QUEENS AND THEIR WARS.

THE REIGN OF VICTORIA ONE OF COMPARATIVE PEACE.

The Cruel Days of Elizabeth and Anne—Both Were Fond of War—Catharine II. of Russia Extended Her Dominions By War—Spain in Isabella's Time—Empress Eugenie and the Franco-Prussian War.

The reign of Queen Victoria, now drawing near the close of its sixtieth year, were it in no other respect remarkable, would, on account of its extreme length alone, take a notable place in history. Length of days is no more assured to the King than to the subject, and when men now advanced in years remember that they can not recall the time when Victoria was not ruling over the British Empire they may well be excused for regarding a reign of this length as quite phenomenal. So it is, for, save in the mythical annals of the Chinese, history records few instances of a longer lease of power, while in several of these, large deductions must be made on account of the tender age of the sovereign at accession, so that, considered from all points of view, the present occupant of the British throne has probably held the reins longer than any ruler since the authentic annals of human history began. If, however, the period of Victoria be reckoned by achievements, if, as Sheridan says, "A life spent worthily should be measured by deeds, not years," Victoria has reigned longer than Methuselah lived. Art and science and industry stood still during the nine centuries of life accorded to the patriarch of the desert; he ate the same kind of food, lived in the same style of tent, plowed his ground with the same model of plow, when he was 900 as when he was 90, while with Victoria, the world has advanced a century with every decade.

When Queen Victoria ascended the throne the railroad and the steamshi were in their infancy, the daguerreotype had just come; the telegraph and the telephone, the typewriter and the reaper, the ocean cable, the sewing machine and the repeating gun, were of the future. Of the names now identified with the art, the science, the literature, the poetry of the present day, hardly one was known. In the year when Victoria was proclaimed, Charles Darwin was a young man of 28, and had just begun those observations which are recorded in his wonderful books; Huxley was a boy of 12; Tyndall was a youth of 17; Mill an almost unknown man of 31; Spencer was the same age as Tyndall; Dickens was a local reporter of 25; George Eliot, a girl of 18, at school in Nuneaton; Tennyson was 28, and unknown save by a little volume of not the very best poetry; and Edison, Tesla and most of the other great specialists in electricity were not yet born. Remove these and their co-laborers from the field of action and the shadow on the dial of time might just as easily be turned back a thousand years as a hundred, for they and men like them represent most that constitutes the difference between modern and ancient life. To say that Queen Victoria has ruled ever since the Middle Ages appears at first glance an unscrupulously bold statement, but when the crown was first placed on her head the life of her day bore a greater resemblance to that of the fourteenth that that which according to our ideas, is peculiar to the close of the nineteenth century.

Wonderful for its length alone, the reign of the present sovereign of Great Britain is remarkable for another feature in which it bears exceedingly favorable comparison with that of almost any other Queen Regnant who ever held a scepter. The old adage concerning the good fortune of a nation whose annals are dull, dates feom a time when the quarrels of kings and the shocks of hostile ranks were the only topics deemed worthy of the historian's notice. Only in our own time has the historical writer learned that the story of peace is of more thrilling interest than the narrative of war. It was eleven years after the coronation of Victoria before Macaulay's volumes purposing to narrate the history of the English people instead of the English kings and armies, came from the press, and there is no doubt a historian of the old school, sitting down to write of the Victoria era, would have found himself greatly hampered from lack of material. For in all these years, covering two average lifetimes, the people of England have been engaged in but one great foreign war, the war with Russia, in 1855, and it was fought at so great a distance from the island that, save from the papers, little was heard of it in England. Petty contests were numerous. There have been small wars waged in Asia, Africa and America, there was a mutiny among the Indian troops in 1857, but of actual conflict the island has seen nothing; not even the boom of a hostile gun has disturbed the commercial and industrial progress of the English people.

