

## TEN

### *Tableaux domestique*

#### **Staff and Staffability – ‘O mother, mother, make my bed’ – ‘Rum, sodomy and the lash’**

##### **~ Staff and Staffability ~**

Marie’s arrival at Clarence House and the acquisition of Eastwell Park led to an immediate and dramatic increase in the Edinburgh personal and domestic staff over whom she exercised ultimate authority. To Marie Viazemskaja, Dmitrii Kolochin, and a Russian maid were immediately added (by royal command) Lady Emma Osborne, Lady Frances Baillie, and Lady Mary Butler as ladies of the bedchamber.

Lady Emma Osborne, the sixth child of the duke of Leeds, was middle-aged, a spinster, and Marie’s least favourite attendant in spite of her favourable comment made in Russia. Missy remembered her as ‘a super-refined, unmarried gentlewoman, prudish, protesting, and, I am afraid, in league with Mademoiselle [Heim] to disapprove of the Duchess’s foreign ways and ideas’.<sup>1</sup> But for Marie her principal demerit was her pair of ‘royal ears’, since anything she overheard in the Edinburgh household would be transmitted to Buckingham Palace, Balmoral, Osborne House, or Windsor Castle. In a letter to Jennie, Marie wrote that she was looking forward to meeting her for dinner, but that Lady Emma Osborne would also attend. This was unfortunate, as she would like to come ‘without the feeling of a governess watching your movements’.<sup>2</sup> She was also peculiar: ‘she can hardly ever eat what is served ... if it is not mutton or chicken, and she never touches any kind of beef. She sometimes eats only dry bread and salad ... [and] refuses five or six excellent dishes’.<sup>3</sup>

Lady Mary Butler was a daughter of the marquess of Ormonde and Ossory in the Irish peerage. Marie liked her immediately, thinking her ‘a charming little person, so animated, intelligent and well educated ... She speaks German quite well ... even better than French. All like her immensely as well as Captain Clarke, who is such a thorough gentleman’.<sup>4</sup> Lady Frances Baillie had married in 1855, and her husband died on 9 November 1874. ‘If you knew how sorry I am about dear Lady Frances who was so good and kind during all this time [Prince Alfred’s birth] and who was so fond of my baby and gave me such good advice about him!’<sup>5</sup> She returned to Marie after a period of mourning; unfortunately, as her sister Lady Augusta Stanley deteriorated she would be forced to gradually withdraw from Marie’s household until, in 1876, she left altogether to look after Dean Stanley. ‘Such a loss for me not to see Lady Fanny and not to show her my dear little girl’, Marie wrote after Missy’s birth.<sup>6</sup> With Viazemskaja and Baillie gone, it was ‘high time’ to think about new ladies-in-waiting, and, although Marie had no idea whom to take on, she was certain that she should be unmarried, as otherwise ‘one can never be sure to have her just when one wants her’.<sup>7</sup>

But unmarried ladies-in-waiting were inclined to marry sooner or later. On 11 July 1877, Lady Mary Butler married William Fitzwilliam, the second son of Earl Fitzwilliam, quondam aide-de-camp to Queen Victoria. As a result, she withdrew from Marie’s staff to be replaced by Lady Harriot Grimston, daughter of the Tory politician the earl of Verulam. As already noted, Lowry-Corry eventually replaced

Viazemskaja after her return to Russia in 1874. She was another boon: ‘Everybody likes [her] very much ... It is such an advantage that she speaks French so fluently and does not seem too shy’.<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, Lowry-Corry was obliged to resign at the beginning of 1882 due to extreme ill health (she would die on 15 June 1885), and Lady Mary Fitzwilliam – by now a personal friend – agreed to return as informal principal lady-in-waiting, although in effect she became a permanent lady companion.

This was not a perfect solution, and a full-time replacement for Lowry-Corry had to be found. Marie first decided on Lady Emma Edgcumbe, a scion of the earls of Mount-Edgcumbe, but Affie objected: ‘[He] says he knew her from her very childhood [and] thinks her rather tiresome’. She was dropped, and Affie selected Lady Elinor Wemyss, a scion of the earls of Wemyss and March. Now it was Marie who objected: ‘[She] is not at all desirable, besides being only 24, and it is a great responsibility taking a handsome young lady ... as we often have many gentlemen in the house and I think she is a great flirt and very independent’.<sup>9</sup>

Marie soon found the solution. Her personal male staff already included the Hon. Captain Debonnaire Monson, comptroller to the household, who along with Major Francis Poore (her principal equerry) was also one of her itinerant aides-de-camp, employed as such for foreign journeys. Marie selected Monson’s wife Lady Augusta, who satisfied her criteria admirably. ‘She is excellent for travelling abroad, very practical in every way ... and is very lady-like and respectable’. Marie also thought her decision was a charitable one, for although Monson was heir to a barony ‘they are in very poor circumstances and [have] four children to educate’.<sup>10</sup>

Births, marriages, and deaths were the cause of most upheavals among Marie’s personal staff. With the acquisition of Lady Augusta Monson, Lady Mary Fitzwilliam was able to return to her husband. However, on 24 March 1885, Lady Harriot Grimston married Major Poore, and Lady Mary Fitzwilliam was recalled when the middle-aged bride immediately began to demonstrate an unusual (but well-timed) level of fertility and could not continue with her duties. ‘I forgot to tell you the great news’, Marie wrote excitedly to Tolstaia almost exactly nine months later when a son was born on 26 December:

Lady Harriot has given birth to a boy and as far as one can tell everything is going well, although I have had just one telegram. And what do you think? I am to be the godmother ... Lady Harriot will – I am sure of it – produce a frightful ‘poupous’ every year, which she will proceed to kill off by dint of applying various theories of modern hygiene.<sup>11</sup>

Early in the New Year, Marie wrote Lady Harriot Poore confessing to her that although she loved small babies she loathed giving birth. ‘I express one very hearty wish, that you may not have to undergo soon again a similar event, which I always considered a most detestable expedition’.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, ten months later there appeared the first indication of a second ‘frightful *poupous*’, and the expectant mother felt that she had to apologize to her mistress for becoming pregnant again so soon after the first time, and causing so much trouble. She wrote, as Marie later quoted it, “‘I really could not help it!’” with Marie adding ‘we shrieked with laughter when we read this last confession’.<sup>13</sup> There was now no question of Lady Harriot Poore returning, so Lady Mary Fitzwilliam once again agreed to take her place, this time on a more permanent basis, arriving at Malta in January 1887. The second Poore child, a girl, was born in April, and Marie responded to the announcement kindly, concluding that ‘all my sympathies are with my own sex and I never regretted having so many girls ... The more I see of life the more difficult I think [is] the bringing up of boys’.<sup>14</sup>

However, a little over one year later Marie may have winced when remembering her first letter to Tolstaia, as it would be Lady Harriot Poore's third 'frightful *poupous*' who would instead kill her off in childbirth on 15 August 1888. Marie wrote of the 'sad death of poor Lady Harriot. They were such a happy couple and the poor husband is quite heartbroken. And left with three small children too!'<sup>15</sup> Major Poore sent Marie his late wife's journal, and she replied to him after reading it:

It reminded me ... of a very happy time, and of one whose admirable character and pure, elevated mind I always so much appreciated. I would also so much like to have one of her last photographs ... I know you always were a true Christian and a thoroughly religious man and you must have ... some consolation in your unbounded faith and belief in a better world and a meeting there.<sup>16</sup>

Marie had found Monson 'a little shy' but 'very gentlemanlike' on first meeting him,<sup>17</sup> but although both he and Poore were highly competent in their duties they shared one severe fault, as Marie explained:

We are at the end of our search for a new aide-de-camp, but the choice is more than a difficult one because I insist on a man a little bit European and speaking French at least passably. The excellent Monson and Poore are no help to me at all abroad thanks to their ignorance.<sup>18</sup>

Poore was worse than Monson: 'His total ignorance of foreign countries and languages is a real trial and I have to take a daily lesson of patience!'<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, Monson would serve the Edinburghs until his death on 18 June 1900 when his son Augustus would immediately succeed him, having been equerry to Affie since April of that year, although he would leave the household soon after Affie's death to become a noted diplomat.

Like most Victorian families, Marie's would be large, and a nanny and two nursery-maids had been engaged to staff the Clarence House nursery. The nanny was Annie Pitcaithly, a Scottish woman formerly a nursery-maid at Balmoral where she had become widowed from the assessor of fisheries at the royal estate. Marie had met her at Windsor Castle in 1874, liked her immediately and agreed to take her on in the important post of nanny to all her children. It was a wise choice, since 'Nana' Pitcaithly was well loved by all the children, and although she later became very ill she survived long enough to take care of Baby Bee in her extreme infancy before she died.

