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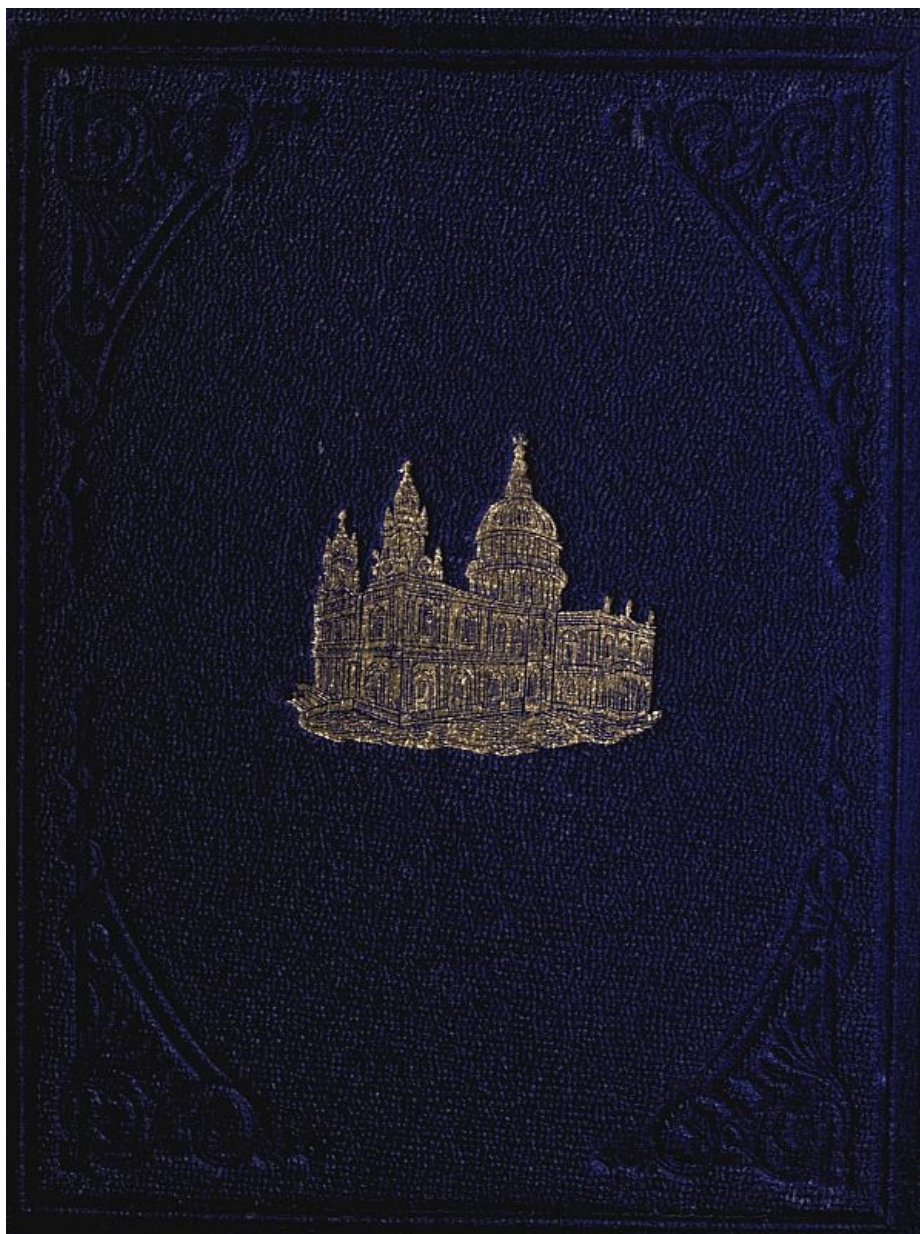
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DURING THE CORONATION OF QUEEN VICTORIA ***



PETER PARLEY'S VISIT TO LONDON.

LONDON:
CLARKE, PRINTERS, SILVER STREET, FALCON SQUARE.



Madeley lith. 3, Wellington St. Strand.

**THE CORONATION OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN
VICTORIA.**

PETER PARLEY'S VISIT TO LONDON,

DURING THE
CORONATION OF QUEEN VICTORIA.



LONDON:
CHARLES TILT, FLEET STREET.
MDCCCXXXIX.

TO THE GOOD
LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS
Of Great Britain,
PETER PARLEY
DEDICATES THESE PAGES.

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PETER PARLEY'S VISIT TO LONDON.

[1]

CHAPTER I. PARLEY ARRIVES IN LONDON.

"WELL, my little friends, here is your old acquaintance, Peter Parley, come to tell some more of his amusing Tales. You wonder, I dare say, what could tempt such a frail old man as I am to leave home, and come so far. You shall hear.

"A Coronation, you must know, is a sight not to be seen every day in the United States, where we have neither King nor Queen, so thinks I to myself, I hear a great deal about the grandeur of the spectacle which is to be exhibited at the crowning of Queen Victoria, and though I have seen many grand sights in my day, I have never seen a Coronation, so I shall just get into one of these new steam ships which take one across the Atlantic Ocean so quickly, and have a look at the affair. I shall, besides, have an opportunity of seeing the kind London friends who treated me so handsomely when I was last in England, and then I shall have such lots of new stories for my young friends. I must—I shall go!

[2]

"Peter Parley is not a man to spend much time in idling after having formed a resolution, so the very next day, having bid my old housekeeper good bye, I was on my way to New York.

[3]

"As soon as I arrived at New York, I made enquiries about the steam ships, and, finding that the 'Great Western' was to sail very soon, I secured my passage in her, and then went to visit my friends in that city, for I always like to fulfil the old adage, and finish my work before I begin to play.

"Every body was surprised at my undertaking, and some kind folks wanted to persuade me to stay at home, thinking to frighten me by telling me about the length of the voyage, &c. They did not know Peter Parley. One wag, who wished to be very witty, asked me why I did not wait and take my passage in the new American ship, the 'Horse-Alligator,' which was to sail on the 25th of June, and arrive in London the day before! I could not help laughing at the idea, but I told him that steam was quick enough for me.

[4]

"I have already told you about my voyages across the Atlantic, so I need do no more now than make just one passing remark on the splendour of the fitting-up, and the admirable arrangements of the 'Great Western.' We passed a great many vessels as we came along, especially when we were not far distant from the American and English shores. They had no chance with us. Sometimes we discovered them far a-head, like mere specks on the ocean. In an hour or two we came up with them, and, in as much more time, left them far behind. The steady and untiring whirl of the steamer's paddles carried every thing before it.

[5]

"We reached Bristol in thirteen days, and, as I had nothing to detain me there, I hurried on to London, and arrived in the middle of the grand preparations.

"Every body was as busy as a bee.—Nothing was talked of but the Coronation. 'Oh! Mr. Parley, have you come to see the Coronation too?' was my first salute from every lip. My kind old friend, Major Meadows, insisted on my taking up my quarters in his house, and promised that I should see every thing that was to be seen, and hear every thing that was to be heard. This was just what I wanted to be at, so I fixed myself with him at once."

[6]

CHAPTER II. PARLEY GOES TO SEE THE NEW CROWN.

"AFTER paying a few visits, and renewing old friendships, I set myself, in good earnest, to see what was to be seen.

"The most attractive object, connected with the Coronation, exhibiting at the time, was the new crown made for the occasion. I accordingly made the best of my way into the city, to the shop of Messrs. Rundell and Bridge, her Majesty's goldsmiths, on Ludgate Hill, who, with the greatest liberality, had thrown open their rooms that the public might have an opportunity of inspecting the crown.

[7]

"So great was the crowd, all anxious to have a peep, that it was some time before I could press forward to the door of the shop. Carriages were so busy taking up and setting down company, that the street was quite blocked up. At length, however, by dint of perseverance, Peter Parley managed to squeeze in.

"After traversing the shop, all round which are ranged articles of the most massive and costly description, we were ushered into an interior apartment, in which, in glass cases, were deposited the precious curiosities.

[8]

"In the centre, the admired of all beholders, was the Royal Crown. It is beautifully designed, and formed in the most costly and elegant manner, and so covered with precious stones, as almost to dazzle the eyes of old Peter Parley. It is composed of hoops of silver, enclosing a cap of deep purple velvet. The hoops are completely covered and concealed by precious stones, the whole surmounted by a ball covered with small diamonds, and having a Maltese cross of brilliants on the top of it. The body of the crown is wreathed with fleurs-de-lis and Maltese crosses; the one in the front being ornamented with a very large heart-shaped ruby, once, I was informed, a principal ornament in the crown of Edward the Black Prince, and which he is said to have worn at the battle of Cressy. Peter Parley cannot remember all the details, for besides these, there are many other precious stones in the crown. The rim is surrounded with ermine, and it certainly struck me as being one of the finest things I had ever seen.