That the reign of a Queen should be an era of peace seems at first glance entirely natural and altogether to be expected. Women are averse to war, and abhor the sight of blood. They are the principal losers when regiments are decimated in battle, for it is easier to die than to live when those we love are dead, and they themselves see nothing in the future but loneliness, misery and want. But it is a singuler fact that while the woman may shudder at the sight of a drawn sword and fear to touch the trigger of a pistol, the sovereign can, without compunction or remorse, set the drums to beating and the regiments to marching, and the guns to bellowing as a matter of course and without apparent reflection on the gravity of the act. Thus it is the reigns of female rulers have, almost as a rule, been periods of warlike conflict, and the fact is, so strange that there is no little difficulty in accounting for it. It may be that the spirit of chivalrous daring is more active during the reign of a Queen than a King; that personal likes and dislikes, more potent with women than with men, have something to do with the matter; that ambition once aroused, is more feverish, that lust of power is less scrupulous in selecting means for its gratification; but each of these considerations has its difficulties, so that while the fact is clear, the reason for the fact must be left where it was found—in the dark.

There were two royal predecessors of Victoria who as well deserve the title of "bloody" as a prefix to their names as the third who receivedi t. Mary Tudor followed the example of her much-married father in putting people to death for their religious belief, but so, for that matter, did every other sovereign of those times, for the stake and the halter, the branding irons and the block were then valid arguments in religious and political controversy, every ruler taking the ground that his views were so obviously unimpeachable that those who differed ought to be hanged or beheaded for their stupidity if for nothing else. But the 73,000 executions during the reign of Elizabeth, most of them for offenses that would now be punished with a month in the work house, are a frightful reminder of the savagery of those cruel days. Aside from the hangings and drawings and quarterings and other brutal punishments, almost as common when Anne was on the throne as when Elizabeth ruled, both reigns were rendered notable by great foreign conflicts. Elizabeth, as well as Anne, was fond of war. When the Spanish Armada was expected on the south coasts, Elizabeth went to the Tilbury camp, mounted a horse, paraded up and down before the troops and thoroughly enjoyed the excitement and the roars that went up in admiration of her bravery. When Marlborough was waging the war of the Spanish succession, Anne was doing Elizabeth's act in London to encourage the regiments about to leave for the war. No reader of English history needs to be told of the result in either case, for, although Elizabeth's subjects were not overfond of her, and Anna was generally known among her people as "Brandy Nan," from her favorite tipple, yet the troops were undoubtedly inspired by the military bearing of the royal ladies, and thrashed the Spaniards in the channel and the French at Blenheim, happy in the belief that they were pleasing their sovereign.

The Elizabethan trick of galloping about on horseback in order to stimulate the fervor of an army was practiced with success by the famous Maria Theresa. She was not to blame for the fact that her reign was one long war, as the conflicts of her day were not of her making. The most florid, if not the most reliable, of English historians has graphically told the story of the treachery of Frederick, of his preparations for war while warmly professing his desire for peace, of the stealthy march into Silesia, how the continent sprang to arms to tear in pieces the Austrian dominions, and how the war spread over the world and raged in countries where the principals in the strife were absolutely unknown. Looked at aright, however, the grand figure in the Titanic struggle was not the treacherous Frederick, but the heroic Maria. Abandoned by allies, outnumbered by enemies, with all Europe against her, unable, as she said, to trust even her chamberlains, lest French or Prussian spies should be of their number, not once did she flinch nor lose courage, and when she rode up the Mount of Defiance and shook the imperial sword of state toward the four points of the compass, challenging the world to question her rights to throne and dominions, no wonder the fiery Huns shrieked their readiness to die for her and her cause. And so they did, for Hungarian bones were left to bleach on every battle-field of the seven years' war, and thus they saved the empire.