The Victorian nursery was a world apart and a law unto itself, as Lady Emma Osborne discovered to her cost when she dared to encroach on Pitcaithly's territory. In May 1879, the head nursery-maid complained to Marie about Lady Emma Osborne's behaviour, and Marie was obliged to pass on the complaint to Queen Victoria. She explained to the queen that she had not wanted to interfere in case Lady Emma Osborne 'should take offence', but that if the admonition 'came entirely from you [at Windsor] ... it would come more naturally'.<sup>20</sup> This subtle and indirect plan must have worked, although it took a great deal of time to take effect as it was not until the autumn of the following year that Marie could write that Lady Emma Osborne was now 'very well behaved and abstaining from the nursery'.<sup>21</sup>

Both nursery-maids were English, but when one left in October 1882 to marry, Marie replaced her with a German girl who spoke no English whatever but who 'gets on very well with Pitcaithly',<sup>22</sup> and this happy arrangement remained intact for the next three years. When Baby Bee was born, Pitcaithly was delighted: '[she] is so intensely happy to have another baby in the nursery, and so proud of her'.<sup>23</sup>

There was a pathetic reason for Pitcaithly's desperate attachment to a new life: hers was ebbing away. It was not at first thought that she would live to see Baby Bee at all, because in 1883 she had been diagnosed with a series of malignant iter al tumours that slowly but surely sapped her strength and wasted away her body. On 30 October 1885, an advanced cancer of the mentum was diagnosed, and on Saturday 7 November she suffered severe ascites chylosus resulting from a rupture of the thoracic duct caused by the tumour, and this put Pitcaithly onto her death-bed at Eastwell Park. One week later, Marie described her condition to Wolseley after her return from Bertie's annual hunting-party in Norkolk:

[she] has not many hours to live. She was very bad when I left for Sandringham but the stupid doctor [Wilks] pretended there was no immediate danger ... she asked me to preside over the distribution of all her treasures. It was a beautiful death-bed ... so truly Christian ... I have been dreadfully upset ... and could not think of anything else.<sup>24</sup>

Annie 'Nana' Pitcaithly expired early on the following day, Sunday 15 November 1885. The coming Christmas would be a difficult one:

But down at the bottom of my heart I have a terrible feeling of emptiness at not anymore seeing the good and happy figure of Nana, who always seemed able to fill the children with joy. They also feel this and keep saying over and over 'Christmas won't be the same without Nana'. But soon the joys of the Christmas tree will return them to their childhood spirit, which is only natural. But her memory will always live in their hearts!<sup>25</sup>

According to Missy, she and her siblings were taken into Pitcaithly's room after her death: 'We wept and wept so that we had to be taken from the room, and were inconsolable for a long time. The loss of Nana was a truly terrible loss'.<sup>26</sup> This was true enough:

We feel more and more how empty the nursery is without our dear Pitcaithly ... [the children] never stop speaking of "dear Nana" ... Missy's eyes often fill with tears when she sits in the lonely nursery ... but nobody misses her more than I, who was so fond of talking with this remarkably sensible, honest and devoted woman, in whom I had such entire trust.<sup>27</sup>

However, Missy made a number of errors when recounting this tragic incident. Her mis-dating of Pitcaithly's death and mis-spelling of her name were slight infelicities beside her stating that 'Mamma never took a real nurse for us after that, only nursery-maids'.<sup>28</sup> It would have been a gross negligence for Marie to entrust the welfare of her newest arrival to the care of nursery-maids, who could be as young as sixteen and quite inexperienced. In fact, Marie, as pragmatic as ever, immediately put Pitcaithly's death to one side and solved the problem:

I am looking for a new Nanny and I think I have found her: an excellent person who is leaving our Meiningen niece next month. She is not unknown to me, which is also an advantage. While waiting, things are going very well, basically, with the two nursery-maids – one of whom is Nana's eldest daughter – who have been already taking care of the children for a year.<sup>29</sup>

Charly's daughter Theodora had been born in 1879 and so no longer required her first full-time nanny, who arrived at Eastwell Park in January 1886 to look after Baby Bee.

The new nanny joined the governess, Amalie Heim, and mistress of the robes, general maid, and itinerant housekeeper, Frances 'Fanny' Renwick. When Marie arrived in England, she had brought with her a young Russian maid (a princess of the Bariatinskii family) who had to return home after three months:

She would not remain any longer because her mother was very ill and she was too anxious for her. She was very sad to quit me, and I to part with her ... I was obliged to take immediately another English maid ... She is from Windsor and was recommended to me by Alice, who has her sister. Her name is Fanny Renwick, the daughter of one of your farmer servants.<sup>30</sup>

Renwick would stay in Marie's employ until pensioned off at the Edinburgh translation to Germany.

Heim would not last that long. She had been born in Alsace-Lorraine, where she had been a schoolteacher, joining Marie's staff in 1880. In common with many Alsatians, Heim nurtured a deep detestation of Germans and Germany for having ruthlessly annexed her homeland on 9 June 1871, pursuing a policy of Germanization at the expense of local traditions and customs. Her criticism of Marie's 'foreign ways' as recorded by Missy did not refer to English habits but to German ones, and quite understandably she wished not to continue serving Marie after the Malta years and the family's closer association with Germany, and she certainly would have wanted to avoid working and living in a German duchy. Accordingly, she left the Edinburghs in September 1887 with Bourke taking her to Naples. In spite of her Germanophobia, at least the younger Edinburghs were disappointed: 'It was a very sad moment, both children and her cried bitterly. I think they continue to miss her at times'.<sup>31</sup>

Staffing problems at Clarence House were considerable. During the turbulent and tragic Eastwell Park winter of 1885, Marie also had to consider the problem of how to arrange sleeping quarters for her daughters now that they were growing up and could no longer be made to sleep together:

In London I intend to separate the three eldest girls now that they have become more grown-up. But with such a small place as Clarence House, the difficult arrangements there are of such a magnitude that my work is really cut out for me, since we had this pleasant but unfortunate idea to lodge Sir and Madam there from the beginning. It is impossible to remove them at present without having to rent an apartment in the neighbourhood, which is a prohibitive expense. Bearing that in mind, they will be lodging forever.<sup>32</sup>

'Sir and Madam' referred to Captain Clarke – 'the excellent, but the dullest of men'<sup>33</sup> – who had moved in to Clarence House after George Liddell retired, and who had subsequently found himself a wife and occupied the last remaining spare rooms.

Clarence House was of course not small by London standards, but its staff was vast. William Gardener was the steward overseeing a male staff of twelve: two valets, a butler, two under-butlers, two hall porters, two footmen, a brusher, a coal porter, and a carpenter. Eleanor Matthews, the housekeeper, oversaw the female staff of fourteen: six housemaids, three kitchen maids, two still-room maids, a china maid, a linen maid, and a dresser. All of these lived on the premises either permanently or in rotation, while in any event one room had to be set aside for the performance of, or paraphernalia associated with, each position. To these had to be added Affie's personal staff, Marie's personal staff, and of course the seven members of the Edinburgh family itself; and there was also Sandy the collie, of course, who when brought to London lived not in some outside kennel but inside with the family.

The additional floor had been a godsend, but it was still no solution to the rather cramped conditions. Many rooms at Clarence House (as in any great Victorian home) could not be used for anything other than the purpose for which they had been designed. The still-room, for example, was where coffee, tea, and hot chocolate were made, where the best china was washed, where jam and toast or muffins prepared and home-made wines and cordials brewed. In fact, a dozen rooms at Clarence House were filled with linen, foodstuffs, and crockery; half-a-dozen more were occupied by

the staff appointed to look after them and could not be appropriated for any other use. This situation remained largely intact until the household staff was scaled down in 1886 at the start of the Malta years, during and after which the house would be of course much less frequently used. A new housekeeper, Elizabeth Chapman of Ashford, who had been housekeeper at Eastwell Park, oversaw a skeleton staff of four female servants and one male domestic until the house was officially vacated in 1900 for the duke and duchess of Connaught; but this did not help Marie in 1885.

Eastwell Park was little better off in this respect. Elizabeth Bryan, the faithful elderly housekeeper, ran it from 1874 until her retirement in September 1881 due to ill health when her position was taken over by Elizabeth Chapman, who would be transferred to Clarence House in 1886. Both housekeepers oversaw a staff of nine women (five laundry maids and four housemaids) as well as the carpenter, stable boy, and coal porter. The carpenter was married with two sons, both of whom worked on the estate, one as an apprentice to his father and the other as a farm labourer on neighbouring Eastwell Farm, the 1,400 acre estate Affie had acquired the right to work in 1883, and where he built an active dairy. There were also four gardeners, one of whom was married with four children who all helped out in the grounds. Also attached to Eastwell Park were two constables and one inspector on duty throughout the day. There was also a permanent telegraph office with its own clerk.

In addition to this, there were naturally many other employees who did not live in the house, such as the Woodreve and Chief Forester, various estate managers, and the many regular labourers such as the hop-pickers. Every 22 January there was a ‘Servants’ Ball’ at Eastwell Park at which Marie was the social pivot and at which about fifty members of staff were usually present. Marie danced with even the lowest farm labourer – provided of course that he had first acquainted himself with the rudiments of etiquette required of him on such an occasion, like learning the quadrille. Also, every Christmas, one of the Eastwell Park Scotch bullocks was slaughtered to provide a meal for all the Eastwell Park staff, estate employees, and their wider families – in total more than one hundred persons.

