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[Translated from the French.]

## The Old King and the Young Girl.

## CHAPTER I.

I had been in London two months; the two months the most foggy of foggy England. At last, toward the middle of February, through a veil of grayish clouds, I perceived as a pale reflection of our sun of France, the sun of Great Britain. It was necessary for me, in order to breathe at ease, to leave the heavy atmosphere which oppressed my breast, and I resolved to go to Richmond, which I had often heard spoken of as one of the most beautiful places in the vicinity of London. Quitting with pleasure my black and smoked hotel, I took a seat in a light stage coach, and arrived in a few hours at my destination.

The sight which presents itself to the traveller from the height of the terrace of Richmond, is the most smiling and beautiful in England. A dense, vast forest displays itself before the eyes, which seems to characterize all the country, and in the midst of whose soft, thick shades all the dwellings are deep set. From distance to distance beautiful lawns extend, which resemble the glades intersecting the wood, wherein stags, roes and fawns bound and play in the mellow light of the sun.

It is from the hill of Richmond that the course of the Thames is seen; it is not yet the proud queen of rivers; here it is simple and modest as the village maid who has not yet seen the city of kings. All poetry apart, the Thames is very insignificant at Richmond; no one would say, seeing it so humble, that a few miles farther on, it becomes so powerful by the abundance of its waters and its riches.

After having breakfasted at the hotel of the "Star," I visited the house of the celebrated Pope. It was then inhabited by the Princes of Orleans. This pretty villa must have been dear to the heart of the English poet; it is tranquilly and admirably situated on the gentle slope of a hill, which forms a lawn before the house, and which is bathed by the waters of the Thames.

I devoted my evening to exploring the park of Kew and the botanical garden. This very modest residence belongs to the crown; it was the favorite retreat of Charlotte, Queen of George III. The little pavilion which the royal couple inhabited, would seem too homely for an upstart of our days.

## CHAPTER II.

Queen Charlotte was entirely satisfied at Kew; she was happier there than at Windsor. This Queen, with a mind little sprightly but solid, possessed some great qualities; she was the model of the wives of Great Britain. The English of our day still remember the assiduous and tender care which she never ceased to lavish upon her wretched husband during his long and painful sickness.

At Kew, Charlotte and George III. lived very retired; they were often seen seated under the shade of the noble cedars; there, they forgot the cares of the throne, the *ennuis* of court, and occupied themselves with the delights of botany, which they passionately loved.

One day, a pretty child, with beautiful black curls, passed near the bench where they were resting from their walk. The Queen called the little girl, whom she found to be charming. It was the child of a French *emigre*. The little girl had filled her apron with field flowers, that she had just gathered on the lawn. The Queen at first spoke to her in English. The child, not comprehending this language, her parents having lately arrived in England, the Queen said to her in French:

"You have some beautiful flowers; for whom are they?"

"For mama, who is very fond of flowers, but who cannot come to see those that are here—because she is sick."

"Has she suffered long?"

"Oh! yes, very long! very long!—ever since she heard of the death of papa, whom the wicked ones have killed."

"What wicked ones?"

"The 'revolutionaries,' who have killed the King."

"Poor child!" said King George, passing his hand over the beautiful hair of the little French girl; "may God spare you your mother!"

"I ask it of the good God every day—and meanwhile she does not recover. I wished to remain with her to-day; but she ordered my nurse to bring me here."

Then Charlotte arose and told the child to conduct her to her nurse. The old governess was far from thinking this to be a Queen who came towards her, so simply attired, and leading the little one by the hand.

"Whence come you, Mademoiselle Louise?" she asked, in a severe tone; "I told you not to go far."

"Do not scold," said the Queen; "the poor child has been speaking to me of her mother, and I have come to ask you, Madam, to conduct me to her."

## CHAPTER III.

"My mistress is very sick," replied the governess; saying this, she passed her hand over her eyes, which were wet with tears. Charlotte added:

"I shall be able perhaps to diminish her sufferings, and shall be very happy to render her a service. Let us go, then, to your home."

They soon arrived at the house in which dwelt the *emigre*, in the village of Kew.

"Mama! Mama! here is a good lady who has come to see you. She has promised to give me every day some beautiful flowers for you."