[9]

"Close beside the crown were the coronets of the Royal Dukes and Duchesses, but though they also were made of costly materials, the attractions of the crown were so great as to throw the others quite into the back ground. I had hardly time to turn my eyes toward the case containing the Orb and Sword of state, before I was hurried away by the pressure of the crowd behind, which kept pouring in in undiminished numbers.

[10]

"As I moved towards the door behind the shop, which was set apart for visitors retiring, I passed a table on which was displayed a service of massive gold utensils, to be used in the consecration service.

"When I reached the street, I found it still densely crowded. I wanted to go to St. Paul's, which stands close by, but was afraid to venture into such a crowd, so I directed my steps to Westminster Abbey, making my way with some difficulty down Ludgate Hill and along Fleet Street, and passing beneath Temple Bar, which marks the boundary of the City."

[11]

CHAPTER III.

PARLEY VISITS WESTMINSTER ABBEY AND HYDE-PARK.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE FAIR.

"As I approached the venerable pile I found all in bustle and confusion. Every where carpenters were busily engaged fitting up galleries for the accommodation of spectators of the procession on the day of the coronation. Ranges of such erections lined the whole course of the street through which the procession was to pass, up to the very door of the Abbey; even the church-yard was lined with them. These I was told were the speculations of tradesmen, who let the sittings according to the value of the situation, at prices varying from half-a-sovereign up to a couple of guineas. For some very choice places even five guineas was asked.

[12]

"Peter Parley could not help smiling at the fine names which had been given to some of these erections; such as the 'Royal Victoria Gallery,' the 'Royal Kent Gallery,' &c., &c.

"By order of the Earl Marshal no visitors were permitted to enter the Abbey; but as good luck would have it, just as I happened to be passing the western grand entrance I met a gentleman connected with the Board of Works, whom I had seen at Major Meadows's the day before, and who most obligingly offered to introduce me.

[13]

"I gladly availed myself of his invitation, and was much struck with the grandeur and extent of the preparations.

"At the western entrance to the Abbey a suite of apartments for robing-rooms for her Majesty and the members of the Royal Family had been erected. So completely did this structure harmonize externally with the rest of the antique building, that I should not have observed that it was a temporary erection had it not been pointed out to me. The chamber set apart for her Majesty was fitted up in the most gorgeous manner—the walls beautifully ornamented, and the furniture, all of the richest and most magnificent description. Though less costly the apartments for the Royal Family were equally chaste.

[14]

"The interior of the Abbey presented a scene at once animated and beautiful. Workmen were busily engaged in various parts finishing the preparations. I will have occasion to tell you about

the interior of the Abbey by and by, so I may as well say nothing about it at present.

"Peter Parley now proceeded to Hyde-Park to see the preparations for the grand fair which was to be held in that noble pleasure-ground on this joyous occasion.

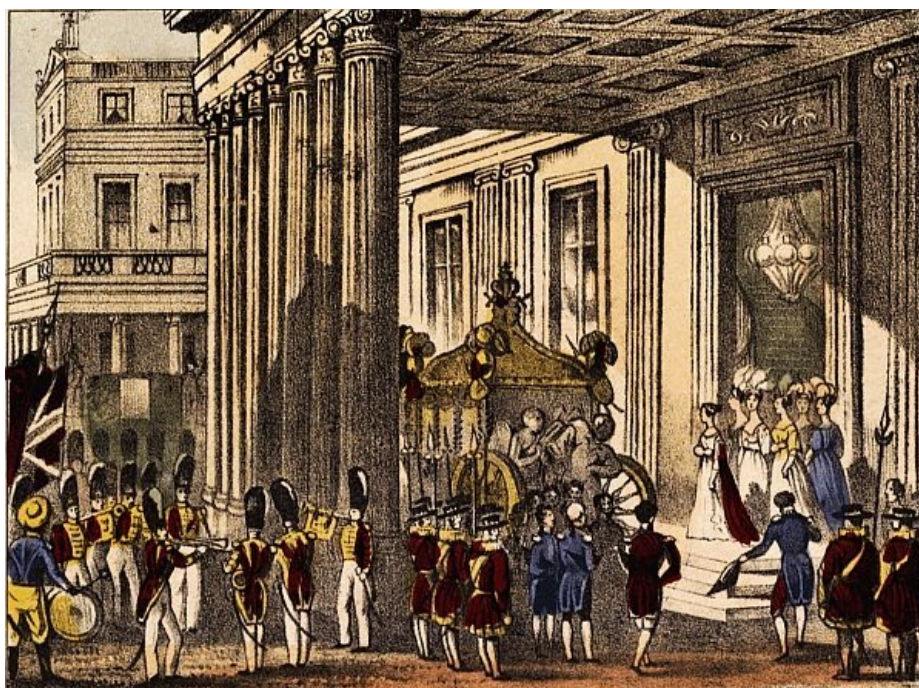
"Already many booths displayed themselves on the plain, and many more were in the act of being erected. Richardson, who Peter Parley understood is one of the most famous of the show-folks, had erected a large and handsome theatre, which even thus early seemed to have considerable attractions for the multitude who had gathered round it in great numbers. [15]

"Peter Parley having seen all that was worth seeing in the fair was beginning to feel tired, and was directing his steps homeward, when all of a sudden his attention was attracted to a particular part of the Park to which people seemed to be hastening from all quarters. Peter Parley hurried to the spot and was most agreeably surprised to find that it was Queen Victoria, accompanied by her suite, taking her accustomed airing in her carriage." [16]

CHAPTER IV.

PARLEY SEES THE QUEEN, AND RELATES SOME ANECDOTES OF HER MAJESTY.

"WHAT a dear sweet lady!' were the first words of Peter Parley when the Royal cavalcade had passed.



Madeley lith. 3, Wellington St. Strand.

HER MAJESTY LEAVING BUCKINGHAM PALACE ON THE MORNING OF THE CORONATION.

"She is a dear sweet lady, Mr. Parley, and, what is more, she is as good as she is sweet,' said my friend, Major Meadows, who, afraid lest I should overwalk myself in my zeal for sight-seeing, had followed me from Westminster Abbey and luckily fallen in with me in the park, and he went on to relate many very interesting anecdotes of the young Queen, which Peter Parley took good care to remember because he knew they would gratify his young friends." [17]

"Her Majesty is doatingly fond of children, Mr. Parley,' said he, 'and that you know is always the sign of a good heart. Nothing can be finer than the traits of character exhibited in a little anecdote which Lady M—— told me a day or two ago.

"Not long since, her Majesty commanded Lady Barham, one of the ladies in waiting, to bring her family of lovely children to the new palace. They were greatly admired and fondly caressed by the Queen; when a beautiful little boy about three years of age artlessly said— [18]

"I do not see the Queen; I want to see the Queen;' upon which her Majesty, smiling, said—

"I am the Queen, love;' and taking her little guest into her arms repeatedly kissed the astonished child.

"This little anecdote warmed old Peter Parley's heart towards the young Queen; nor did any of the stories which Major Meadows told me tend to lessen my regard for her. Peter Parley was pleased to hear that she has a proper sense of the importance of the station to which she has been called by Divine Providence.

"On the day on which she was proclaimed Queen of Great Britain she arrived in company with her royal mother at St. James's Palace for the purpose of taking part in the important ceremony. As they drove towards the palace the party received the most affectionate demonstrations of loyalty and attachment, the people following the carriages with a continuous cry of 'Long live the Queen'—'God bless our youthful Queen, long may she live,' &c. Yet, exciting and exhilarating as were these acclamations, her Majesty's countenance exhibited marks only of anxiety and grief. [19]

"They arrived at St. James's Palace a little before ten o'clock. When the old bell of the palace-clock announced that hour, the band struck up the National Anthem, the Park and Tower guns fired a double royal salute, and the young and trembling Queen, led by the Marquis of Lansdowne, President of the Council, appeared at an open window looking into the great court of the Palace. At the fervent and enthusiastic shout of the people who had come to witness the ceremony, her Majesty burst into tears, and, in spite of all her efforts to restrain them, they continued to flow down her pale cheeks all the time she remained at the window. Her emotions did not, however, prevent her from returning her acknowledgments for the devotedness of her people. [20]

"Some of the most interesting anecdotes which Peter Parley heard, however, related to an earlier period of the Queen's life, when she was Princess Victoria. [21]

"'Here is an anecdote which I heard at a Missionary Meeting, Mr. Parley,' said Major Meadows, 'and I assure you it told with great effect.'"

