

mere State ceremonies which can be equally well performed by other English members of her family, is to ask her to run the risk of entirely disabling herself for the discharge of those other duties which cannot be neglected without serious injury to the public interests. . . . More the Queen cannot do, and more the kindness and good feeling of her people will surely not exact from her."

This dignified remonstrance was afterwards endorsed by a speech of the Duke of Argyle. His Grace remarks: "I think it a circumstance worthy of observation, and which ought to be known to the people of this country, that during all the years of the Queen's affliction, during which she has lived necessarily in comparative retirement, she has omitted no part of that public duty which concerns her as Sovereign of this country; that on no occasion during her grief has she neglected work, in those public duties that belong to her exalted position."

And in 1866, at a great meeting held at St. James's Hall, we are told that Mr. Bright asked leave to refer in a few words to the insinuation contained in the speech of the Member for the Tower Hamlets as to the indifference of the Queen to public affairs.

"I am not accustomed," he said, "to stand up in defence of those who are possessors of crowns; but I could not sit and hear that observation without a sensation of wonder and of pain. I think there has been, by many persons, a great injustice done to the Queen in reference to her desolate and widowed position; and I venture to say this, that a woman, be she Queen of a great realm, or the wife of one of your labouring men, who can keep alive in her heart a great sorrow for the lost object of her life and affection, is not at all likely to be wanting in a great and generous sympathy for you."

These remarks elicited immense applause, and the whole body of people in the Hall rose simultaneously and mani-

66 Her Majesty the Queen

fested their loyalty by singing a verse of "God save the Queen." We do not know if the Queen ever heard of the speech, but when Mr. Bright lost his wife, a kind message came from Windsor Castle expressing her sympathy in his bereavement.

In the memoir of Rev. Norman Macleod there are many touching references to the Queen. In his Journal under the date of May 14th, 1862, he says: "After dinner I was summoned unexpectedly to the Queen's room. She was alone. She met me, and with an unutterably sad expression which filled my eyes with tears, at once began to speak about the Prince. It is impossible for me to recall distinctly the sequence or substance of that long conversation. She spoke of his excellence, his love, his cheerfulness, how he was everything to her; how all on earth seemed dead to her. She said she never shut her eyes to trials, but liked to look them in the face; how she would never shrink from duty, but that all was at present done mechanically; that her highest ideas of purity and love were obtained from him, and that God could not be displeased with her love. But there was nothing morbid in her grief. I spoke freely to her about all I felt regarding him—the love of the nation and their sympathy; and took every opportunity of bringing before her the reality of God's love and sympathy, her noble calling as a Queen, the value of her life to the nation, the blessedness of prayer."

The sum of his impressions is given in letter written in 1887, before he went to India. "I had a long interview with the Queen. With my last breath I will uphold the excellence and nobleness of her character. It was really grand to hear her talk on moral courage and on living for duty."

The marriage of the Princess Alice to Prince Louis of Hesse, so long delayed, took place very quietly at Osborne

on July 1st. She was given away by her paternal uncle, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, the Queen sitting in deep mourning in the background.

The following month the Queen was again at her beloved Balmoral, when she erected the Cairn in memory of the Prince Consort on the Craig Lowrgan. "I and my poor six orphans," she writes, "all placed stones on it, and our initials as well as those of the three absent ones." Below is the inscription chosen by the Princess Royal:—

"He being made perfect in a short time fulfilled a long time;
For his soul pleased the Lord.
Therefore hastened He to take him away from among the wicked.

Mr. Leitch, the artist, who was drawing-master to the Queen and Royal Family for twenty-two years, speaks of the sadly altered life at Balmoral.

He writes: "The Queen is still the kind, good, gracious lady that she always was, but I need hardly tell you that there is a change. Indeed, the whole place is changed. Everything very quiet and still. How different from my first visit here!—the joyous bustle in the morning when the Prince went out; the Highland ponies and the dogs; the gillies and the pipers coming home; the Queen and her ladies going out to meet them; and the merry time afterwards; the torchlight dances on the green, and the servants' ball afterwards."

