprisoned here.

In order to get to the tower we had to go through a great many apartments, passages, and corridors, and terminate all by climbing a winding staircase, steeper and narrower than was at all desirable for any but wicked heretics, who ought to be made as uncomfortable as possible. However, by reasonable perseverance, the archbishop, the bishop's lady, and all the noble company present found themselves safely at the top. Our host remarked, I think, that it was the second time he had ever been there.

The room is thirteen feet by twelve, and about eight feet high, wainscotted with oak, which is scrawled over with names and inscriptions. There are eight large iron rings in the wall, to which the prisoners were chained; for aught we know, Wickliffe himself may have been one. As our kind host moved about among us with his placid face, we could not but think that times had altered since the days when archbishops used to imprison heretics, and preside over grim, inquisitorial tribunals. We all agreed, however, that, considering the very beautiful prospect this tower commands up and down the Thames, the poor Lollards in some respects might have been worse lodged.

We passed through the guard room, library, and along a corridor where hung a row of pictures of all the archbishops from the very earliest

times; and then the archbishop took me into his study, which is a most charming room, containing his own private library: after that we all sat down to lunch in a large dining hall. I was seated between the archbishop and a venerable admiral in the navy. Among other things, the latter asked me if there were not many railroad and steamboat accidents in America. O my countrymen, what trouble do you make us in foreign lands by your terrible carelessness! I was obliged, in candor, to say that I thought there was a shocking number of accidents of that sort, and suggested the best excuse I could think of--our youth and inexperience; but I certainly thought my venerable friend had touched a very indefensible point.

Among other topics discussed in the drawing room, I heard some more on dits respecting spiritual rappings. Every body seems to be wondering what they are, and what they are going to amount to.

We took leave of our kind host and his family, gratefully impressed with the simplicity and sincere cordiality of our reception. There are many different names for goodness in this world; but, after all, true brotherly kindness and charity is much the same thing, whether it show itself by a Quaker's fireside or in an archbishop's palace.

Leaving the archbishop's I went to Richmond's again, where I was most agreeably entertained for an hour or two. We have an engagement for Playford Hall to-morrow, and we breakfast with Joseph Sturge: it being now the time of the yearly meeting of the Friends, he and his family

are in town.