"A poor but truly pious widow, placed in charge of a lighthouse on the south coast of the Mersey, had resolved to devote the receipts of one day in the year, during the visiting season, to the Missionary cause. On one of these days, a lady in widow's weeds and a little girl in deep mourning came to see the lighthouse; sympathy in misfortune led to conversation, and before the unknown visitor took her departure they had most probably mingled their tears together. The lady left behind her a sovereign. The unusually large gratuity immediately caused a conflict in the breast of the poor woman, as to whether she was absolutely bound to appropriate the whole of it to the Missionary-box or not. At length she compromised, by putting in half-a-crown. But conscience would not let her rest: she went to bed, but could not sleep; she arose, took back the half-crown, put in the sovereign, went to bed and slept comfortably. A few days afterwards, to her great surprise, she received a double letter, franked, and on opening it, was no less astonished than delighted to find twenty pounds from the widow lady, and five pounds from the little girl in deep mourning. And who were that lady and that little girl, do you think? No other than her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent and our present rightful and youthful sovereign." [22]

"During one of the summer seasons of the Princess's childhood the Duchess of Kent resided in the neighbourhood of Malvern, and almost daily walked on the Downs. One day the Princess and her beautiful little dog Pero, of which she was uncommonly fond, happening considerably to outstrip the Duchess and governess, she overtook a little peasant girl about her own age. With the thoughtless hilarity of youth she made up to her, and without ceremony, said to her— [23]

"My dog is very tired, will you carry him for me if you please?"

"The good-natured girl, quite unconscious of the rank of the applicant, immediately complied, and tripped along by the side of the Princess for some time in unceremonious conversation. At length she said,

"I am tired now, and cannot carry your dog any farther."

"Tired!" cried her Royal Highness, 'Impossible! Think what a little way you have carried him!'

"Quite far enough,' was the homely reply; 'besides, I am going to my aunt's, and if your dog must be carried, why cannot you carry him yourself?' [24]

"So saying, she placed Pero on the grass, and he again joyfully frisked beside his royal mistress.

"Going to your aunt's;' rejoined the Princess, unheeding Pero's gambols; 'pray who is your aunt?'

"Mrs. Johnson, the miller's wife."

"And where does she live?'

"In that pretty little white house which you see just at the bottom of the hill, there;' said the unconscious girl, pointing it out among the trees; and the two companions stood still that the Princess might make sure that she was right, thus giving the Duchess and her companion time to come up. [25]

"Oh, I should like to see her!' exclaimed the light-hearted Princess; 'I will go with you, come let us run down the hill together.'

"No, no, my Princess,' cried the governess, coming up and taking her Royal Highness's hand, 'you have conversed long enough with that little girl, and now the Duchess wishes you to walk with her.

"The awful words 'Princess' and 'Duchess' quite confounded the little peasant girl; blushing and almost overcome, she earnestly begged pardon for the liberties she had taken, but her fears

were instantly allayed by the Duchess, who, after thanking her for her trouble in carrying Pero, recompensed her by giving her half-a-crown.

[27]

"Delighted, the little girl curtsied her thanks, and running on briskly to her aunt's, she related all that had passed, dwelling particularly on the apprehension she had felt when she discovered that it was the Princess whom she had desired to carry her dog herself. The half-crown was afterwards framed and hung up in the miller's homely parlour, as a memento of this pleasing little adventure."

"This is but a childish story, but Peter Parley loves to hear stories of good children, and he knows that his little friends love to hear them too."

CHAPTER V.

[28]

PARLEY CONTINUES HIS ANECDOTES OF THE QUEEN.

"THERE was one anecdote of the Queen from which Peter Parley derived much pleasure, because it showed that, notwithstanding her high station, she is not unmindful of Him by whom 'Kings reign, and Princes decree justice.'

"A noble lord, one of her Majesty's ministers of state, not particularly remarkable for his observance of holy ordinances, recently arrived at Windsor Castle late one Saturday night.

"I have brought down for your Majesty's inspection,' he said, 'some papers of importance, but as they must be gone into at length I will not trouble your Majesty with them to-night, but request your attention to them to-morrow morning.'

[29]

"To-morrow morning!' repeated the Queen; 'to-morrow is Sunday, my lord.'

"But business of state, please your Majesty—'

"Must be attended to, I know,' replied the Queen, 'and as of course you could not come down earlier to-night, I will, if those papers are of such vital importance, attend to them *after we come from church to-morrow morning.*'

"To church went the royal party; to church went the noble lord, and much to his surprise the sermon was on '*The duties of the Sabbath!*'

[30]

"How did your lordship like the sermon?' enquired the young Queen.

"Very much, your Majesty,' replied the nobleman, with the best grace he could.

"I will not conceal from you,' said the Queen, 'that last night I sent the clergyman the text from which he preached. I hope we shall all be the better for it.'

"The day passed without a single word on the subject of the 'papers of importance,' and at night, when her Majesty was about to withdraw, 'To-morrow morning, my lord,' she said, 'at any hour you please, and as early as seven if you like, we will go into these papers.'

[31]

"His lordship could not think of intruding at so early an hour on her Majesty; 'Nine would be quite time enough.'

"As they are of importance, my lord, I would have attended to them earlier, but at nine be it; and at nine her Majesty was seated ready to receive the nobleman, who had been taught a lesson on the duties of the sabbath, it is hoped, he will not quickly forget.

"Exemplary as the young Queen is in her religious duties, however, Peter Parley was pleased to find that she does not allow her religion to consist in mere theory, but that in reality she clothes the poor and feeds the hungry.

[32]

"On one occasion when her Majesty, accompanied by her suite, was taking an airing on horseback, in the neighbourhood of Windsor, she was overtaken by a heavy shower, which forced the royal party to seek shelter in an outhouse belonging to a farm yard, where a poor man was busily employed making hurdles. Her Majesty entered into conversation with the man (who was totally ignorant who he was addressing), and finding that he had a large family and no means of supporting them beyond what he gained by making these hurdles, her Majesty enquired where he lived, and on taking her departure presented him with a sovereign. Next day she went, accompanied by her Royal Mother, to the cottage of the poor man, and finding his statement to be correct, immediately provided some good warm clothing for his wife and children. Her Majesty seemed very much pleased with the neatness and regularity of the cottage, and on taking her departure presented the poor woman with a five-pound note.

[33]

"There was no end to stories of this description, but I can only afford room for two or three more; one of which, in particular, shows how early the Queen has been taught to look up to the only source of real comfort in affliction.

[34]

"An old man who once served in the capacity of porter to the Duke of Kent, and who, in his old age and infirmity, has long since been pensioned by the Duchess, is not a little gratified at receiving a nod of recognition from her Majesty whenever her carriage chances to pass his

cottage. The aged man has a daughter much afflicted, and who has been confined to bed for eight or ten years. On the evening of the late king's funeral this young woman was equally surprised and delighted at receiving from the Queen a present of the psalms of David in which was a marker worked by herself with a dove, the emblem of peace, in the centre. It pointed to the forty-first psalm, which her Majesty requested she would read, at the same time expressing a hope that its frequent perusal might bring an increase of peace to her mind.

[35]

"Another poor man named Smith, who had for several years swept the crossing opposite the avenue leading to Kensington palace, and whom her Majesty always kindly noticed, rarely passing through the gates without throwing him some silver from the carriage window, received a message on the morning after the Queen's accession informing him that her Majesty had ordered that a weekly allowance of eight shillings should be regularly paid him. The poor man, however, did not long enjoy his pension, dying within six months from its commencement.

[36]

"Short and brilliant as has been her Majesty's career however, and fondly and carefully as she has been watched over, her life affords a very striking instance of providential preservation.

"During one of their summer excursions on the southern coast of England, the Royal party sailed in the Emerald yacht, and proceeding up the harbour at Plymouth for the purpose of landing at the dock-yard, the yacht unfortunately, from the rapidity of the tide, ran foul of one of the hulks which lay off the yard. The shock was so great that the mainmast of the royal yacht was sprung in two places, and her sail and gaff (or yard by which the sail is supported) fell instantaneously upon the deck.