In the following autumn Her Majesty was induced to resume her sketching.

In September Her Majesty went to Germany. Then was a passing visit to King Leopold at Laeken, when she had her first interview with her future daughter-in-law, the Princess Alexandra of Denmark.

The remains of the Prince Consort were removed, on December 18th, from the vault beneath St. George's Chapel to the Mausoleum at Frogmore. The ceremonial was strictly private.

68 Her Majesty the Queen

On the following March 7th, London was *en fête* to welcome the Prince of Wales' bride-elect, the "Sea-kings daughter from over the sea," the fair young Princess Alexandra. The marriage was solemnised in St. George's Chapel on March 10th, the Queen in her widow's weeds being present in the Royal closet.

On May 9th, Her Majesty visited the Military Hospital of Netley. Seven years before she had laid the foundation stone, accompanied by her beloved husband. In one ward an old soldier from India lay nearly at the point of death. When the Queen had spoken to him, he said, "I thank God that He has allowed me to live long enough to see your Majesty with my own eyes." The Queen and Princess Alice of Hesse, who accompanied her, and who had recently given birth to a daughter at Windsor, were much touched by this loyal speech.

The first public ceremony which the Queen attended was the unveiling of the statue of the Prince Consort at Aberdeen. She appeared much depressed on this occasion.

The following August, on her way to Balmoral, she inaugurated another statue of the Prince Consort at Perth. At the beginning of the year 1865, the Queen showed her deep solicitude for her subjects by causing a letter to be written to the various directors of the railway companies, calling their attention to the increasing number of serious accidents. This important letter received instant attention from the directors and the public press.

In March, Her Majesty went through the Consumption Hospital at Brompton; and in August, after visiting Germany and Rosenau, the Court spent September and October in the Highlands. Princess Alice speaks "of the terrible sufferings" of the first three years of the Queen's widowhood, but adds, "that after the long storm came rest, so that the daughter could tenderly remind the mother, without reopening the wound, of the happy silver wedding

Widowhood 69

which might have been this year, when the royal parents would have been surrounded by so many grandchildren in those young households."

In October Lord Palmerston died, and the year closed sorrowfully for the Queen with the death of her beloved uncle and friend, King Leopold.

On February 6th, 1866, the Queen opened the first session of her seventh Parliament. Her Majesty, who wore half-mourning, a deep purple velvet robe trimmed with white ermine, sat silent and wrapt in thought, while the Royal Speech was read by the Lord Chancellor. At the conclusion she rose from the throne, kissed the Prince of Wales and shook hands with Prince Christian, and then retired with the usual ceremony.

At this time a new decoration, styled the Albert Medal, was instituted by Royal sign manual. It was to be awarded to those who saved, or endeavoured to save, the lives of others from shipwreck or other perils of the sea. The Queen also sent the eminent American philanthropist, Mr. Peabody, a miniature of herself, and would willingly have conferred on him a baronetcy or Grand Order of the Bath, in gratitude for his munificence to the poor of London, if Mr. Peabody would have accepted it.

Two Royal marriages were solemnised in this year: that of the Princess Mary of Cambridge to the Duke of Teck; and Her Majesty's third daughter, Princess Helena, to Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein—the bride being in her twenty-first and the bridegroom in his thirty-sixth year. The Queen gave her daughter away.

The war in Germany saw two of the Queen's sons-in-law, the Crown Prince of Prussia and Prince Louis of Hesse, ranged on opposite sides. Austria was utterly worsted, and Prussia ultimately annexed Hanover and Hesse-Cassel.

In October the Queen evinced her usual interest in her people's welfare by opening the fine new waterworks

Her Majesty the Queen

at Aberdeen; and she came again forth from her seclusion in the following February, to open Parliament.

In the course of the year the deeply-interesting book entitled "The Early Years of H.R.H. the Prince Consort," compiled under the direction of Her Majesty by Lieut.-Gen. the Hon. C. Grey, made its appearance.