This very different arrangement at Eastwell Park presented Marie with its own worries. Diphtheria had always been a problem in Kent, since it was usually brought over to England from France (hence it was known locally as ‘Boulogne sore-throat’), and there was a minor epidemic in the autumn of 1884 that reached Eastwell in October. Marie became very concerned because, as she put it in her customary ironic and cynical manner whenever dealing with diseases or physicians:

several of the under-servants have their families [in Eastwell]. I have given strict orders, that they should either not enter the house at all or live here entirely and not with their families ... The good village people thought their children had only sore throats, until a boy of 18 who had been working in our house died of the effects of this sore throat: then only attention was paid to it.<sup>34</sup>

Of all Marie’s staff, it was Lady Mary Butler who would become ‘her great friend’, as Missy in this instance accurately put it.<sup>35</sup> She accompanied Marie on many of her London outings in the 1870s prior to her Fitzwilliam marriage in 1877, and she was often made Marie’s official representative when she was indisposed. On 19 June 1874, for example, she took a quantity of toys and books selected by Marie for distribution to the children at St Thomas’s Hospital when the Edinburghs were preparing to leave England for their first journey abroad together. Missy remembered her as ‘an Irishwoman ... [with] all the wit and vivacity of her race, also something of their instinctive antagonism to all things too truly British. Without being a beauty she

was full of charm, very clever, a delightful companion, amusing, gay, well-read, and forever on the go'.<sup>36</sup> Here Marie certainly agreed with her daughter.

Mother and daughter were also in agreement over Lady Mary Fitzwilliam's husband, but on this occasion taking a negative view. William Fitzwilliam had been Irish Liberal member for County Wicklow and would take the Liberal seat for the South Division of the West Riding of Yorkshire in 1880; he was also an officer in the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion of the North Riding Volunteers. Apart from this, he was 'a worthy but dull and rather deaf husband who was generally left at home'.<sup>37</sup> Marie could only agree with Missy:

I have the vague idea of taking Lady Mary to Russia, but she also wants to bring her husband, who is a real 'Tsar Skuka' [Tsar of Tedium], who stutters and does not speak a word of French. I do not look forward to producing an Englishman of that quality back home.<sup>38</sup>

This antipathy to Lord Fitzwilliam was clearly known by him and his wife and must have led to some amusing discussions between them. It seems that to inflict on Russia such an oaf was one matter, but to have to introduce him as the son-in-law of an Irish peer was quite another, and rather too much for Lady Mary Fitzwilliam to bear. The trip was not undertaken until June 1889 for the marriage of Pavl to Aline, but two months before the party left England, Marie noted that Lady Mary Fitzwilliam was 'rejoicing like a child' at the prospect of going.<sup>39</sup> In the following spring, Marie was delighted to explain what had happened: 'You know that Lady Mary came with me to Russia, and that her husband accompanied her disguised as an aide-de-camp! She was amused almost silly by this'.<sup>40</sup>

Lady Mary Fitzwilliam accompanied Marie throughout her stay on Malta after January 1887 (without her husband save just prior to the Russian expedition), participating in all the cruises and social events:

She has much success here and is invited to all the balls. Young and old alike flirt with her as though she was the only conspicuous female on Malta, and she teases us horribly. Her craving for physical activity is greater right now than ever, and she is only a touch calmer when scouring the country on horseback, galloping at full speed ... she is always late for dinner, and arrives completely red and disoriented – a sunburnt gingerbread Amazon.<sup>41</sup>

Lady Mary Fitzwilliam also took an active and enthusiastic part in the domestic recreational activities of the family, particularly during the Edinburgh Christmas period at which charades would be performed. Marie described how in one of these 'I represented a very fat woman and Lady Mary a very fat baby I was feeding with the bottle. We were all bolstered, painted and frightfully got up – I thought the children would laugh themselves into fits'.<sup>42</sup>

In her memoirs, Missy laboured her assertion that she and her sisters felt Anglican and English, resenting their eventual conversion to Lutheranism and the overall Germanization that took place in Coburg under the direction of two grotesque Teutons at the behest of their mother. These two Coburg monsters, clumping around the Palais Edinburgh like Wagner's giant ogres Fáfñir and Fasolt, were named by Missy only as 'Dr X' and 'Fraülein'. They were, in fact, Dr Wilhelm Rolfs, one of the leading academics and instructors of the duchy, and Esperanza von Truchsess von Wetzhausen, the daughter of the highly respected but impoverished *junker* family of Truchsess von Wetzhausen from their ancient seat of Wetzhausen in Prussia. Rolfs was engaged principally as Prince Alfred's tutor, while Von Truchsess took over as the girls' governess from the Germanophobic Amalie Heim. Missy:

Dr X was a most intelligent man and won Mamma's favour by his extreme erudition. Being exceedingly cultured and well-read herself, she found in this clever man a fond of wisdom and learning. But he was German 'Kultur' at its worst, arrogant, masterful, overruling everyone else, turning the best into ridicule, laying down the law, intolerant, tyrannical. But worst of all, he hated everything that was English ... His object was to uproot in us the love of England and turn us into Germans. We resisted this with all our might ... with that magnificent courage of children when their gods are attacked.<sup>43</sup>

About Von Truchsess she was even more venomous:

The stories she told sounded harmless ... but there was poison in every word ... poison in her insinuations, and especially was there poison in her reticence and in the things she never quite said. She would seem to be pleading for someone whilst in reality ... she was tearing them to pieces ... I can only compare her to a miasma ... Her influence was uncannily pernicious ... she was as destructive as a dangerous bacillus.

Worse still, Fáfnir and Fasolt fell in monstrous love and were married: 'and the two together were a terrible force against which no old, loved influence or habit could stand'.<sup>44</sup>

However, as so often with Missy, not only were the cold facts very different, but also her assessment and recollection of her attitudes as recorded by Marie at the time. Von Truchsess arrived at Malta three months after Heim left, docking at La Valetta (escorted by Lady Mary Fitzwilliam) on 10 December 1887. Shortly afterwards, there began a battle of wills between Queen Victoria and Marie over whether the Edinburgh children should spend the summer holidays of 1888 in Coburg or at Osborne Cottage. 'I hope to be able to make the children come [with me] for their holidays', Marie explained to Tolstaia in June. 'The Queen would like to have them back, but I hope to have made an end of this matter with a stern letter'.<sup>45</sup> Marie was victorious, and the children would spend the summer in Germany.

While still on Malta with her daughters, Marie wrote to Duchess Alexandrine giving her opinion of Von Truchsess: 'Our new governess is marvellous, and every day we take delight in having a German in the house – additionally one of good background ... and I am looking forward to the nice summer in our beloved Thuringia, when all the children will be together'.<sup>46</sup> Shortly after arriving at the Rosenau, Marie wrote to Queen Victoria about Von Truchsess and her relationship with the girls:

The fact is ... [she] is a charming person and manages them so well, they are really fond of her and don't even wish her away for her well-deserved holy days. This is the best proof of being really liked by them. My only dread was how she would get on with Dr Rolfs. But I instantly saw that they were on very good terms, and two days ago she announced to me her betrothal to him! I was quite pleased, as Alfred is so fond of her, and she always will be an excellent element in the house. She had such a good influence over Dr Rolfs that he is quite an altered man and looks very happy. But they are not to marry till next spring or summer when we have finished all our wanderings.<sup>47</sup>

Although both Rolfs and Von Truchsess were middle-aged, the betrothal lasted for one year, as Marie had reckoned, and they were married in July 1889.

In spite of this letter, Missy claimed that Affie sided with his children against Marie in what she claimed was their collective loathing of both Rolfs and Von Truchsess until, in September 1893, the Coburg monsters were persuaded to leave the ducal household, by which time Prince Alfred was an officer cadet in Potsdam and Missy was married. Von Truchsess was replaced by Sophie von Passavant, another scion of a respected *junker* family, as governess to Ducky, Sandra, and Baby Bee, and Missy

made yet another error when she stated that Passavant became her mother's lady-in-waiting after her remaining daughters matured and married. This was not true, and Passavant became Ducky's principal lady-in-waiting when she married in 1894. The truth is that Rolfs was eventually dismissed, and Von Truchsess was obliged to follow him as his wife.

But the cruellest deception Missy perpetrated (consciously or otherwise) was to imply that Rolfs – who was certainly to begin with the most appalling man – had been chosen by Marie to instruct Prince Alfred. As the reigning duke, it was Ernst's business to do this, and his choice of Rolfs in fact led to a bitter quarrel between him and Marie, one in which Affie played little or no part at all.

For Missy, Countess Tolstaia was yet another giant ogre clumping around with 'a series of double chins ... flabby and limp like emptied leather sacks ... open nostrils'. She had a hand with a missing middle finger giving her 'a nervous tic ... she kept rubbing the points of her two other fingers together over the stump of the missing digit, and ... pass them along the side of her cheek and nose as though scaring away a fly'.<sup>48</sup> But for Marie, who remained close to her former governess for the rest of her life, she was always 'so pleasant and clever: we read a great deal together'.<sup>49</sup> Perhaps Marie gave the most cogent summary of Tolstaia to Jennie:

I stopped for two days at Baden, that most lovely spot, on a visit to my old governess, a very clever woman who has turned out, what she thinks, a successful bit of royalty in my humble person. She is always full of information, witty and amusing, and talking with her is always a treat for me. Naturally, I have to listen to many a good-natured sermon, but I do not mind it!<sup>50</sup>

It is a fact of nineteenth-century social history that only in a handful of unfortunate cases did a genuinely sadistic governess or nanny damage their charges in future life. For the most part, they assumed a stern attitude as part of the accepted mechanics by which their unique station operated, one for which most charges were grateful for the rest of their lives. In all these vast majority of untraumatic cases the charges established a lifelong closeness with their governess and nanny that would become quite incomprehensible to subsequent generations.