[37]

"The Princess happened unfortunately to be standing almost directly under the sail at the moment, and the most fatal consequences might have ensued, had not the master of the yacht, with admirable presence of mind, sprung forward and caught her in his arms and conveyed her to a place of safety. The alarm and confusion caused by the accident was for a time heightened by the uncertainty as to the fate of her Royal Highness, who had been preserved from injury by the blunt but well-timed rescue of the honest sailor.

"'There is one thing which pleases me mightily, Mr. Parley,' said Major Meadows, 'and it is this, that with all this goodness our young Queen has a truly British heart. Often and often has she manifested this, and when quite a girl though perfectly acquainted with several European languages, and particularly with French and German, she never could be prevailed upon to converse in them as a habit, always observing that 'she was a little English girl and would speak nothing but English.' There is a healthiness of feeling in this, Mr. Parley, which is quite delightful.'

[38]

"Long before Major Meadows had finished his anecdotes about the Queen we had reached home. As it is the custom to dine late in London, we dined after our return, and during the repast, the Queen and the spectacle of to-morrow formed the chief subject of conversation, my friend continuing from time to time to give interest by some new anecdote, of which his store seemed to be inexhaustible.

[39]

"Peter Parley is fond of early hours, so we retired to bed betimes, which was the more necessary, because by sun-rise to-morrow we must be up and away to Westminster Abbey."

CHAPTER VI.

[40]

PARLEY DESCRIBES WESTMINSTER ABBEY ON THE MORNING OF THE CORONATION, AND RELATES THE LEGENDS CONNECTED WITH ST. EDWARD'S CHAIR.

"EARLY in the morning, Peter Parley was up and dressed. He had hardly finished his devotions when, early though it was, Major Meadows knocked at the door of his room to enquire if he was stirring.

"After partaking of a hurried breakfast we got into a carriage and drove to the Abbey. As we passed along, we found people, even at such an early hour, already begun to congregate in the streets, and to take up stations from which they expected to obtain the best view of the day's proceedings.

[41]



Madeley lith. 3, Wellington St. Strand.

HER MAJESTY LEAVING HER PRIVATE APARTMENTS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

"Peter Parley was pleased to find, on our arrival at the Abbey, that the doors had been opened a short time before, and the crowd of eager expectants who had been waiting, some of them upwards of an hour, had been already admitted. We were thus saved the necessity of exposing ourselves to being crushed by stronger and more energetic claimants for admission.

"On entering the venerable building I was struck mute with astonishment at the magnificence of the preparations which now burst upon the sight with all their breadth and effect; though I had seen it so recently, I was not at all aware of the greatness of the scale on which they had been undertaken.

[42]

"The approach to the theatre was by six broad steps leading from the vestibule under the music gallery. At the termination of the choir, just where it is intersected by the north and south transepts, a similar number of steps led to a large platform, covered with a splendid carpet in rich puce and gold colours. Upon this platform was raised a second of a smaller size, approached by four broad steps, each covered with carpeting of the most magnificent description. The fifth step, which formed the platform, was covered with cloth of gold, and in the centre was placed a splendid throne of a rich gilt ground, tastefully embellished with rose-coloured sprigs at short intervals, and the royal initials in the centre.

[43]

"A little further in advance of this splendid throne, and nearer the altar, stood a chair of a more humble bearing, but far more interesting, from the legendary stories connected with it. This was St. Edward's chair, of which Peter Parley must say a few words.

"The chair is made of solid oak, and beneath the seat is deposited a large stone, on which the Scottish kings used to be crowned. The legendary history of this stone is very curious. It commences as early as the time of Jacob, who is said to have rested his head on it in the plain of Luz, when, as you will recollect, he fled from the anger of his brother Esau. It was afterwards carried to Spain, by the Scythians, whence it found its way into Ireland in the time of Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome. Here, it seems, from all accounts, first to have exhibited miraculous powers—making a 'prodigious noise, and being surprisingly disturbed,' whenever a prince of the Scythian line was seated upon it. Peter Parley would not have you believe any of these marvellous legends, none of which are true, but which are interesting nevertheless, as they serve to show in what manner the people of former times were misled by the silly and ridiculous legends of the darker ages.

[44]

[45]

"From Ireland this singular stone was carried into Scotland, and placed in the Abbey of Scone, where the coronation of the Kings of Scotland usually took place. One of the Scottish kings caused an inscription to be cut upon it, an ancient prophecy, as it was said, but more probably an invention of some monkish chronicler of the time:—

"If Fate speak sooth, where'er this stone is found,
The Scots shall monarch of that realm be crown'd."

"When Edward I. dethroned Baliol, he sent this celebrated stone, on the possession of which the Scots set great value, to London, along with the Scottish regalia. In the following year, the monarch presented these trophies at the shrine of St. Edward the Confessor; and it appears soon afterwards to have been placed in the coronation chair, where it has remained ever since. [46]

"Peter Parley has heard that the ancient prophecy, to which even at so late a period the more superstitious amongst the Scottish nation clung, was held to be fulfilled when James I. ascended the throne of England; and it is also said not to have been without a certain influence in reconciling many of the people to the Union with England.

"But we must not forget the coronation in Westminster Abbey, in our interest in the legend connected with St. Edward's chair. [47]

"On each side of the platform on which the thrones stood, were the galleries appropriated for Peers and Peeresses and their friends, also those for the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Privy Councillors.

"There were two other galleries rising above these on each side, the highest quite among the vaultings of the roof, which were appropriated indiscriminately to the rest of the visitors.

"The whole of these extensive galleries were covered with crimson cloth, and trimmed with gold fringe, which had a very rich effect when contrasted with the sombre colours and antique stone walls of the building. [48]

"The decorations of the chancel and altar were of the most gorgeous description; the draperies being of the richest purple silk, brocaded in the most sumptuous pattern with gold. Behind the altar the decorations were of a still more delicate character than the rest, both the ground-work and the gold being of a lighter shade. Against the compartment behind the altar stood six massive gold plateaux, two of them being of very large dimensions. The table itself was loaded with a gold communion service, as well as with other articles used in the ceremony.

"Peter Parley had time to notice all these things from being in the Abbey so early in the morning, before the visitors were so numerous, and the place so crowded as it afterwards became. The good sense and knowledge of Major Meadows led him to select a seat from which, while we could see as much of the ceremony as nine-tenths of those within the Abbey, we could readily retire to the roof, from which we could obtain an admirable view of the procession outside. [49]

"By six o'clock in the morning the visitors began to arrive in the interior of the Abbey, and bustle and confusion began to prevail, where, but an hour before, all had been stillness and silence; the rich and elegant dresses of the ladies giving an air of gaiety to the scene. An hour later the Peers and Peeresses began to make their appearance, and the attention was kept completely on the alert by some new arrival of a distinguished personage, or of a rich or picturesque costume." [50]

"At length the sound of the Park guns announced that the Queen had entered her carriage and was on her way to the Abbey. This joyful announcement seemed to inspire every one present with joy and animation. The Peers, who had hitherto dispersed themselves over various parts of the building, giving, by their rich and picturesque costumes, additional brilliancy and variety to the already gorgeous scene, now retired to their appointed places, and a certain degree of order began to prevail within the Abbey. [51]

"As the procession began to draw near, Peter Parley took advantage of Major Meadows' foresight, and, with some little difficulty, made his way to the roof, to view its approach."

CHAPTER VII. [52]

PARLEY DESCRIBES THE PROCESSION TO WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

"FROM this elevated and commanding position Peter Parley had a most admirable view of the procession, and of the immense multitude of spectators which lined the streets and crowded every window and roof from which even the most distant and casual view of it could be obtained.

"Far as the eye could reach was one dense mass of human beings. The deafening cheers of the populace, the waving of ten thousand handkerchiefs, the clang of martial music, and the novelty and singularity of the whole scene, well nigh turned the head of poor Peter Parley. [53]

"He had hardly time to satisfy his old eyes with gazing on the immense assemblage when the procession began to approach.

"Peter Parley will not attempt to give you an exact list of the procession, for he knows very well that a simple catalogue of names would not at all interest you; he will therefore merely run hastily over the principal parts of it, and show you drawings of several of the most striking scenes, which he knows very well will give you by one glance a clearer idea of it than if he were

to spend hours in mere description.