In the May Her Majesty in person laid the first stone of the Hall of Arts and Science at Kensington, afterwards known as the Royal Albert Hall. On this occasion the Prince of Wales read an address to the Queen, who replied, contrary to custom with her, in a scarcely audible voice.

The following May Her Majesty laid the foundation of the new buildings for St. Thomas's Hospital, and in her reply to the address, referred to the founding of the Hospital by her predecessor, Edward VI., and to the great interest taken in it by her late husband. She also alluded to the merciful preservation of her son, the Duke of Edinburgh, from the hand of an assassin in Port Jackson, New South Wales. He had been shot in the back by a man named O'Farrell, but the ball had been extracted. Before the close of this year the Queen's volume appeared, "Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands." Her Majesty sent a copy to Charles Dickens, with the graceful words, "From one of the humblest of writers to one of the greatest."

In November 1869 the Queen visited the City for the purpose of opening the new bridge over the Thames at Blackfriars, and the new Viaduct over the Fleet valley, from Holborn Hill to Newgate Street; and the following year, 1870, she was present at a most interesting ceremony, when Her Majesty, accompanied by the Prince and Princess of Wales, opened the new buildings erected for the University of London in Burlington Gardens.

This year was an eventful one for the Continent, for, as Barnett Smith tells us, the war between Germany and France led to the re-making of the map of Europe so far

as these countries were concerned, and the Emperor and Empress of the French were driven into exile, and took up their abode at Chislehurst. During the autumn of this year, while the Queen and her family were at Balmoral, Princess Louise became engaged to the Marquis of Lorne, eldest son of the Duke of Argyle. The marriage took place the following March at St. George's, and the Duke of Argyle attracted much notice by appearing in the "garb of old Gaul, with kilt, philibeg, sporran and claymore complete." Rooms were allotted to the young couple in Kensington Palace.

Her Majesty opened the Royal Albert Hall on March 29th, and on June 21st the new St. Thomas's Hospital, and knighted the treasurer, Mr. Francis Hill. In November the news of the Prince of Wales's illness from typhoid fever created great solicitude. For some days there was intense anxiety, for the Prince's life was in imminent danger; but on December 14th, the anniversary of the Prince Consort's death from the same fever, there was a slight improvement in his condition, and from that date he continued to improve. The universal sympathy shown by the whole country during those terrible days of suspense made a lasting impression on the Queen.

February 27th, 1872, was observed as a day of national thanksgiving. The Queen, with the Prince and Princess of Wales and Princess Beatrice, went in state to St. Paul's, where a solemn Te Deum was sung.

During the next few years events came thick and fast, some of them very nearly affecting the Queen. The death of her valued friend and spiritual adviser, Dr. Norman Macleod, was a sad loss to Her Majesty; and soon afterwards she laid the foundation stone of a monument to her dear friend the Duchess of Sutherland in the grounds of Dunrobin Castle. Shortly after this the Queen received news of the death of her beloved sister, Princess Feodora,

Her Majesty the Queen

the Dowager Princess of Hohenlohe-Langenburg. In January 1873 the Emperor Napoleon died at Chislehurst; and in the following May a fatal accident befel one of the Queen's grandsons, Prince Frederick William of Hesse, who fell from a window at Darmstadt and was killed.

On January 23rd, 1874, the Duke of Edinburgh was married to the Grand Duchess Marie of Russia, the ceremony taking place in the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg.

In April of this year Her Majesty visited Gosport, and inspected the sailors and marines of the Royal Navy who had taken part in the war against the Ashantees. At a later period she conferred medals on nine seamen and marines.

On the occasion of the Jubilee Meeting of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Queen addressed a letter to the President, Lord Harrowby, "expressing her deep interest in the success of the efforts made at home and abroad for the purpose of diminishing the cruelties on dumb animals."

There appeared this year the first volume of Sir Theodore Martin's "Life of the Prince Consort"; and among other tributes to his memory was the erection of a statue at the termination of the Holborn Viaduct.