When her turn came, Missy of course would not treat her children any differently, and if she recognized this relationship at all she ignored it for the sake of her memoirs and the ulterior motive she had in writing them. She attacked virtually all Marie's friends, staff, and close acquaintances in order to render her mother guilty by associating with the alleged demons of her youth, one of whom was even the kindly Fanny Renwick, who was condemned outright as 'a tyrant'.<sup>51</sup>

There was one other long-term German member of staff who requires to be mentioned. Captain Heyl was a young Prussian officer who joined the Edinburgh suite in September 1883:

I am very much pleased with our new German equerry ... who is an excellent horseman and who is just the sort of aide-de-camp I would always like to see about Alfred. He has his own independent opinions and does not give way in everything, and still Alfred likes him.<sup>52</sup>

Three years later Marie's opinion of Heyl had not changed: 'He is admirable ... and the greatest help ... He always has the best influence over Alfred'.<sup>53</sup> Heyl was perhaps fortunate that Missy chose not to ensnare his memory in her posthumous war against her mother.

~ ‘O mother, mother, make my bed’ ~

Even in her merely silly passages, however, Missy was capable of casual insight:

Our childhood was a happy, carefree one, the childhood of rich, healthy children protected from the buffets and hard realities of life. Our mother played a greater part in our lives than our father ... it was Mamma who was the great reality of our lives ... Mamma loved us passionately. Her whole life was given up to her children, we were the supreme and central interest of her existence.<sup>54</sup>

Missy had been right to see in the woman who had (on her own admission) no social or political ambition (although she might have achieved both) a mother singularly dedicated to the welfare of her children.

Marie’s interest in children was not restricted to her own offspring, and she could take as much pleasure in overseeing a children’s party as in reading to one of her own daughters. On the afternoon of Friday 20 December 1878, there was such a party at Clarence House for the four Teck children. They were all a little older than Marie’s children, but friendly nonetheless, as she explained to the duchess of Teck:

The boys are too splendid, I would not believe their age. The little girl looks quite well now. They had tea in my room and we held long conversations; they were particularly interested in the description of the Russian winter and I had to relate about it while they were having their tea with great appetites. They are now romping with my children and making a tremendous noise. Thank you for having sent them, they are so charming and so well behaved.<sup>55</sup>

On the afternoon of Friday 20 February 1885, there was a children’s party at Marlborough House to which Mary Waddington had also been invited with her small son. ‘Both Prince and Princess were very amiable’, she noted, ‘and the Duchess of Edinburgh was very good to Mimi, as she always is, making him sit by her daughters to see the conjurer, and at her table for tea’.<sup>56</sup>

Both Affie and Marie also took an interest in the children of their many associates. Sir Charles Scott, chargé d’affaires at Coburg from 1879 to 1883, was a great Russophile who would later be posted as ambassador to St Petersburg. Marie was in London in 1882 when a child of his was born in Coburg. On 13 May, Bambridge was instructed to pass him her felicitations on the subsequent christening, explaining that Marie would be returning to Coburg on 20 June and that she was looking forward to seeing the new addition to his family. The older Scott children were already frequent guests at the Palais Edinburgh, remaining so until their departure.

Charles Le Strange died on 13 June 1891 while on active service with the *Dreadnought* at a time when his nephew Roland had recently married and was eagerly anticipating the arrival of his first child. A son was duly produced, on 9 December 1892, in the London parish of St George’s, Hanover Square, and both Affie and Marie were present at the christening following on from one of her visits to Devonport. Roland Le Strange had some quasi-naval connections in that he was the hereditary lord high admiral of the Wash, but this had little to do with his association with Affie. In fact, the entire Le Strange family was well liked by the Edinburghs, and the feeling was mutual. Affie and Marie stood as sponsors to the boy, who was named Charles Alfred in honour of his late great-uncle and godfather.

Marie’s own children were of the utmost importance to her. Wilks had vaccinated Prince Alfred on 6 January 1875, and Missy too endured the process a few months after her birth – facts she either chose to forget or never knew. Although a century old by this time, by 1870 an anti-vaccination society had been founded in Britain that led

to a parliamentary commission being appointed on 13 February 1871 to investigate the validity of the alleged medical science behind the procedure. Once again, Marie was not opposing what was still a still largely unproven medical procedure.

In April 1879, all the children had ‘bad colds and can’t get rid of them’, and Marie was obliged to isolate them in various Eastwell Park rooms until their health improved.<sup>57</sup> One month later, with the colds gone, she sent Tolstaia an assessment of her three daughters:

The children are developing very quickly ... Missy learns her letters but without paying much attention: she is content to be jolly all the time and to cuddle a plump dolly very tenderly. Ducky continues to be an ‘original’, impertinent and amusing at one and the same time. Her ringlets are growing and already need to be held back by a ribbon. She strives to take a firm attitude to things and knits her brows more than ever. She will not be very easy to teach. She is a touch irascible and easily loses her patience ... Missy, on the other hand, is very easy to manage, very sweet and gentle, only from time to time she gets little headaches ... Baby [Sandra] is a delicious little creature, all rosy and white, very jolly and smiling all the time. She is a little in the same mould as Missy with very blonde hair, well groomed, and very blue eyes. Her father adores her – in spite of the fact that she is a girl.<sup>58</sup>

The Edinburgh children – and for that matter their mother – were ill far more often than Missy implied in her memoirs. As soon as Marie arrived in Coburg following her extensive stay in Russia for the coronation of 1883, Missy fell ill with non-exanthemic scarlet fever. Marie may or may not have ‘repudiated the bacillus theory’ of disease, but once again she recognized (as she would do in the following year with the diphtheria outbreak at Eastwell) that scarlet fever was highly contagious, and she isolated Missy at the Rosenau while the rest of the family remained at the Palais Edinburgh. ‘We separated the other children at once and the two little girls sleep now with me’, and in spite of the fact that Marie had ‘never heard of such a light case’ of the disease,<sup>59</sup> she tended to her sick daughter by travelling daily between the two residences:

I arrived here [Palais Edinburgh] on Friday with the children, the Duke arrived yesterday, and also yesterday Missy was brought back from Rosenau to our town house, and all the children are once again reunited. Missy did not have fever for more than three days and nor did she have any rash, and as I could no longer detect any danger, the inconvenience of separating the children using the little house was too much. The joy of the other children is touching, and they wish to do nothing other than delight their sister. Missy is now able to speak and is in good humour – she is more jolly than ever and grins all day long. I am writing this in the nursery with a really bad pen because Missy does not like to be left alone while Nana is unpacking. I never stopped going to see her, and could not have put up with that for long.<sup>60</sup>

As any mother should readily confess, children do not become any less childish merely on account of growing up. When Marie attended the coronation of Niki in Moscow in May 1896, she wrote Duchess Alexandrine how her married and grown-up daughters, Missy and Ducky, as well as Prince Alfred, were still running to her with all their infantile domestic problems:

With difficulty, I was able to write a couple of times to Sandra ... she being the only one not here on this occasion. For nearly a week I have not had five free minutes to finish a letter ... what singularly complicates my life here right now are my own family members, who are unable to deal with domestics and constantly coming to me asking for help – I am spending half my time interpreting their problems and disentangling the monstrous confusion over transport, invitations, etc. Because the only domestic speaking (atrocious) German had disappeared, the entire corridor of guests was in a state of complete disarray! Thus the ridiculous aspects that bring to mind the relative calm of Illinskoe.<sup>61</sup>

It hardly requires to be stated that Missy neither made any mention of these problems nor even hinted at how she had burdened her mother with the task of solving them.

None of Marie's children spoke any Russian at this time, and Missy (unsurprisingly) blamed her mother for this deficit. 'Mamma always spoke English with us', she claimed. 'She would never teach us Russian, declaring that she did not wish to hear her beloved mother-tongue mutilated by her own children'.<sup>62</sup> This is barely credible nonsense, implying that Marie was unaware of the connection between learning a language and speaking it correctly; had they been capable of learning it, no doubt she would have taught them how to speak it, as she attempted to do with French. The plain truth is that none of Marie's children would display any great gifts as adults, and this vindictive remark was another example of Missy justifying her intellectual inability to master a language as complex and unfamiliar to her as Russian by the customary method of impugning her mother. It is a pity that none of her sisters left a competent record of their lives, and that on the rare occasion when they were mentioned by Missy in her memoirs she chose to speak on their behalf without justifying her assertions with a direct quotation.

Missy was again ill – but this time more seriously – in the autumn of 1897, travelling with difficulty to the Palais Edinburgh to recuperate while her husband went abroad for a tour of duty. Missy's lassitude is quite apparent, as Marie described how she worried and wore herself out looking after her twenty-two-year-old daughter. 'But I must keep Missy some time yet', she explained, 'as she must get quite strong before travelling again'.<sup>63</sup> No doubt motherhood has been a thankless task throughout the world in any era; and no doubt Ducky, Sandra, and Baby Bee would have left the world a very different picture of Marie. They all took their problems to their mother, even into early middle-age, but they were very different in character from their eldest sister. Unfortunately, Marie's only reward for doing her very best for Missy was to be maligned after her death in printed passages that were to a considerable degree frankly libellous.