There was another Empress, miscalled the Great, Catharine II., of Russia, who had no wars forced on her, but who had a sort of preternatural knack of picking a quarrel and forcing a war on everybody else. She had three bellicose female predecessors on the imperial throne of Russia, the first Catharine, Anna and Elizabeth, but by comparison with her they are as Mrs. Caudle to an Amazon. She was forever on the lookout for territory that, in her opinion would neatly round off a corner of her dominions. When she found a district that suited her purpose a woman's because was reason enough for taking it, and if the owner objected to this summary appropriation of his land, so much the worse for the owner. In Asia she vastly extended the dominions of the empire, the scattered and isolated tribes falling an easy prey to the Russian regiments, but in Europe she stole from all her neighbors that she felt able to fight, and during her reign a long march was made toward the Turkish capital. Her master stroke, on which she always prided herself was the partition of Poland. The brave but unfortunate people had become so weakened by civil strife and foreign war that they were helpless against the robber nations, and so their land was divided, not equally, for Catharine wanted and would have taken it all, but for fear of the wrath of Prussia and Austria. As it was, she succeeded in getting the lion's share, much to the chagrin of the other thieves, who might have gone to war about the matter had they not already had in the seven years' war all the fighting they wanted.

Catharine never got enough of war to suit her taste, but there was another Queen who did, and who testified that she never felt happier in her life than on the day when she left her dominions, as she supposed, for good and all. How Isabella of Spain would have enjoyed the fray had her conflicts been between her own and the subjects of some other monarch we have no means of knowing, for during the thirty-five years of her reign her affectionate people kept things in so constant and uniform a stew that she had no time to think of fighting anybody else. First the Basques broke out, as they were always ready to do, and after they had been quieted by promises to do something for them the Catalonians got up an insurrection, then came the Aragonese, then the Catalonians, then a big insurrection down in Andalusia, then a row away off in Galicia. Then somebody in Leon "pronounced" about something, nobody knows or cares what, and after he had been shot all Castile raised an uproar, which necessitated the shedding of a considerable quantity of Castilian gore. Estremadura came next, then Navarre, then the Basques again. The turn of the cities was latter. There were rebellions in Barcelona and Valencia and Cadiz and Malaga, where the people left gathering their grapes and making their raisins for the more congenial business of fighting the government. Seville had to be bombarded and Madrid, on more than one occasion, came near sharing its fate. It was simply dreadful, so dreadful, in fact, that after thirty-five years of this sort of thing the whole Spanish people rose as one Hidalgo and told Isabella to go, and she went.

If all the quarrelsome queens had been as summarily treated the world might have enjoyed more peace, for the rule is invariable that whenever a queen regnant bobs up in history, it is in connection with a war. There was Athaliah, who appears as the slayer of all the royal family and disappears in a revolution. There was Boadicea, who led the Britons, much to their discomfiture; and there is Zenobia, who makes her entry on the historic stage as the warlike Queen of Palmyra, and her exit as the wife of a Roman senator. There was Mary Stuart, on whose account every school girl is prepared to shed tears, but who was known in her own time as the trickiest, most turbulent woman in Europe. Even in our own day, we have had an example of a warlike empress, for it was Eugenie, who, when the Franco-Prussian struggle broke out, declared, with clenched fist, "This is my war," and lived to regret that she had so much to do with it. From her case, it appears that a queen does not need to rule with undivided sway to make international trouble. In fact, a woman with influence to spare does not need to be crowned, for there were the ladies who filled the courts of Louis XIV., and his equally virtuous great-grandson, who succeeded him, the La Vallieres, the De Montespans, the Maintenons, the Chateauroux, the Pompadours, the Du Barrys; everybody knows the whole bad lot and what part they had in the politics and wars of their day. They were not queens, but in this particular they might as well have been, for not even Catharine the Great did more to disturb the peace of neighboring nations than these vicious favorites of two corrupt kings.

ABOUT PROMINENT PEOPLE.

Notes About Some of the Great Folks of the World.

President McKinley has already distinguished himself by shaking the hands of 1,395 callers at the White House in thirty-one minutes.

Miss Duffy, of New York city, is a dealer in wild animals. She supplies menageries in all parts of the States with lions, tigers, bears and elephants.

Patrick Donahoe, the owner of "The Boston Pilot," who has just celebrated his 86th birthday, is in good health, and attends regularly to his business.