The Queen was prevented from opening Parliament this year by the alarming illness of her youngest son, Prince Leopold, from typhoid fever; but he eventually recovered. As Princess Alice remarks, "He had already been given back three times to his family from the brink of the grave."

In October the Prince of Wales left England for a lengthened tour through Her Majesty's Indian dominions.

The Queen made many public appearances this year; amongst them she opened a new wing of the London Hospital, which had been built by the Grocers' Company. She also erected a memorial cross to the memory of her personal friend, Lady Augusta Stanley, at Frogmore.

In 1877 Her Majesty visited Lord Beaconsfield at

Hughenden. It is also worthy of note that her first grandchild, Princess Charlotte of Prussia, was married to the Hereditary Prince of Saxe-Meiningen; and in the same year her cousin, Princess Elizabeth of Prussia, to the Hereditary Grand Duke of Oldenburg. A grievous trouble came to the Queen in December. On the seventeenth anniversary of the Prince Consort's death, her good and beloved daughter, the Princess Alice of Hesse, died of diphtheria at Darmstadt. Few princesses have been more loved and revered.

The following March the Duke of Connaught was married at St. George's to the Princess Louise of Prussia, and in May Her Majesty received the news of the birth of her first great-grandchild, the daughter of the Princess of Saxe-Meiningen.

The Queen was in her Highland retreat when the sad news of the Prince Imperial's death, killed in the Zulu war, reached her. She felt it very deeply, and wrote in her Journal: "To think of that dear young man, the apple of his mother's eye, born and nurtured in purple, dying thus is too fearful, too awful; and inexplicable and dreadful that the others should not have turned round and fought for him. It is too horrible!"

In 1887 another attempt was made on the Queen's life. A man named Roger Maclean fired at her, but on the plea of insanity he was sentenced to be confined during Her Majesty's pleasure. During this year the marriage of the Duke of Albany to Princess Helen of Waldeck took place, and the young couple had Claremont assigned to them. When the Egyptian War broke out, the Duke of Connaught accompanied Sir Garnett Wolseley. The news of the great victory at Tel-el-kebir gave great joy. The telegram that reached the Queen said, "The Duke of Connaught is well, and behaved admirably, leading his brigade to the attack."

The new Law Courts in the Strand were formally opened

74 Her Majesty the Queen

by the Queen in December. The following March the Queen sustained a severe accident; she slipped upon some stairs at Windsor and sprained her knee. For about a year it was a source of pain and much discomfort.

In 1884 the Duke of Albany died at Cannes from a fit of apoplexy; and in 1885 Her Majesty's youngest child, Princess Beatrice, married Prince Henry of Battenberg in Whippingham Church, Isle of Wight.

There were numerous other good works inaugurated by the Queen during the next few years: the laying of the foundation stone of the new Medical Examination Hall of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons on the Thames Embankment; the opening of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition at South Kensington, the Liverpool Exhibition, and the Royal Holloway College for Women at Mount Lee, Egham; and also of the People's Palace at the East End, in the May preceding Jubilee Day. There have been three royal jubilees in the history of England, but none of them can compare with the Jubilee of June 21st, 1887, unless it be the Jubilee of 1897, when our beloved Sovereign commemorated the sixtieth year of her reign. It was a sight that thrilled all hearts when the Queen left her palace gates that June morning, surrounded by her glorious guard of honour, sons, sons-in-law and grandsons, on her way to Westminster Abbey. The fair young Queen of fifty years before was now a grey-haired woman, but the loving heart still responded to her faithful subjects' acclamations. Since then our beloved Sovereign has celebrated her Sixtieth Jubilee, and those ten years have brought her many fresh sorrows. The loss of her three sons-in-law, the noble Emperor Frederick, the Grand Duke Louis of Hesse, and Prince Henry of Battenberg, and the death of her beloved grandson, Prince Victor, were heavy troubles, and her tender sympathy with her widowed daughters was their greatest comfort.