There is no record of Marie having been familiar with the pioneering writing of Mary Wollstonecraft, and she most probably was not. But there is a passage of hers that adequately encapsulates Marie's character respecting motherhood. It is one that does not readily apply to Missy: 'To be a good mother – a woman must have sense, and that independence of mind which few women possess who are taught to depend entirely on their husbands ... Meek wives are, in general, foolish mothers'.<sup>64</sup>

~ 'Rum, sodomy and the lash' ~

A mutual passion for music may have helped cement the early relationship between Affie and Marie, but it was not an adequate basis on which to build and sustain a marriage. Even a cursory chronological examination of their married life reveals an increasingly apparent tendency for them to spend time apart from each other even where they might have been expected to be together. There are obvious pitfalls inherent in such clinical deductions concerning matters as unscientific as the breakdown of a marriage. However, while it may be possible for two people as outwardly romantically inactive as Affie and Marie to find in their very dullness a perpetual claim to the Dunmow fitch, Marie at least was not possessed of the inner emotional and mental inertia such a prize would require.

Marie disliked most soldiers and some sailors, but she loathed all sportsmen and most of their sports, including huntsmen, although she did occasionally fish. In common with so many royals of the nineteenth century, Affie was a keen hunter, casually despatching animals with the detached equanimity of all his kind. He once wrote Arthur Sullivan from Balmoral in 1873 that he had personally killed fourteen stags in three days, some of them 'very fine ones'.<sup>65</sup>

Affie was also a dedicated punter at the races, although Marie rarely accompanied him to the required sporting events such as Ascot and Epsom. Affie, always careless with money, bet on races at Ascot until 1893, and records of some of his carefully noted betting transactions indicate that he received £65 from his bookmaker on 24 June 1890 resulting from that one season at Ascot. Although very small by some betting standards, this was not in general terms an inconsiderable sum for the time. Betting was widely regarded as immoral, having been restricted in 1874 (37 & 38 Vict. c.15) as applied to betting stations at races, and then again in 1892 (55 & 56 Vict. c.4). Some organizations, such as the Anti-Gambling League, proposed to abolish betting altogether. There is no evidence that Marie disapproved of gambling on moral grounds, although she may have been concerned that like the vast majority of gamblers Affie declared only his gains and not his losses.

However, Marie certainly found little to enjoy at 'horse' events. She attended a polo match at the Hurlingham Club in Fulham on Friday 5 June 1874, played between the 1<sup>st</sup> Life Guards and the Royal Horse Guards (polo had been introduced from India just two years earlier), but she left England a few weeks later without having accompanied Affie to Ascot. 'Alfred went twice to the races and I spent both days with Alix', she noted briefly but pointedly.<sup>66</sup> Marie first accompanied Affie to the races on 26 May 1875, when Bertie, Alix, the duke of Connaught, the Lornes, Christians, Alexander von Hesse, and Julia von Battenberg joined them at Epsom. It was a rare visit for Marie, and on the whole her views on racing were expressed cogently enough to Jennie in 1886: 'I hope you enjoyed Ascot, and that the hideous climate did not spoil, as usual, all the enjoyments'.<sup>67</sup> Marie was therefore not exaggerating when she had written to Wolseley that she could not bring herself to take an interest in any of Affie's habits and pastimes (other than music, naturally). There were, however, far more serious problems for the couple than a difference of opinion as to the merits of the turf or shooting at animals.

Marie's physical appearance before the 1880s was an illusion of youth. She had been an inordinately plump baby (likened, as noted, to a grand duke), which was often a sign of endogenous obesity due to some form of endocrinal dysfunction. Once the natural energy of youth began to dissipate, obesity was the natural – and in Marie's day untreatable – consequence.

However, she disliked being even temporarily overweight before the 1880s. Her spontaneous embryonic abortion had caused some inflammatory swelling, but she found the post-traumatic period worse by far: 'I never took so much exercise in my life especially in hopes of getting thinned, as I am, just now, very unhappy about my figure. Ever since I was laid up in the autumn, I have been very fat, though I never felt better in my life'.<sup>68</sup> Marie was no glutton, and in any event dieting could not have controlled a metabolic disorder of this nature; at best, a severe diet would have done no more than prevent an exacerbation of the condition while endangering her health. But clearly she did enjoy her food, and she was further hampered by suffering eight post-natal periods in which a combination of good eating and physical inertia led to immediate weight gain.

Marie was only too aware of her permanent physical expansion in the 1880s, often attempting to remedy her condition through a combination of diet and exercise, not realizing that this would have little effect. In particular, she tried to take up horse riding again in 1883:

I was privately fond of it before I married, but afterwards was never able to do so ... and got quite disgusted ... and these last few years I have grown so fat, that I look monstrous in a riding habit ... But in Germany I am going to fast ... and will return to England much thinner.<sup>69</sup>

Inevitably, Marie returned to England looking much the same as she did before. Still, she would not capitulate: 'The one dreadfully vain ambition of my life is to get thinner ... only I won't do foolish things and ruin my health, like so many ladies do nowadays'.<sup>70</sup>

Her condition was a source of profound self-loathing, and she occasionally attempted to conceal her despair with humour, as when she wrote Jennie from Russia after a Peterhof ball in 1886:

The Queen of Greece is here ... dancing away merrily whilst I look on. I cannot make up my mind to dance in the same place which witnessed my *début* some sixteen years ago, a slim young lady then, a fat matron now. So I walk about ... and try to make myself agreeable.<sup>71</sup>

But her despair was ill concealed by a poor attempt at humour in the following lines written in November 1888: 'As for me, I still try to put on a brave front at all times, prodigious, rolling my fat person along the stony roads of Malta, and detesting my present state. I am ashamed to show myself'.<sup>72</sup>

Affie's problem was very different, but far less innocuous and self-inflicted through weakness. Naval catch phrases from the nineteenth century made reference to the various persons of an unholy trinity expressed by every tar as 'rum, bum and bacca' or 'rum, bum and concertina'. Winston Churchill (a future first lord of the admiralty) put it more famously and permanently as 'rum, sodomy and the lash'. There is no doubt that Affie refrained from venerating the second person of this naval trinity while maintaining the consumption of fine tobacco and vulgar sea shanties to an acceptable level. But his sycophantic genuflection before the person of Bacchus resulted in virtual clinical dipsomania by the late 1880s, with bouts of alcoholic poisoning even before he was married. This was hardly a secret, but not a subject that was openly discussed among British royals of the nineteenth century. Only long after his death could family members such as his niece openly state in print that Affie 'loved ease and sport and was overfond of liquor'.<sup>73</sup>

However, a combination of gout and incipient delirium tremens in 1882, resulting in a serious accident, shocked him into temporary sobriety. The near tragedy began

when, at the beginning of June, Marie reported that Affie had been ‘suffering a great deal from gout and felt quite weak. I don’t think he is very well’.<sup>74</sup> A few weeks earlier, Affie had successfully performed at the charity concert for the West End Hospital for Diseases of the Nervous System, so clearly his hyperuricæmia had brought on acute rather than chronic arthritic inflammation of either the knee or foot joints precipitated by an excessive intake of purine rich foods – in his case alcohol.

Marie spent most of June in London with Marie Erbach, while Affie went on a fishing trip during one of his journeys aboard the *Hercules*. Marie then travelled to Germany, where shortly after her arrival she received a telegram from Affie telling her that he had had a serious accident while fishing:

I only received one letter from Alfred written before his accident. I cannot imagine what could have happened? I am so very anxious to know, and it is a great trial to receive such old letters and at such long intervals. He must have been in great danger, otherwise he would not have telegraphed.<sup>75</sup>

Affie, his legs painfully swollen and weak, had slipped on a rock in a river and fallen into the water, his head narrowly missing another large rock, before being swept away by the current to disappear beneath a weir, becoming submerged several times before managing – with considerable difficulty – to swim ashore to safety. ‘His fishing accident might have been fatal’, Marie observed later. ‘He had really a marvellous escape’.<sup>76</sup> Sullivan was moved to send a telegram to Affie congratulating him on his ‘narrow escape’, and while aboard the *Hercules* at Gibraltar, Affie thanked his friend for his concern confirming that his escape had indeed been ‘a very narrow one’.<sup>77</sup>

The accident improved Affie’s disposition only slightly and only temporarily, and he was clearly still an extremely difficult man to live with:

Alfred, I am happy to say, is very reasonable this time and I am always watching him to see that he does not talk too much or show his displeasure at this and that, or make a fuss about a nonsense or a simple [misunderstanding]. He is rather inclined to exaggerate things and often I am obliged to bring him back to the “juste milieu”.<sup>78</sup>

Affie’s condition prompted the following comment from Queen Victoria to Vicky on 10 January 1883: ‘Affie ... is not very well and very dull and depressed and rather morose in company, which distresses poor dear Marie very much’.<sup>79</sup>

Missy never remembered Affie as anything other than ‘a little bit of a stranger’ who ‘did not occupy himself actively’ with his children.<sup>80</sup> But glimpses of Affie’s active home life have already been noted, while in 1885 Marie wrote Jennie that he ‘is an exemplary papa’ to all his children.<sup>81</sup> Whatever familial detachment Affie’s drinking habit may have brought about by the 1890s, they were certainly not apparent to Marie a decade earlier. Much more important to her at that time would have been Affie’s frequent and lengthy absences from the family home and her company. When he was not aboard ship he was often away hunting, and of course it is quite apparent that even early on in their marriage Marie was starved of any marital affection even when he was at home. Sexual love was of precious little importance to Marie, and it seems likely that she abstained from it after the birth of Baby Bee in 1884. Not only was this done from the horror of becoming pregnant for the ninth time, but also perhaps from the fear of mature pregnancy, which in its most pernicious guise had first debilitated then destroyed the forty-three-year-old Lady Harriot Poore in 1888.