Queen Victoria's salon in her private railway coach was furnished at a cost of $30,000. The carpet cost $750, and each door-handle a like amount.

Mme. Lillian Nordica, the great singer, is a grand-daughter of the late Rev. John Allen, an eloquent Methodist preacher, known as "Campmeeting John Allen."

Herbert Spencer has refused the offer of Cambridge University to make him a doctor of science, on the ground that he has always declined to accept such honors.

The original manuscript of Keats' "Endymion" has just been sold for $3,475, which is without doubt much more than Keats ever received for his entire poetical works.

Jose Echegaray, Spain's greatest playwright, is 64 years old. He is an engineer and a mathematician. He was once a Minister of State. He has written fifty-two plays.

The life of Tennyson, on which his son, the present lord, has been for some time at work, has gone to the press. It is to be published in two good-sized volumes in the autumn.

Princess Marie von Hohenlohe, wife of the Imperial Chancellor, has performed the notable feat of killing a bear while hunting on her estates in Russia. The Princess is 68 years old.

M. Andree, who means to try for the north pole again next summer, has had the size of his balloon increased by 300 cubic feet, which will enable him to take along 400 pounds more of dead weight.

William Bayley recently disposed of 51 per cent. of the stock of the Tom Boy mine at Telluride, Colo., to an English syndicate for the sum of $2,225,000. The mine has paid $800,000 in dividends the last two years.

It is said that Mme. Sarah Bernhardt has never used wine or other intoxicants, confining her beverages mostly to milk and water, and that she attributes largely to this the remarkable preservation of her powers.

Among the ancestors of Dr. Nansen was a Hans Nansen, born in 1598, who explored the White sea, spent many years in the Iceland trade, and wrote a geography which described Arctic routes so well that a copy of the book was in use as late as 1841.

Gladstone's brilliant bit of satire on the German Emperor's exhibitions of judgment and experience is seconded by the London Spectator, which says:—"He seems capable of thanking God for a great harvest and sending him the Order of the Red Eagle in acknowledgment."

Ham N'Ghi, ex-King of Annam, now thirty years old, whom the French are keeping as a State prisoner at Allare keeping as a State prisoner at Algiers, has developed some skill as a painter, and intends to send a few of his pictures to the Salon. He is an amateur photographer, rides a bicycle, and studies mathematics and philosophy in French text-books.

ARMS AND LEGS.

According to the result of many measurements made at the Anthropological Laboratory in London, the right arm in human beings is, in a majority of cases longer than the left arm, while, on the contrary, the left leg is longer than the right leg. Sometimes, however, the relative proportions are exactly reversed, but very seldom does perfect equality exist between the two sides. The tendency of the right arm to exceed the left arm in strength is somewhat greater in men than in women, while equality of strength in the two arms occurs almost twice as frequently with women as with men.

The Drunkard's Family.

Ralph Stone stood in the barn door, looking over the fields where he had worked so hard all through the early spring and the hot summer, early and late; he had worked hopefully and faithfully, and now to lose his home, for that was how it would end.

The cloud on the young face grew darker as he lingered, and he spoke passionately; "I will not stand it, after all I have done, to see it all go for drink; even our home to go to old Jim Allen for rum. I will go away and let it all go."

A hand was laid on his arm, and a sad voice said: "Ralph, would you leave your mother and little sisters to bear their trouble alone? Is your home all that you love?"

"Mother, you know it is not. It is for you and Lucy and little Dolly that I care so much; but what can I do for you if our home is mortgaged, for you know that he has already drank up nearly, or quite all, he can get on the place, and he will sell the crops we have worked so hard to raise; so we can barely live, without paying a mortgage. Besides, the farm is yours, mother, and no one has a right to take it from you for anything, much less rum."

"Ralph, the farm shall not go. I have no right to let my children's home go, and I will not. Your father cannot dispose of it without my consent, and I have made up my mind that my children shall have a home while they live."

"But he will strike you, mother—and I shall kill him if he does. I will never never see him strike you again."