"Preceded by a squadron of horse-guards, whose gallant and warlike bearing excited general admiration, came the carriages of the foreign ministers resident in this country. Even in the midst of so much bustle, Peter Parley could not help moralizing on the singularity of the scene. Here were the representatives of every power on the face of the globe gathered together in one harmonious congregation; and the feelings to which their passing thus in review, in a living panorama as it were, gave rise were of the most peculiar description. Here were all separate and rival interests for the moment buried in oblivion, and people from the east, from the west, and from the north, and from the south, came to assist in doing honour to England's Queen. [54]

"Immediately behind the resident ministers followed the ambassadors extraordinary, that is, those who had been sent by their respective governments for the express purpose of taking part in the solemnity. Some of the carriages and trappings of these ambassadors excited the greatest attention and admiration. Those in particular of Marshal Soult, the French ambassador, one of the ablest opponents of the Duke of Wellington during the peninsular war, were rich almost beyond description. In colour his carriage was of a rich cobalt relieved with gold, the panels most tastefully ornamented with his Excellency's armorial bearings, at the back of which was a field-marshal's baton. It was furnished at each corner with a lamp surmounted by a massive silver coronet, and the raised cornices with which it was ornamented were of silver, deep and richly chased. These, with the beautiful harness (of white—the furniture was also of silver exquisitely chased), gave an air of richness and beauty to the whole equipage which was quite unequalled in the procession. Peter Parley thought he should never have done gazing at the rich and splendid equipage. [56]

"The carriages and attendants of the ambassador from the Sultan, though far less richly caparisoned, were objects of equal curiosity, partly on account of the eastern dress in which Ahmed Fetij Pasha appeared, and partly because of that undefined idea of romance which exists in the popular mind in connection with the crescent and the rising sun, the emblems of Turkish power. [57]

"The carriage was of a rich lake colour, with the emblems which Peter Parley has just mentioned richly emblazoned on the panels. Inside it was lined with crimson and yellow silk, in rich festoons; the hammercloth blue, with gold and scarlet hangings, the centre of scarlet velvet with the rising sun and crescent in diamonds.

"The only other ambassador's carriage which Peter Parley shall notice is that of the Prince de Ligne, ambassador extraordinary from Belgium. I mention it not that it was very much more striking than the others, for they were all beautiful, and each was distinguished by some peculiarity of elegant chasteness or rich display. The carriage, which was also of rich lake tastefully ornamented with gold, was drawn by six beautiful grey horses, and was preceded by a couple of outriders likewise mounted on greys. His Excellency's armorial bearings were emblazoned on the panels, the roof ornamented by four gold coronets, one at each corner. The richness of the liveries and trappings made this equipage very much admired. After the foreign ambassadors followed a mounted band and a detachment of life-guards which preceded the carriages of the branches of the Royal Family. [58]

"Peter Parley cannot find a word to express his idea of the gorgeous magnificence of the carriage of the Duchess of Kent, the mother of the Queen. The masses of gold lace by which the hammercloth and the attendants' liveries were ornamented had an extremely rich effect. Her grace seemed highly delighted with the ceremony, and nothing could be more gratifying than her reception, unless indeed it was that of the Queen herself. Every where was the Duchess cheered, and she returned the people's greetings by smiling and bowing in the blandest and most courtly manner. [59]

"The Duchess of Gloucester, and the Dukes of Cambridge and Sussex, followed next in order, and each was received with the same warm and enthusiastic cheers. [60]

"After these came the Queen's bargemaster and his assistants, forty-eight in number. The blunt sailor-like appearance of these men, some of whose weather-beaten countenances gave token of years of service, excited much interest. When Peter Parley saw them they recalled to his mind the anecdote of the saving of the life of the Princess Victoria, and he wondered which of the bluff sailors it was who had been so ready and so thoughtful.

"The Royal carriages now approached. These were twelve in number, each drawn by six splendid horses, and accompanied by two grooms walking on each side. As they passed in succession, the interest became more intense as her Majesty drew nigh. The beauty of the maids of honour, the courtly bearing and gay dresses of the lords in waiting, which the carriages conveyed, the richness of the trappings, and the beauty and spirit of the horses, excited the intensest admiration. At length the twelfth carriage passed, and the most breathless interest prevailed. A squadron of Life Guards and a mounted band preceded the military staff and aides-de-camps, including some of the most distinguished military officers of the day. The Royal Huntsmen next appeared, followed by six of her Majesty's horses, with rich trappings, each led by two grooms. Though nothing could be finer than the appearance of these most beautiful animals the amount of attention which they received was but small, for close behind, preceded by one hundred Yeomen of the Guard, appeared the state coach, drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, attended by a Yeoman of the Guard at each wheel, and two footmen at each door, conveying [61]

"The cheering by which other parts of the cavalcade had been received was loud and heartfelt, but no sooner did the young and amiable Queen make her appearance, than the loudest and most enthusiastic plaudits rent the air. The ladies in the balconies waved their handkerchiefs, the people cheered, peal after peal of joyful applause came thundering upon the ear, shout followed shout, and acclamation burst after acclamation, until the music of the military bands and the discharges of the artillery were completely drowned in the roar of popular applause. The Queen seemed to enjoy the exciting scene, and continued bowing on all sides in the most graceful and engaging manner.

[63]

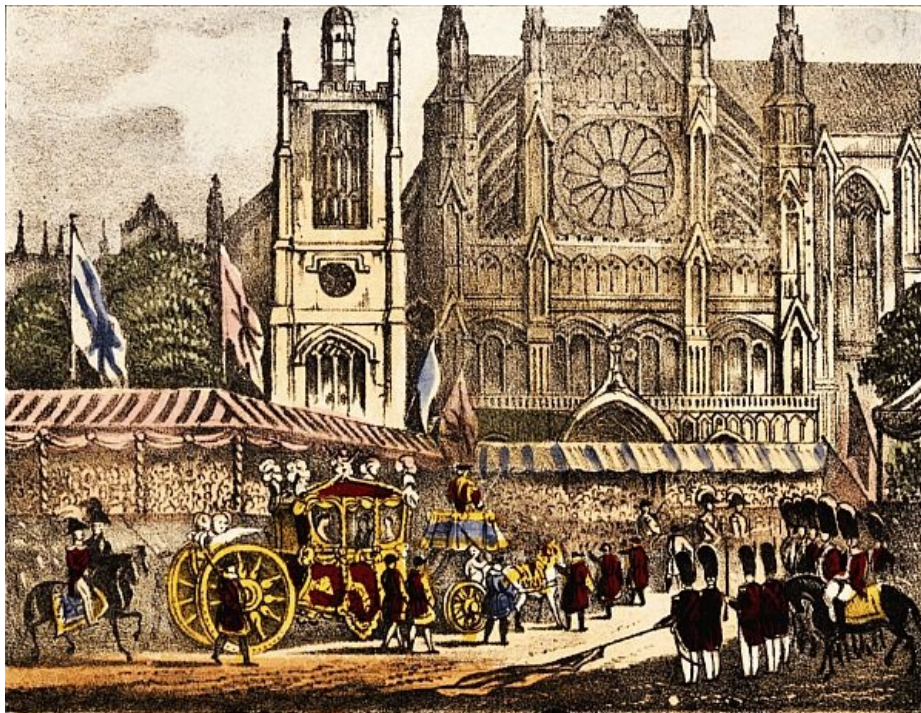
"The excitement which prevailed along the line of the procession, as her Majesty approached, was, Peter Parley was assured, great beyond description. *Then* were the rich trappings of the Foreign Ambassadors, the magnificence of the Royal carriages, the dazzling scarlet uniforms of the watermen, the magnificently caparisoned horses, the rich uniforms of the great officers of state, and even the beauty and attractions of the maids of honour, all forgotten. There was one and one only thought of—it was THE QUEEN. The struggle was to look upon her, and the object of each individual present seemed to be—

[64]

"How and which way he might bestow himself,
To be regarded in her sun-bright eye.'

"Never, Peter Parley will venture to say, did British monarch receive more heartfelt greeting, or pass under brighter auspices within the portals of Westminster Abbey."

[65]



Madeley lith. 3, Wellington St. Strand.

THE PROCESSION APPROACHING WESTMINSTER ABBEY

CHAPTER VIII.

PARLEY DESCRIBES THE CORONATION IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

"As soon as the Queen, the great object of attraction, had passed, Peter Parley and his friend hurried into the Abbey to resume their places. As they entered they encountered the most deafening and enthusiastic plaudits, to which the announcement of her Majesty's arrival within the Abbey gave rise.

"While her Majesty was undergoing the ceremony of robing, in the magnificent room which Peter Parley has already told you about, the procession, which forms part of the ceremony within the Abbey, was arranged in order.