Such enforced sexual abstinence, while it may have improved Marie’s life, certainly did not ameliorate Affie’s severe drinking habits, since he was at least as constitutionally unfit to pursue physical relationships outside marriage as he was an

emotional one within it. Affie is not known to have had more than one or two very casual flirtations before his marriage, and none in the accepted sense after it. Early in 1873, Francis Knollys had approached the earl of Rosebery to ask whether he would be willing to permit Bertie and Affie the use of his London home (2 Berkeley Square) as a rendezvous for their various liaisons, but Rosebery declined. That April, Rosebery was present at 2 Brook Street, the home of the editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, where such a rendezvous had been established for Bertie and Affie and where he was witness to a very high-spirited night of entertainment. Clearly, Affie was merely basking in the social glare of his elder brother, as at this time he was three months short of being engaged to Marie. Such raucous behaviour never really sat very easily with him.

However, Affie did nurture a peculiar relationship with an older woman both before and after his marriage, although it was as nothing next to Marie's relationship with Wolseley. The object of his affection was the duchess of Sutherland, a Scot descended from the earls of Cromartie and the marquesses of Tweeddale, who was fifteen years Affie's senior. He began a correspondence – only a part of which survives – with her shortly after her husband succeeded to the dukedom in 1861, after which she was created countess of Cromartie in her own right. The surviving letters are insipid and unrevealing, but a testament to a written legacy that lasted nearly a quarter of a century.

The Sutherlands were a well-connected family. Affie's duchess was the daughter of Queen Victoria's friend and four times mistress of the robes under Liberal administrations who had also been a friend to Gladstone. One of her sisters had married the duke of Argyll and was therefore Lord Lorne's mother. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Sutherland was close to George Sala and shared his journalist friend's enthusiasm for Russia ever since as the marquis of Stafford he had been appointed part of the special mission to represent Britain at the coronation of Aleksandr II in 1856. His marriage to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duchess, however, was not entirely happy, since he was a peculiar mixture of tenderness and cruelty about whom Lord Clarendon had once written 'what an odd compound he is!'<sup>82</sup> As a result, the duchess spent much of her time alone in her numerous homes across Britain, delighting in the affections of the younger royal duke. It was almost certainly the duchess of Sutherland who had seen Affie off at Charing Cross station in 1883, and who had given him his farewell tokens, occasioning the sarcastic remarks from Marie concerning her *'passé'* status.

Marie was the one who flirted. Her most important confession had been the one to Wolseley concerning the 'distinguished Prince' whom she probably would have married but for his engagement to one of her cousins and Affie's appearance and persistence in wishing to marry her. Both circumstances were not binding at the time and could easily have been broken, and Marie was probably right to suggest that had her princely hero annulled his engagement their marriage would have gone ahead, in which case her life (and this biography) would indeed, as she surmised, have been entirely different. In any event, it may legitimately be concluded that Affie and Marie were not suited to one another and ought never to have married. Had they lived in the less socially restrictive period of a century later, Marie could have married the first commoner who loved her for who she was, and Affie could have remained a contented bachelor to the end of his sailing and drinking days.

Whether or not Affie may be classed as a true alcoholic is rather a moot point, but he certainly exhibited the standard patterns of denial familiar to those treating registered alcoholics. Vincent Corbett was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Secretary to the embassy in Rome when Affie visited him there during the 1888 cruise. During a general conversation,

Corbett made some remark about the ‘extravagant hospitality’ aboard Russian ships (meaning the quantity of alcohol consumed), prompting the following extraordinary confession from Affie:

Whenever I am invited to dine on a Russian ship, I always take the precaution of drinking half a liqueur glass of salad oil just before I start; I can then ... drink them all under the table: the oil prevents any fumes rising to the brain so that I remain perfectly sober.<sup>83</sup>

Affie then explained that he customarily returned to wherever he happened to be lodged and ‘purged’ himself, which must have been a delightful – and of course by then quite pointless – experience for anyone with him.

Affie’s heavy drinking continued with periodic but ultimately vain attempts to curb his alcohol habit and make himself a more agreeable man both to live with and be around. ‘He must have made some very good resolutions’, Marie noted with a reference to the New Year of 1890, ‘for he has not once given way to any impertinence and ... everybody is struck by his different ways’.<sup>84</sup> But these periods of even-tempered lucidity were brief, and becoming less frequent as the 1890s progressed. When Affie retired from Devonport, Marie was afraid of what would become of him in Germany: ‘It seems a great pity at his age, but unfortunately he was too quickly promoted in his youth ... I am so afraid that he will feel bored and idle’.<sup>85</sup>

But bored and idle, as well as boring and indolent, is precisely what Affie became in Germany, and so of course his drinking worsened. ‘When we have guests, he easily gets again into his former ways’, Marie reported on New Year’s Day 1895. ‘I really think that his present good health is owing to his having been forbidden beer for the last months’.<sup>86</sup> But Affie had to be watched closely no matter what he had been forbidden, and Marie knew what would happen once she was not at home to keep him in order. When she had to leave him at Gotha to go to Darmstadt three weeks later, she was afraid that he would ‘get bored, complain of being dull in Germany and perhaps then fall again into his bad habits’.<sup>87</sup>

Eventually, Affie did not require Marie’s absence to do this. Two years later, he was being treated for chronic erythematous eczema on his legs, and she noted that he ‘is the most hopeless patient ... [spending] the whole day in a hot room reading newspapers and smoking and drinking beer! When the shooting is over, we can hardly induce him to leave the house’.<sup>88</sup> In the following year, Affie was at Villefranche by Nice accompanied by Missy while Marie remained behind in Coburg. ‘If you only knew how easy and comfortable life is without him ... feed him well and in a joky way, prohibit his taking spirits’.<sup>89</sup> The overall result of Affie’s ‘thoroughly English education’, his mental and emotional inertia, his excessive drinking, and his inflammatory temper was that Marie summed up her marriage to him as her having been no more than his ‘legitimate mistress’.<sup>90</sup>

This is not, however, how Arthur Sullivan saw matters. Having appointed himself Affie’s attorney general in about 1879, rather predictably he assumed Marie to be guilty, and took this as his starting point in what would develop into two decades of intriguing against her. The story of their relationship is as lengthy as it is a sorry one. By 1880, Marie was already largely absenting herself from social gatherings at which Sullivan would be present, although the friendship between Sullivan and Affie was by then more intense than it had been during the 1870s. In August 1880, Affie gave Sullivan a pony named Cocky that he used to race but now wished to sell off as it was too old for the turf, turning it over to his friend when he found that Sullivan got on with it extremely well. Unlike Marie, Affie always took an active interest in Sullivan’s music, a fact the composer naturally appreciated just as he probably



Affie went to Peterhof to dine with the tsar while Sullivan remained on board ship before joining his friend, to be lodged in an imperial guesthouse. Sullivan was then officially presented to Aleksandr III on Monday 22 June/4 July. Two days later, just before leaving Russia and the 'Roosians', Affie and Sullivan were entertained for one hour by the Imperial Chapel Choir at the Winter Palace, a vocal ensemble whose famous contrabasses Sullivan described as 'like nothing else'.<sup>93</sup>

There were still some convivial moments with Marie. Affie invited Sullivan to join his family at Cowes in August 1881, and on Monday 8 he dined with Marie, Lady Emma Osborne, and Major Poore, noting that after the meal the four of them enjoyed a pleasant game of whist together. However, when from Sunday 27 to Monday 28 November 1881 Sullivan and the lawyer Sir Henry Thring spent a weekend at Eastwell Park, Marie remained at Clarence House. But she and Affie dined with him in Paris on Wednesday 12 April 1882, while the Edinburghs were at the Hotel Bristol returning from their recent Continental journey and Sullivan was returning from a lengthy trip to Egypt. Although afterwards Sullivan and Affie spent the rest of the evening together in Paris, Marie remained behind at the hotel.<sup>94</sup> Two days later the friends met again, with Sullivan noting – laconically as usual – that he had 'had a chat' with Affie.<sup>95</sup> On 15 April, there was a grand dinner at the British embassy thrown by Lord Lyons, last British ambassador under the Second Empire, for Affie and Marie at which Sullivan was also present.

The next meeting in England did not take long to be effected. Sullivan returned to London on 18 April, and six days later he was at Clarence House. On 10 May, shortly before Marie Erbach's arrival, Sullivan dined again at Clarence House with both Affie and Marie before the three of them and a small suite left for the Royal Court Theatre in Chelsea to see the popular comedy *The Parvenu* with Henry Kemble, Johnston Forbes-Robertson, and Marion Terry, which had opened on 8 April. Forbes-Robertson described the play as a 'pretty piece'.<sup>96</sup> Three days later, it was Sullivan who played the harmonium when Affie accompanied Emma Albani for the *Ave Maria* at the Floral Hall charity concert.