"Hush! Oh, hush! my son! You must not speak so of your father. It is not that he is cruel to me; it is the drink. He used to be so kind and love us so, and remember, he is your father still."

"Honor him! when he makes himself lower than the dumb brutes, and when he abuses you, mother—the best woman on earth; and Lucy! Look at her—deformed for life by him. And you ask me to lone and honor him! Mother, I love and honor you with all my heart, and will obey you as far as it is in my power to, but I cannot love or honor him."

"Don't—don't speak so, my son. Try to be patient and pray that he may become a man again. I will not give up our home, and you must stay and care for me and your sisters. Here comes Frank. I am sure my boys will help each other, and help me to bear life bravely."

There was a gathering moisture in Ralph's eye, and his voice was a little husky, as he said: "Yes, mother; we will do the best we can, if he will not strike you or the children. If he does —I will not promise. Come, Frank; we must be at work. I have idled too long already," and they hastened away, while tears kept back for her boys' sake now rolled down the mother's face unheeded, and, sinking on her knees, she prayed long and earnestly that in some way this trouble might be removed and their home still remain without bringing a heavier sorrow.

When she arose, although she could see no way out of her trouble, she felt that "He who cares for the sparrow" would care for her and her children, and she returned to her work with a firmer trust, if not a lighter heart.

Ralph Stone was now 18, and Frank two years younger, both well-grown boys, and for the past four years had done nearly all the work on their small farm, while the father spent his time in idleness and drinking all he could get to sell, or get trusted for, until now his health was much broken, and he was so deeply in debt that old Jim Allen thought he had better secure his pay before it was too late, and so John Stone had been trying to get his wife to mortgage the place to Allen, and when she had refused, had struck her and sworn that she should sign or she should suffer for it.

The little farm had been very productive when given to Mrs. Stone by her father, and had remained so as long as well cared for, but for several years, before the boys were old and intelligent enough to attend to it as it should be, it had been neglected, and until the present season had not regained its old fertility. But now it was showing the care the boys had given it. The hay had been cut and carefully stored in the barn, and most of the grain; while corn and potatoes promised an abundant crop—more than enough to supply the family if only it was not sold to satisfy the insatiable drank demon.

Ralph and Frank worked almost in silence, for both knew what they had to fear from him who was a father only in name, and as the sun began to sink towards the green hill-tops, they watched the road to the village, least he come before their work was done and beat their loved mother or helpless sisters. Evening came and the father did not; but this was not unusual, and they did their accustomed work and ate their supper—in peace, Ralph thought, but did not say, lest it pain his mother.

The night passed quickly and with the earliest dawn the boys were up and at work. Mrs. Stone was a little uneasy at her husband remaining away all night, but only feared that he was drinking more heavily than usual.

They had just finished their early breakfast, when a wagon drove slowly up with several of their neighbors in it, and Ralph hastened out, wondering at such an early call from so many.

The oldest man, Mr. Rogers, came forward at once to meet Ralph, while the others stayed at the wagon.

"Good morning, Mr. Rogers," Ralph said, pleasantly. "You are abroad early."

"Yes, Ralph, and not on a pleasant errand, either. Your father——" He stopped and turned away his head.

"Father did not come home last night, Mr. Rogers. What has he done?"

"Well, lad, it's hard to tell you, but it must be done. He started to come home last night, but he had been drinking considerably, and he had a bottle along, too. He got along all right till he got to Mill brook, and it seems he wanted a drink of water, or missed the bridge—anyway, I had to go to town right early, and when I got to the bridge I saw someone lying half in the water, face down, and—it was your father, lad, dead for hours; and so I got the neighbors to help me bring him home. I'm sorry for you, lad. It's hard to have him go that way, but I guess it is better for you all to have him gone. Why, lad! Lad, don't look like that. The Lord knows what is best, and you must bear up for your mother's sake."

"Oh, Mr. Rogers; only yesterday I almost wished him dead, and I said I would kill him if he ever struck mother again, and now he is dead!"