[66]

"Every thing having been prepared, her Majesty made her appearance habited in a rich mantle and train of crimson velvet, over a dress of satin wrought with gold, and the assembled thousands of her loyal subjects rose with one accord, and welcomed their Sovereign in a manner which must have thrilled the heart of the greatest potentate who ever swayed a sceptre. The band of instrumental music swelled forth their richest notes, and the choir gave magnificent effect to the anthem:—

[67]

"I was glad when they said unto me we will go into the house of the Lord. For there is the Seat of Judgment, even the Seat of the House of David. O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love Thee. Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces. Glory be to

the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.'

"As the procession moved slowly up the Abbey, the effect was most magnificent; the splendour of the pageantry, the beauty of the young Queen, whose mild blue eyes shone scarcely less brightly than the circlet of diamonds which encompassed her beauteous brow, and the rich effect of the music, as it reverberated among the aisles of the building, almost made Peter Parley think it was a scene in fairy-land, or one of those bright and unsubstantial visions which flit across the mind in our dreams. [68]

"The Queen having advanced to a chair which had been provided for her, about midway between the throne and the south side of the altar, the noblemen and others who composed the procession took up the stations which had been appropriated for them; the choir in the mean time continuing to chaunt the anthem.

"The cadences of the anthem had scarcely died away among the aisles of the Abbey, when Peter Parley was startled at the sound of youthful voices, singing at their highest pitch. He directed his eyes towards the spot whence the sound proceeded, and found it was the Westminster scholars, who, according to an ancient and established custom, greeted their sovereign with a kind of chaunt, 'Vivat Victoria Regina!' [69]

"At the conclusion of this chaunt, which, though not the most harmonious, struck Peter Parley as certainly not the least interesting part of the greeting, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Great Chamberlain, and the Earl Marshal, advanced and commenced the ceremony of the Coronation by what is called the Recognition; that is, advancing towards each side of the theatre in succession, they thus addressed the assembled spectators:— [70]

"Sirs, we here present unto you Queen Victoria, the undoubted Queen of this realm; wherefore all you who are come this day to do your homage, are you willing to do the same?'

"As the question was repeated on each side, the Abbey rang with the joyful response 'God save Queen Victoria!' A flourish of trumpets added to the enthusiasm of the scene; and even Peter Parley, carried away by the feeling of the moment, shouted forth his acclamations, in as heartfelt a manner as the most devoted of her Majesty's subjects. [71]

"During this part of the ceremony, the Queen remained standing by the chair on which she had at first taken her seat, and turned her face successively toward that part of the Abbey to which the question was addressed.

"When the enthusiastic cheering subsided her Majesty resumed her seat, and preparations were made for that part of the altar service called the Oblation. The Bible, the chalice, and patina, were placed upon the altar, before which, two officers of the wardrobe spread a rich cloth of gold, and laid upon it a cushion for her Majesty to kneel upon. The Bishops who were to be engaged in the service also advanced and put on their copes. [72]

"Every thing being ready, her Majesty, supported by two bishops and preceded by the great officers of state bearing the regalia, approached the altar, and kneeling upon the cushion, made the various offerings.

"The first, which consisted of a pall or altar-cloth of gold, was delivered by an officer of the wardrobe to the Lord Chamberlain, and by him handed to the Lord Great Chamberlain, who delivered it to the Queen. Her Majesty then gave it to the Archbishop of Canterbury, by whom it was placed on the altar.

"An ingot of gold, a pound in weight, was then handed by the Treasurer of the Household to the Lord Great Chamberlain, by whom it was placed in the hands of the Queen, who delivered it to the Archbishop, by whom it was put into the oblation basin, and set upon the altar. [73]

"The Archbishop then said the following prayer, the Queen remaining kneeling before the altar:—

"O God, who dwellest in the high and holy place, with them also who are of an humble spirit, look down mercifully upon this thy servant Victoria our Queen, here humbling herself before Thee at thy footstool, and graciously receive these oblations, which, in humble acknowledgment of thy sovereignty over all, and of thy great bounty unto her in particular, she hath now offered up unto Thee, through JESUS CHRIST, our only mediator and advocate. Amen.' [74]

"At the conclusion of this prayer her Majesty returned to the chair on the south side of the altar, and the whole of the regalia, except the swords, were delivered to the archbishop and placed on the altar.

"The Litany was then read by the Bishops of Worcester and St. David's, which was followed by the Communion Service, previous to which, the choir sang the *Sanctus*:—

"Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God of Hosts;
Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory;
Glory be to Thee, O Lord, most High. Amen.' [75]

"At the conclusion of the service the Bishop of London ascended the pulpit, which had been placed opposite her Majesty's chair of state, and preached the sermon. His lordship's text was chosen from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31,—'And the King stood in his place and made a covenant before the

Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.'

"At the conclusion of the sermon, to which the Queen was deeply attentive, the Archbishop of Canterbury advanced toward her Majesty, and standing before her, thus addressed her:— [76]

"Madam, is your Majesty willing to take the oath?"

"The Queen answered, 'I am willing.'

"The Archbishop then ministered these questions; and the Queen answered each question severally, as follows:—

"*Archbishop.*—Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the people of this United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the dominions thereto belonging, according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the respective laws and customs of the same? [77]

"*Queen.*—I solemnly promise so to do.

"*Archbishop.*—Will you to the utmost of your power cause law and justice, in mercy, to be executed in all your judgments?"

"*Queen.*—I will.

"*Archbishop.*—Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law? And will you maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the United Church of England and Ireland, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as by law established within England and Ireland, and the territories thereunto belonging? And will you preserve unto the bishops and clergy of England and Ireland, and to the churches there committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them, or any of them? [78]

"*Queen.*—All this I promise to do.

"The Queen then proceeded to the altar, attended by the various functionaries, who had taken up their stations about her, and kneeling before it, laid her right hand on the great Bible, and, in the sight of her people, took a solemn oath, to observe the promises which she had made, saying —

"The things which I have here before promised, I will perform and keep—So help me, God.' [79]

"Her Majesty then kissed the book and set her royal sign manual to a copy of the oath. After this solemn ceremony she returned to the chair, and kneeling at her fald-stool, the choir sang, with the most touching effect, the magnificent hymn—

"Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And warm them with thy Heav'nly fire;
Thou who th' Anointing Spirit art,
To us thy sevenfold gifts impart;
Let thy bless'd unction from above
Be to us comfort, life, and love;
Enable with celestial light
The weakness of our mortal sight:
Anoint our hearts, and cheer our face,
With the abundance of thy grace. [80]
Keep far our foes, give peace at home—
Where Thou dost dwell no ill can come.
Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And Spirit of both, to be but one,
That so through ages all along,
This may be our triumphant song;
In Thee, O Lord, we make our boast,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

CHAPTER IX. [81]

PARLEY CONTINUES HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE CORONATION IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

"THE ceremony of anointing followed next in order—Her Majesty having been divested of her crimson robe by the Mistress of the Robes, took her seat in St. Edward's chair, and the Dean of Westminster taking from the altar the ampulla, containing the consecrated oil, and pouring some of it into the anointing spoon, proceeded to anoint her Majesty on the crown of the head and on the palm of both hands, in the form of a cross—four knights of the garter holding over her head a rich cloth of gold. [82]

"The Dean of Westminster then took the spurs from the altar and delivered them to the Lord Great Chamberlain, who, kneeling before her Majesty, presented them to her, after which she forthwith sent them back to the altar. The Viscount Melbourne, who carried the sword of state, then delivered it to the Lord Chamberlain, receiving in lieu thereof, another sword, in a scabbard of purple velvet, which his lordship delivered to the archbishop, who laid it on the altar. After a short prayer the archbishop took the sword from off the altar, and, accompanied by several other bishops, delivered it into the Queen's right hand. Then rising up her Majesty proceeded to the altar and offered the sword in the scabbard, delivering it to the archbishop, who placed it on the altar. Lord Melbourne then redeemed it by payment of one hundred shillings, and having unsheathed it, bore it during the remainder of the ceremony.

[83]

"The most important part of the ceremonial now approached: the Dean of Westminster having received the imperial mantle of cloth of gold, lined or furred with ermine, proceeded to invest her Majesty, who stood up for the purpose. Having resumed her seat, the orb with the cross was brought from the altar, and delivered into her Majesty's hand by the archbishop; having in like manner been invested with the ring, the sceptre and the rod with the dove were placed in each hand. The archbishop, then, standing before the altar, took the crown into his hands, and again laying it on the altar said—

[84]

"O God, who crownest thy faithful servants with mercy and loving kindness, look down upon this thy servant Victoria, our Queen, who now in lowly devotion boweth her head to thy divine majesty; and as thou dost this day set a crown of pure gold upon her head, so enrich her royal heart with thy heavenly grace, and crown her with all princely virtues, which may adorn the high station wherein thou hast placed her, through JESUS CHRIST, our LORD, to whom be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.'