At these words, the sick lady, who was seated near the window, upon which were

placed some pots of mignonette, and who, her head supported on her hand, was looking at the setting sun, attempted to rise; but the Queen restrained her, and taking a chair near her, said: "Do you suffer much, Madam?"

"I have not the strength to suffer much—but I have suffered a great deal," replied the widow *emigre*.

"Your charming child has told me, and I have come to propose a change of house; this is damp and sickly. You have not enough sunshine. I have a dwelling close by—in this neighborhood. Your pretty child will have more room to run and play. Permit me, Madam, to send for you to-morrow."

"Oh! I have but a short time to live; it is scarcely worth while. I thank you, Madam."

"Put away these sombre thoughts. Think of your child, and you will accept my offer; I make it freely. I will come to take you myself. My husband and myself love the French *emigres* very much."

"Oh! so much the better! so much the better!" repeated little Louise. "I am delighted to go into a large house, with a beautiful garden. Mama, you will be much better there than here."

The next day a carriage came for the poor sick lady. It was not until they arrived at the pavilion of Kew, that she learned that the Queen was her benefactress.

"Who would ever have believed that this was a Queen?" the old governess repeated incessantly in her joy; "a lady in a calico dress and straw hat!"

The utmost sympathy, the kindest attentions, were lavished upon the mother of Louise, but it did not restore her to health; care had penetrated too deeply into her heart.

In regard to the little girl, she could not believe that a large garden, with many beautiful flowers, and a good room, with handsome furniture, would not restore her mother. She was very happy—the charming child—to play in the aviary of the Queen and feed the birds.

## CHAPTER IV.

One day old King George, who had just fallen again into one of his sombre moods of melancholy, heard the little French girl singing. He was struck with the sweetness of her voice; he called her, and taking her upon his knees, said:

"Louise, sing to me what you just sang."

"Oh! it is very sad," replied the child.

"That makes no difference; I love the air, and I shall be much pleased to hear it again."

Then Louise obeyed, and commenced this touching complaint on the death of Louis XVI.:

"O my people! what have I done?  
I loved virtue, justice;  
Your happiness was my only object;  
And you drag me to the scaffold!"

While the little girl was singing this sad refrain, the old monarch, his eyes fixed upon her and buried in a sad reverie, was weeping silently. That evening, when he was alone in his room, and the lamps had not yet been lighted, he seated himself at the piano and repeated the air of Poor James, on which the royal complaint had been founded.

After that day, he often sent for the little orphan, who had just lost her mother, and said to her:

"Child, sing the air of Louis XVI.; the air which made me weep."

When Louise commenced to sing, the old monarch seated himself at the piano, and accompanied her softly, and with strains so sad, that they resembled melodious wailings.

Ah! it was truly a touching sight to see and to hear this little orphan singing in a trembling voice the misfortunes of a martyr king to another king crushed under the hand of God.

Queen Charlotte became more and more attached to Louise de Glandeuil. She had cared for the mother until the last moment; she adopted the child, raised her well, and later, having richly dowered her, married her to an English nobleman.

Louise lives yet; her beautiful black hair has become white, and in the ease and peace which God has given her on this strange earth, she preserves sacredly the remembrance of her poor mother and her noble benefactors. Hers is a beautiful old age; the memory of the heart has not been extinguished in her. When, three years ago, I returned to England, I saw at the house of Madame Radnor nee Glandeuil a portrait of George III., painted in his last days.

The blind monarch seems crushed beneath the burden of his years and misfortunes; a long white beard streams down upon his breast; his venerable hair parted in front, falls from right and left over his shoulders; the head of the old monarch seems to be bowed by the weight of his crown; meanwhile, there is yet a smile wandering and vague upon his lips. It is perhaps a remembrance of the glory of his reign, which comes to him in the midst of the wanderings of his mind, as a light in the depths of darkness, or as a ray of the sun on a tomb.—*Le Vicomte Walsh.*

A PERSIAN philosopher being asked by what method he had acquired so much knowledge, answered: "By not being prevented by shame from asking questions when I was ignorant."

A negro boy was driving a mule, when the animal stopped short and refused to move "Won't go eh?", said the boy; "feel mighty grand do you? I s'pose you forget your fader was a jackass."