"Well, Ralph, you could not help feeling that way with such a good mother, and him abusing her, but you must try and forget it now, and your mother must know."

Without a word Ralph turned and walked into the house to his mother's side, and, throwing his arms around her, said:

"Mother, dear mother; father will never drink again. I hope you will forgive my wicked words of yesterday, and I hope God will forgive me. Dear mother, I will do all I can for you. Try to bear it, mother, for Lucy's and Dolly's sake."

Mr. Rogers then said:

"Mrs. Stone, this is the hardest errand I ever came on, but the Lord will comfort you in His own way and time. Now we must think of getting him in and cared for. There won't have to be an inquest, for it is plain enough what caused his death."

And so John Stone was brought into the home he had made so unhappy and had tried so hard to place in the hands of the rum-seller; brought home for the last time.

Their tears were very bitter when they remembered what he had been before the drink demon took possession of him, and, and then of the death he died

After he was buried Ralph and Frank went back to their work with renewed energy, for they knew that what they made from the farm now would bring added comfort to their mother and sisters, and they were determined to give Lucy an education and all the comforts in their power to atone for the sufferings she had to endure from her deformity.

Jim Allen tried to get Mrs. Stone to pay for the liquor he had sold her husband, but she told him sternly to return the life and manhood that he had taken from her husabnd, and then she would think about paying him.

He went away with many threats, but he did not trouble her again.

The years passed rapidly away, and the little farm yielded an abundant support for the family.

The girls were kept in school, and Frank spent the long winter evenings in study, fitting himself for a business life, as he felt that to be his lifework, and he could be spared from the farm, as Ralph could hire help as such times as he needed.

Ralph was a practical and enthusiastic farmer, and while Frank was studying to fit himself for business, Ralph was studying the best methods of farming, and Dolly, now growing a fine, healthy girl, was quite as interested as Ralph, and could make as good butter as could be found in any dairy, and no one raised nicer chicks or sold more eggs from the same number of hens than Dolly.

Lucy had grown stronger with the years, and had been an earnest student, though she was still delicate.

Her spriritual life had developed, also, and, being a great lover of music and a good musician, she had been chosen organist for the little church where they all worshiped; she was also an earnest worker in the Sunday school, and a very ardent worker for the temperance cause, for she could not forget her father or his sad death.

Frank joined with her earnestly in this, and together they fought the drink fiend until there were no more open saloons in their loved state of Vermont, but they still found plenty of work for the cause of temperance.

Ralph and Dolly dislike the liquor traffic quite as much as the others, but Dolly says they can do better farm work than temperance work, and so they leave that to the others.

It is again early fall, and Ralph and Frank stand in the barn door where we saw them first. It is near evening, and they are looking out at the little valley, and then at the hills that surround it. Frank is going away on the morrow to enter a business college, and is wondering when he shall again see the sun set on this familiar scene. At last Ralph spoke. "You may go where you will, Frank, to find you a home, but you will never find a fairer spot than this little valley nestling here among the green hills. I can never leave it. There would never be another place that I could love as I do this."

"Yes, it is beautiful, and I love it, too, but not as you do perhaps, and I have other work to do I am sure, but it is very hard to go away from you and from them all," and Frank turned hurriedly away.

"Keep up a good courage, Frank, for this will be your home still, as long as you wish it, and you know it would not do for everybody to stay in the home nest. There is work to be done out in the world, and there must be workers there, and I am sure that for mother's and Lucy's sake you will be good and brave. The sun is set and we must go in."

And now we will leave them to follow their life work in their own chosen way.

A PLAIN TALE FROM THE HILLS.

It was at a table d'hote dinner at a hill station in India that a very young officer just up from the plains found himself seated next to a lady whom he too kfor one of the grass whom he took for one of the grass widows common in those parts. He made himself agreeable, but his neighbor seemed a good deal out of spirits; so he said, sympathetically:

I suppose you can't help thinking of your poor husband grilling down below?

But the lady was a real widow, and when he learned that he changed his seat.