[85]

"The Royal Crown was then brought from the altar and placed on her Majesty's head.

"At this instant the most deafening and enthusiastic cries of 'GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!' rose from every part of the Abbey, the peers and peeresses put on their coronets, the bishops their caps, and the spectators cheered and waved their handkerchiefs. The guns in the park, and at the tower, fired a royal salute.

"After a short prayer by the archbishop, the choir sang an anthem, and the Dean of Westminster taking the Bible, which had been carried in the procession, from off the altar, presented it to her Majesty, who, having received it, delivered it again to the archbishop, and it was returned to the altar.

[86]

"Having thus been solemnly anointed, and crowned, and invested with all the ensigns of royalty, the archbishop solemnly blessed the Queen, the rest of the bishops and the peers following every part of the benediction with a loud and hearty 'Amen.'

"The *Te Deum* was then sung by the choir, and her Majesty passing to the recognition chair in which she first sat, received the homage of the peers.

"The bishops first approached, and, kneeling before the Queen, the archbishop pronounced the words of homage; the others repeating them after him, and, kissing her Majesty's hand, retired.

[87]

"The Royal Dukes, ascending the steps of the throne, took off their coronets, and kneeling, repeated the words of homage, and then, touching the crown on her Majesty's head, kissed her on the left cheek and retired.

"The other Peers then performed their homage, each in succession touching the crown and kissing her Majesty's hand.

"The monotony of this ceremony was relieved by one little incident which evinced much kindness on the part of her Majesty. As one of the peers (Lord Rolle), who is a very aged and infirm man, approached the throne, he stumbled and fell back from the second step upon the floor. He was immediately raised, and supported by two noble lords; when he again approached, her Majesty, who beheld the occurrence with emotion, rose from her throne and advanced to meet him, extending her hand to him, and expressed much concern for the accident. This little trait of genuine goodness of heart was warmly cheered.

[88]



Madeley lith. 3, Wellington St. Strand.

HER MAJESTY'S STATE CARRIAGE.

"Peter Parley was highly amused at the scene which was enacted behind the throne, where one of her Majesty's Household was busily engaged scattering the coronation medals. Peers, Peeresses, Aldermen, and Military officers engaging warmly in the scramble and eagerly clutching at the coveted memorials.

[89]

"When the homage was concluded, her Majesty descended from the throne and, proceeding to the altar, partook of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

"The procession was then marshaled in the same order in which it had entered the Abbey. The rich effect of the costumes was however much heightened by the coronets of the peers.

"After a short stay in the robing rooms, the procession for the return to Buckingham palace was formed, and the crowned Sovereign left Westminster Abbey amid the enthusiastic greeting of her faithful and devoted subjects.

[90]

"Of course, there were many poems and songs made on this joyful occasion. The best which Peter Parley has seen is one by Charles Swain, which will form a very appropriate conclusion to this chapter.

"CORONATION SONG.

I.

"Thou music of a nation's voice,
 Thou grace of old Britannia's throne,
 Thou light round which all hearts rejoice,
 God save and guard thee, England's own!
 While thousand, thousand hearts are thine,
 And Britain's blessing rests on thee,
 Pure may thy crown, Victoria, shine,
 And all thy subjects *lovers* be!

[91]

II.

"Come, wives! from cottage—home, and field!
 Come, daughters! oh, ye lovely, come!
 Bid every tongue its homage yield,
 Sound, trumpets, sound; and peal the drum!
 God save the Queen! ring high, ye bells!
 Swell forth a people's praise afar;
 She's crowned the acclaiming cannon tells!
 The Queen!—God save the Queen! hurrah!

III.

"Long may she live to prove the best
 And noblest crown a Queen can wear
 Is that a people's love hath blessed,
 Whose happiness is in her care!
 God bless the Queen! ring sweet, ye bells!
 Swell forth old England's joy afar,
 She's crowned the exulting cannon tells;

CHAPTER X.

[92]

PARLEY GIVES AN ACCOUNT OF THE ILLUMINATIONS, AND OF THE GRAND DISPLAY OF FIRE-WORKS.

"AFTER the splendid pageant, which had rivetted the attention of every one during its continuance, had passed away, the fair in Hyde Park seemed to be the great centre of popular attraction.

"Though pretty well tired out with the unusual exertion of the last day or two, Peter Parley proceeded to Hyde Park to see what was going on there. He had come across the Atlantic to see the show, and he was determined to see all that was to be seen.

[93]

"How different an aspect did the park now present to what it did when Peter Parley visited it but two days before! The fair was now begun in good earnest, and there was no end to the booths for the sale of fancy goods of every description. Tents for the supply of articles of more substantial enjoyment were in equal abundance, and every one of them seemed to be completely crowded. When Peter Parley had wandered about the outskirts of the fair for some time, he saw a great many people standing looking at a large erection which seemed more like a house than a tent. He soon recognised the theatre of Mr. Richardson, which he had seen erecting when he first visited the park; as he drew near he saw that the people were laughing and enjoying the antics of a clown or merry-andrew, who was dressed in a parti-coloured dress, and was cutting the most ridiculous capers, to the no small delight of the spectators.

[94]

"Peter Parley loves a little fun, and can laugh as loud as any one at innocent amusement, so he got close up to the booth to see how the clown acquitted himself.

"Come along, old boy!—this way, this way, father Adam!' cried the fellow to Peter Parley, when he saw him advancing—'make way there, ladies and gentlemen!' he continued, leaping right over the head of a countryman who was gazing at him with intense delight, at the same time knocking his hat over his eyes so as completely to blindfold him. In an instant the clown stood beside Peter Parley, and was hurrying him up the steps of the theatre before he knew what he was about. Peter Parley, however, did not relish such a summary mode of introduction, so he disengaged himself from the fellow's grasp and moved to another part of the fair, amid the rude laughter of the by-standers.

[95]

"Peter Parley was amazed at the number of round-about and swings of every description, which beat the air and performed their evolutions with almost incessant rapidity. Some of them in the form of boats, which in the course of their movements rose and sunk alternately so as to imitate the motion of a vessel on the water, seemed particularly ingenious and appeared to be in constant request. Donkey races, too, lent their attractions, and altogether such a scene of gaiety Peter Parley never witnessed.

[96]

"As long as daylight lasted these out-of-door amusements seemed to lose little or none of their attractions. When it became too dark for their performance people crowded into the theatres and tents, or waited patiently for the grand display of fireworks which was to take place at a late hour in the evening.

[97]

"By way of making the most of his time Peter Parley got into a hackney coach and drove through the principal parts of the town to see the illuminations, which it was expected were to be on a grand scale.

"All along the line of the procession the display was most splendid, and though many of the exhibitions of private individuals were beautiful and tasteful, the public offices certainly carried off the palm. Peter Parley thinks he never saw such a brilliant display as that at the Ordnance Office, in Pall Mall, the whole front of which was one blaze of light. Peter Parley was told that there were no fewer than sixty thousand lamps employed in the devices!

[98]

"The Admiralty, Somerset House, and the Horse Guards, shared, with the Ordnance Office, the attention of the evening. The former displayed a magnificent imperial crown surmounting an anchor, with the union flag on each side in coloured lamps. It had also an inscription, 'God save the Queen.'

"Somerset House, in which are several of the public offices, excited a good deal of attention from a novelty in the art of illumination. Instead of being lighted up with oil, the coloured lamps were illuminated with gas, which added greatly to their brilliancy and effect. The Horse Guards was, also, lit up in the same manner, and was equally attractive.

[99]

"There were, besides these, hundreds of others well worth looking at and remembering too; but so many attractions offered themselves to his notice on every side, that Peter Parley does not know which to tell you about.

"After being satisfied with gazing at the illuminations, Peter Parley again proceeded to the Park, as the time approached for the grand display of fireworks.

"So dense was the crowd of eager spectators, that it was with difficulty that Peter Parley could gain access to the Park. He succeeded at length, however, thanks to the virtue of perseverance, which has done much for him in the course of his life. [100]

"The display commenced by the discharge of what is called a maroon battery, which fired off successively a series of immense crackers, each giving a report like the loudest cannon. The commencement of the spectacle was hailed with loud cheers by the assemblage, many of whom had waited several hours, and were beginning to lose all patience at the delay.