Sullivan informed Affie of the death of his mother by letter on 27 May 1882, and she was buried on Thursday 1 June. He recorded that Bambridge had been sent to the funeral to represent Affie. He did not mention Marie, although of course Bambridge was her private secretary, and strictly speaking he had nothing to do with Affie. Meanwhile, Sullivan had been working closely with Affie and Bertie on the new Royal College of Music, both royal princes being the chief driving force behind the project in spite of fierce opposition from the long-established Royal Academy of Music. Affie scored a significant victory over the older rival when he obtained Gladstone's personal support and presence at meetings throughout the spring of 1882, with Sullivan of course also present.

On 14 May 1883, Sullivan held a birthday party – a day late this time – at his London home heralding his knighthood. It is true that the party, to which Affie had been invited, was an all-male affair, but Marie remained calmly again at Clarence House without even troubling herself to acknowledge the important occasion. On Saturday 30 June, Sullivan telegraphed Affie at Coburg 'to propose ourselves [he and some friends] for a visit to Coburg'.<sup>97</sup> It seems that this visit took place, but of course Marie was still in Russia following the tsar's coronation. Sullivan and his friends remained for only a few days in Coburg with Affie before leaving prior to her arrival on 13 July and Affie's short journey to Kissingen. The timing seems too precise not to have been contrived.

In fact, several major parties thrown by Sullivan seemed to take place just when Marie happened to be absent. On 6 July 1884, while she was with Sergei at Illinskoe, Sullivan gave one of his monster musical parties at Victoria Street. Edward Lloyd joined members of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company to perform Gilbert and Sullivan pieces before a large audience that included Affie and Sir Algernon Borthwick. After the concert there was a dinner with a slight change of guests that now included Lord Wolseley. Again, while Marie was at Eastwell Park during the early spring of 1885, Affie attended Sullivan's performance of Beethoven's fourth symphony for the Philharmonic Society (12 March), after which Sullivan had dinner at Clarence House. And then, on Friday 3 April, Sullivan journeyed to Eastwell Park where he stayed for three days, but only Affie and Prince Alfred were there; presumably Marie had travelled up to Clarence House.

However, there was no escaping Sullivan altogether, and Marie was present at that most seminal of moments in the history of Gilbert and Sullivan – the opening night at the Savoy Theatre on 14 March of *The Mikado*. The work was new to Marie, but not to Affie as he had been present at a full dress rehearsal two days earlier, after which Sullivan had 'smoked a cigarette' with him at Clarence House.<sup>98</sup> Marie wrote nothing about the experience that has survived, but Sullivan noted the 'most brilliant house' (which included Loosy and Liko) and the 'Tremendous reception'.<sup>99</sup> There had been a triple encore for both 'Three little maids' in Act 1 and 'The flowers that bloom in the spring' in Act 2, and although George Grossmith as Ko-Ko slipped and fell during this second song, the audience laughed believing it to have been part of the act. Gladstone, Hartington, Salisbury, and Chamberlain were the politicians ruthlessly satirized in Ko-Ko's 'little list' song, with Grossmith exchanging clever stage props to identify his 'apologetic statesmen' who would 'none of 'em be missed' if they were executed by him and stuffed underground. Marie, who took her politics – and Radical/Liberal politicians – so seriously, may not have been so amused.

Utterly elated by the experience at a time when Gilbert and Sullivan were famously experiencing a hiatus, Sullivan visited Affie at Clarence House on the next day to talk (or perhaps babble) about his success. This time Marie, presumably, had returned to Eastwell Park. The same situation seems to have occurred in the following month when Sullivan arranged a private concert at Clarence House on Thursday 14 May, at which the violin virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate performed solo pieces and also accompanied Emma Albani. All the Edinburgh children were there as well as Loosy, but curiously not, it appears, Marie. Sullivan gave another party at his flat on 7 June 1885. Among the twelve guests were Affie, Waddington, Irving, and Bertie. After dinner, the musical section included Albani, Henschel, and various Savoy players singing extracts from *The Mikado*.

On 4 January 1886, Sullivan again had dinner with Affie at Clarence House while Marie was at Eastwell Park. But on Sunday 31 January, Sullivan was at a dinner at Marlborough House given by Bertie with fourteen other guests; this time Marie was present, but not Affie. Marie was also at the R.A.H. on 10 February to see Sullivan conduct *The Martyr of Antioch* with Albani, Patey, and Lloyd prior to a farewell dinner at Marlborough House for Affie before his departure; but this time it was an all-male affair, and Marie was necessarily absent.

A mutual friend would soon bring Sullivan and Marie together. Sometime in the very early spring of 1886, long before Marie left for Coburg after Easter Sunday, Jennie introduced Marie to one of her old friends, an Irish-American divorcée named Mary 'Fanny' Ronalds. Possessed of an acute amateur musical talent for singing *lieder* and operatic aria, Fanny Ronalds had settled in Cadogan Square some years

earlier to become Sullivan's erotic muse. Every Sunday afternoon she held a salon for serious music lovers, and it was to one of these that Affie and Marie were first invited at Jennie's request before his departure for the Mediterranean. Affie had met Ronalds already, most recently at an all-male Sullivan affair on 7 June 1885 at which Ronalds had been the only female present. But Marie did not know about Sullivan's relationship with Ronalds when she accepted the invitation, and presumably Affie did not enlighten her beforehand. Affie was of course delighted, and accompanied Ronalds on the violin while Sullivan played the piano. Marie must have been less thrilled by it, as she subsequently never attended these salons, although curiously she and Ronalds thereafter remained on very friendly terms.

Strangely, the friendship between Affie and Sullivan experienced a hiatus during the Malta years, and subsequently never re-established itself along former terms. There was no correspondence from Sullivan to Affie during the three Malta years, which fact pained Affie considerably, since he had been writing to him. In September 1888, he wrote Sullivan from the *Alexandra* complaining bitterly that he had not heard at all from his friend since leaving England, asking him to send arrangements of his famous operetta songs for the band of the *Galatea*, as he had apparently promised to do in 1886 but had not yet done. In this letter, Affie revealed that his favourite Sullivan music was that which the composer had scored for Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* for the Theatre Royal in Manchester in August 1877. Sullivan had produced an arrangement of this for the *Galatea* band who played it constantly: 'I like it better every time I hear it'.<sup>100</sup>

The cause of the cooling between the two men has no obvious explanation, although one can be proposed. Sullivan was now at the height of his fame and unusually preoccupied, conducting the Philharmonic concerts as well as working on another serious choral work *The Golden Legend* in addition to *Ruddigore*, the successor to *The Mikado*. He travelled extensively, usually to the Riviera where he had been a regular visitor since the 1870s for his health. Suffering from chronic *calculi* in the kidneys that at times made his life unbearable, *Ruddigore* had been greeted with boos and hisses as well as polite applause at the first performance on 22 January 1887. He was in Berlin on 22 March for the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of Emperor Wilhelm and a performance before the imperial family of *The Golden Legend*, which was almost a complete disaster due to the appointment of a lead soprano who turned out to be worse than useless.

Some idea of how deeply these circumstances had affected Sullivan can be determined from his clear memory of them nine years later while staying at Friedrichshof at Vicky's invitation. He explained in a letter how Vicky was being as kind to him then as she had been in 1887 when he had been 'full of troubles – plots and intrigues – sheer jealousy thickened around me; every difficulty thrown in my way; every man's hand (and one woman's also) against me'.<sup>101</sup> For no real reason, other than self-preoccupation, Sullivan simply allowed himself to drift apart from Affie. Friendships, like plants, require constant watering in order to survive, and Sullivan was not to see Affie for four years after his departure for Malta. Sullivan was again abroad while Affie was being ferried back to England from Malta as a patient, and although he returned a few days before him, he immediately rented a house in Weybridge, Surrey, and did not return to his flat in London until 19 September.

The first meeting between Affie and Sullivan since February 1886 appears to have been at a dinner given by Oscar Clayton on Tuesday 11 March 1890 while Sullivan was in between two Continental journeys, the first to Paris and the Riviera and the second to Belgium. Sullivan returned from his second trip on 18 April, and he met

both Affie and Marie at the French embassy on 8 July following the laying of the foundation stone for the Royal College of Music. This was Sullivan's first meeting with Marie since January 1886.

On 31 January 1891, he saw Marie again when she was obliged to attend the première of Sullivan's romantic opera *Ivanhoe* inaugurating Richard D'Oyly Carte's new Royal English Opera House on Shaftesbury Avenue. Affie, Bertie, and Alix accompanied her. Sullivan himself conducted, and during the interval he, Bertie, and Affie met for a smoke while Marie and Alix disappeared into another room.