"This startling display was immediately followed by an exhibition of coloured fire, and four balloon mortars shooting forth serpents and squibs of every variety of colour. The beautiful variety of tints, blue, green, red, and purple, to which some of these gave rise when they exploded in the air, was most magnificent. [101]

"For two whole hours did the gentlemen who had the direction of this exhibition continue the display, each successive variety vieing in beauty and brilliancy with that by which it was preceded, to the delight of all beholders, many of whom, and Peter Parley among others, never witnessed such a grand sight. The young Queen, it was said, enjoyed the splendour and beauty of the sight from the palace window, with as much interest and delight as any of her subjects.

"It was almost one o'clock before the fireworks were concluded, and nearly an hour later before Peter Parley could make his way home; and the sun rose high in heaven before he awoke next morning. [102]

"Peter Parley must not omit to mention that all the theatres and places of public amusement were, by her Majesty's command, open to the public free; of course they were all filled, but Peter Parley did not visit any of them.

"It pleased Peter Parley to hear that the poor and the unfortunate were no less kindly attended to. In almost every parish committees were formed by the inhabitants for the purpose of collecting subscriptions and arranging matters for regaling the poor and the children attending the charity schools, so that to all the 28th of June should be a day of rejoicing. Nor were the unfortunate inhabitants of the prisons forgotten. In all those belonging to the city, they were each allowed an ample repast, and in some of the others the great brewers supplied them with a good allowance of ale or porter." [103]

CHAPTER XI.

PARLEY ATTENDS A REVIEW IN HYDE PARK, AND RELATES SOME PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF MARSHAL SOULT.—CONCLUSION.

"PETER PARLEY had begun to recover from the fatigue which he had undergone, and was thinking of once more crossing the Atlantic, and returning to the enjoyment of his quiet home, when one morning at breakfast, Major Meadows announced that there was to be a grand review in Hyde Park, on a scale of such splendour, that Peter Parley must see it before he left town. [104]

"The day fortunately turned out one of the most beautiful that could be conceived, and the crowds of persons who assembled to witness the grand military display, were very great. It was estimated by some of the military officers, who are accustomed to form pretty accurate notions of vast bodies of men, that at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, there were not less than two hundred thousand spectators present, in and around the Park. [105]



MARSHAL SOULT'S STATE CARRIAGE.

"Early in the day the troops began to arrive, and by ten o'clock all the regiments to be reviewed were on the ground. Shortly after, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Hill, and a great number of English military officers, as well as Marshal Soult, and all the foreign ambassadors, attended by their brilliant suites, arrived, and were every where received with great cheering.

"At half-past eleven her Majesty arrived accompanied by her suite in four carriages, each drawn by four horses, and escorted by a detachment of Life Guards. She was attended by her Aides-de-Camp in full military uniform. The arrival of the royal party was announced by a discharge of cannon, the band striking up the national anthem, and the soldiers presenting arms as her Majesty approached. [106]

"The great attraction among the foreign visitants was Marshal Soult, who, as usual, excited much attention. As he rode close past the spot where Peter Parley and his friend Major Meadows had taken their stand, his stirrup broke, and we feared he would have fallen from his horse, but the Marshal is a good rider, and quickly recovered. Peter Parley afterwards saw a curious anecdote in the newspapers connected with this accident. On learning what had happened, Sir H. Vivian immediately dispatched a messenger to the saddlers to the Ordnance, to procure a pair of stirrups to replace the broken one. It happened, singularly enough, that the Saddlers had in their possession the stirrups which Napoleon used in many of his campaigns; so that Marshal Soult, during this review, actually did what was next to standing in his master's shoes! [107]

"Seeing that Peter Parley was very much interested in the Marshal, Major Meadows, who had been engaged in the Peninsular war, and had fought against him in some of his most celebrated battles, continued, when our attention was not completely occupied by the evolutions of the troops, to relate many most interesting anecdotes of his distinguished career. [108]

"'Marshal Soult,' said Major Meadows, 'is a very singular man, Mr. Parley, and like many of Napoleon's generals, rose from the very humblest rank. He entered the army as a private soldier, and, after serving some time in this capacity in a royal regiment of infantry, he became sub-lieutenant of grenadiers.

"He afterwards rose through the various ranks, till in 1796 he was appointed general of brigade, and sent to join the army of Italy. Here he soon won for himself new laurels, and his fame attracted the notice of Napoleon, who henceforth honoured him with his personal esteem.

"On the eve of the memorable battle of Austerlitz, in which he was entrusted with the command of the centre of the army, Napoleon, as usual, called his marshals together to explain his plans to them, and to give them instructions for their guidance. To the others he was minute in his directions, in proportion to the importance of the posts assigned to them. When he came to Soult, however, he merely said, 'as for you, Soult, I have only to say, act as you always do.' [109]

"In the midst of the battle, an aide-de-camp arrived with an order that the Marshal should instantly push forward and gain certain heights. 'I will obey the Emperor's commands as soon as I can,' replied Soult, 'but this is not the proper time.' Napoleon, enraged at the delay, sent a second messenger, with more peremptory orders. The second aide-de-camp arrived just as the Marshal was putting his column in motion. The manœuvre had been delayed because Soult observed that his opponents were extending their lines, and, consequently, weakening their centre. Complete success attended the attack. Napoleon, who, from the elevated position which he occupied, saw the attack, instantly perceived the reason for the delay, and the brilliancy of the movement, and riding up to Soult, complimented him in the presence of his staff, who, but a few minutes before, had seen him angry at the supposed disobedience, saying, 'Marshal, I account you the ablest tactician in my empire!' [110] [111]

"After the battle of Eylau, Napoleon was very much discouraged at the loss he had sustained, and wished to fall back, so as to form a junction with the other corps of his army. Against this resolution Soult warmly protested, telling the Emperor, that from what he had seen, he expected the enemy would retreat during the night, and thus leave the French army in possession of the field. Napoleon complied with the Marshal's advice, and every thing took place just as he had foretold. So that it was to the sagacity of Soult that the French army owes the honour of the victory of Eylau.

"In 1808, Soult, now Duke of Dalmatia, was entrusted with the command of the army in Spain, and his first movement was to pursue the gallant Sir John Moore in his memorable retreat towards Corunna. Under the walls of that town he engaged the British army, but, after a sharp contest, was completely repulsed. The British general, however, was killed in the action, and was buried in the citadel, his corpse wrapped in a military cloak, and the guns of his enemy paying his funeral honours. Marshal Soult, with that noble feeling which can only exist in minds of true greatness erected a monument to his memory, near the spot where he so nobly fell. [112]

"To the Duke of Dalmatia Napoleon entrusted the command of the army, when the defeat of the French at Vittoria had placed the Peninsula at the mercy of the Duke of Wellington. After a series of conflicts, which covered the British army and its able general with glory, Soult, finding the cause of his imperial master hopeless, gave up the contest and returned to Paris. [113]

"Soult afterwards fought at Waterloo, but without that distinction which might have been expected from his old renown. After this battle, which for ever stamped the fate of Napoleon, and showed Wellington the greatest general of the age, Soult retired to the country, and lived for some years in seclusion. He was however recalled, and created a peer of France by Charles X.' [114]

"Such was Major Meadows' account of this celebrated man. To Peter Parley he was an object of great interest, because his presence recalled the remembrance of some of the spirit-stirring events in which he had been a participator; not that Peter Parley is an admirer of military genius or delights in military renown. He would rather do honour to the humblest benefactor of the human race than the greatest general that ever lived. With him the glory of James Watt, the inventor of the steam-engine, far outshines the lustre of a Soult, or a Ney, or an Alexander! and he would rather be the author of the Waverley Novels than be crowned with the blood-stained laurels of a Napoleon or a Wellington! [115]

"Peter Parley is one of those who hope the time is now come when the sound of war will be heard no more, and nations, instead of wasting their energies in deeds of blood, will strive to rival each other only in the peaceful pursuits of commerce and the arts."

"Peter Parley must now bid his young friends good bye! When he meets them again he hopes to find them all equally willing to be pleased and as patient and attentive to the tales which he tells them, as they have been to his 'VISIT TO LONDON DURING THE CORONATION OF QUEEN VICTORIA.'" [116]



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LIST OF PLATES.

[119]

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Transcriber's Notes: Obvious punctuation errors repaired.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PETER PARLEY'S VISIT TO LONDON, DURING
THE CORONATION OF QUEEN VICTORIA ***

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