*Ivanhoe* was Sullivan's sole attempt at a serious opera, for which a libretto had been adapted from Scott's novel by Julian Sturgis, an American-born English novelist of popular but ephemeral works who had been recommended to Sullivan by Gilbert, having written only one serious opera libretto previously. *Ivanhoe* was no *Mikado*, and it ran for just 160 nights before running out of steam. Carte's idea had been a noble one – to inspire a truly English operatic idiom set in a purpose-built venue; but Sullivan was not the 'English Beethoven' everyone was waiting for. Lady Louisa Wolseley saw the opera on 4 March, and her reaction was that of the vast majority of critics then and subsequently. 'It is a good *spectacle*', she wrote Lord Wolseley, 'but the music says nothing to me. Sullivan ... is foolish to attempt what he can't manage – a serious opera. He had better leave that to Wagner'. George Goschen, chancellor of the exchequer under Salisbury, seems to have seen the opera at the same time, telling Lady Louisa Wolseley that it "left me cold".<sup>102</sup> *Ivanhoe* did not save Carte's theatre, which had to close on 31 July to re-open briefly in December before closing again in the following January, re-opening as the Palace Theatre of Varieties on 10 December 1892. It may be conjectured that none of this would have surprised Marie.

In August 1890, Affie moved down to Devonport while Sullivan, his health again deteriorating, left England for the Riviera on Saturday 14 February 1891 and then France on Tuesday 24 for a further European journey. On his return, he dined with Affie at Clarence House, on Thursday 9 July, before Marie's arrival in August. He again left for Nice, Monte Carlo, and Cannes on 30 December, remaining in the Riviera for four months, falling very sick on 29 March 1892, having already felt unwell for three weeks, before returning to London at the end of April. While still in relatively good health, on Monday 14 March 1892, Sullivan made a rare and interesting reference to Marie in his diary when he noted that he had 'sent flowers to [the] Duchess of Edinburgh'.<sup>103</sup> The date has no significance for Marie either personally or for any event in her life, and it is tempting to see this gesture as not casual but an attempt to heal some unrecorded specific breach. When Sullivan returned to England, he was still so ill that his nephew had been obliged to fill in his diary for him. Affie visited the bedridden composer at Victoria Street twice, on Tuesday 17 May and then the very next day as well. He visited him again at home on Sunday 25 September.

Sullivan and Affie met three times in 1893 after Devonport but before the translation to Coburg: at the opening of the Imperial Institute on 10 May, when Sullivan conducted his *Imperial March*; at a concert at Kneller Hall in Hounslow (The Royal Military School of Music) on Thursday 29 June; and at Clarence House on Wednesday 15 November. Marie had of course been present at the Imperial Institute. Where she was the day after Niki's departure from London has not been determined, but she was certainly not at Kneller Hall, while during the third meeting she was of course in Russia.

In an undated letter composed on the Riviera in April 1897, Sullivan wrote at length to Loosy summing up the situation between Affie and Marie as he saw it:

Yes indeed, all my life I have tried to influence him ... in the right way. Years ago, even, before he was married, I have tried to check the evil tendency which was manifesting itself. The difference of position compelled me of course to use all possible tact and discretion, but I never allowed timidity to prevent me from saying what I thought was right, and I have often neglected important work ... to be with him by night or by day, when I thought that my companionship would be beneficial to him. To keep him at home ... I have over and over again gone to him late at night, taking little pieces I had especially written or arranged for him, and then once having got him interested would remain playing accompaniments till two o'clock in the morning. But after his marriage I naturally saw less of him, and dared not attempt to resume the relative position I occupied before; because I saw there was a distinctly *hostile element* risen up against me, which made me feel very uncomfortable, and always embarrassed. I saw that in any effort I made even to hint or indicate what I thought was judicious or discreet, *I got no help* whatever from one to whom I desired to be a faithful servant and ally.

Madam, I am writing *insacred confidence* to you, because I know you love him so much, and I know that you are his favourite sister. *He never had any support or help in his home life.* Don't be angry with me for being so bold, but it is the truth. I have seen things – witnessed little scenes – heard words which have pained me dreadfully. And yet withal he was so sweet and gentle – so patient and forbearing that I could not help admiring and respecting him more than ever, and could hardly blame him if he sought a little 'soulagement' in a resource which was neither right nor healthy ... But I am quite helpless. To do him good – to practically influence him for good – one ought always to be with him. Being with him for an hour or two now and then is of no use. I wish he had one of his children with him to save him from the loneliness of that big house – from the solitude of his life. Or if he could stay quietly with one of his family that he likes, he could be influenced in the right way. But, failing one of these means, I don't see what is to be done. I shall go over on Sunday and see him, and if he will let me, I will stay with him all the afternoon, and longer...<sup>104</sup>

The letter was sententious, conceited, and crudely sacrificial, revealing a nature of immense naïveté with an unpleasant need to justify itself and pre-empt accusations of alienation or even complicity. Few married couples enjoy being preached at, and fewer still the interference of a third party, particularly one with no experience whatsoever of a matter on which it considers itself equipped to ejudicate. Sullivan had no right to expect anything other than what he claimed to have found – resistance from Affie and loathing from Marie who, as has been seen, was very far from being a 'hostile element' until Sullivan interfered in matters that did not concern him. Marie of course made no direct reference to Sullivan the man or Sullivan the composer in any of her surviving correspondence, and much of what she may have felt about both him and his music must be coaxed out from circumstances. But his later feelings for her were made quite explicit in this letter.

## NOTES and REFERENCES to Chapter Ten

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- <sup>1</sup> *Marie of Romania* i 62.
- <sup>2</sup> CAC Churchill Papers CHAR 28/46/7, Eastwell Park to London 24 Feb. 1886.
- <sup>3</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1602, Marie to Queen Victoria 21 Jun. 1881.
- <sup>4</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1439, Marie (Jugenheim) to Queen Victoria 3 Jul. 1874.
- <sup>5</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1447, Marie to Queen Victoria 21 Nov. 1874.
- <sup>6</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1462, Marie to Queen Victoria 10 Dec. 1875.
- <sup>7</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1465, Marie (Eastwell Park) to Queen Victoria 17 Jan. 1876.
- <sup>8</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1471, Marie to Queen Victoria 16 Jul. 1876.
- <sup>9</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1605, Marie to Queen Victoria 7 Jan. 1882.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>11</sup> RIG unsigned fragment 8°x 4, Eastwell Park to St Petersburg [28] Dec. 1885. Marie was being somewhat disingenuous here with her surprised tone. In the telegram she had sent to Lady Harriot Poore congratulating her on the birth she in fact proposed herself ‘as godmother’ [RA VIC/Add. U 181/12].
- <sup>12</sup> RA VIC/Add. U 181/13, Marie (Clarence House) to Lady Harriot Poore 18 Jan. 1886.
- <sup>13</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1128, Marie (San Antonio) to Queen Victoria 2 Nov. 1886.
- <sup>14</sup> RA VIC/Add. U 181/5, Malta to [?] 10 May 1887.
- <sup>15</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1651, Marie (Coburg) to Queen Victoria 28 Aug. 1888. Nevertheless, there had been something more than a friendship between Lady Harriot Grimston and Captain Clarke before her marriage to Clarke’s colleague. Marie wrote that she was always running off to hide in ‘solitary corners’ in order to read secretively letters ‘no doubt ... from her beloved Clarke’ [RA VIC/Add. A 20/1064, Marie to Wolseley 10 Aug 1883].
- <sup>16</sup> RA VIC/Add. U 181/23, Marie (San Antonio) to Poore 12 Nov. 1888.
- <sup>17</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1451, Marie (Eastwell Park) to Queen Victoria 2 Feb. 1875.
- <sup>18</sup> RIG unsigned fragment 8°x 4, Eastwell Park to St Petersburg [28] Dec. 1885.
- <sup>19</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1632, Marie (Coburg) to Queen Victoria 16 May 1886.
- <sup>20</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1559, Clarence House to Windsor Castle 23 May 1879.
- <sup>21</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1595, Eastwell Park to Balmoral 6 Oct. 1880.
- <sup>22</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1615, Marie (Eastwell Park) to Queen Victoria 26 Oct. 1882.
- <sup>23</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1624, Marie (Eastwell Park) to Queen Victoria 21 May 1884.
- <sup>24</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1111, Marie (Eastwell Park) to Wolseley 14 Nov. 1885.
- <sup>25</sup> RIG A.I.s. 8°x 4, Eastwell Park to St Petersburg [15 Nov. – 24 Dec.] 1885.
- <sup>26</sup> *Marie of Romania* i 49.
- <sup>27</sup> RA VIC/Add. S 29/233, Marie (Eastwell Park) to Queen Victoria 24 Nov. 1885.
- <sup>28</sup> *Marie of Romania* i 49.
- <sup>29</sup> RIG A.I.s. 8°x 4, Eastwell Park to St Petersburg [15 Nov. – 24 Dec.] 1885.
- <sup>30</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1439, Marie (Jugenheim) to Queen Victoria 3 Jul. 1874.
- <sup>31</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1647, Marie (San Antonio) to Queen Victoria 28 Nov. 1887.
- <sup>32</sup> RIG A.I.s. 8°x 4, Eastwell Park to St Petersburg [15 Nov. – 24 Dec.] 1885.
- <sup>33</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1059, Marie to Wolseley 5 Jul. 1883.
- <sup>34</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1627, Marie (Eastwell Park) to Queen Victoria 18 Oct. 1884. This necessarily harsh and common sense attitude demonstrates that Marie was well aware of the need to isolate diphtheria cases from the community, and rather underscores the silliness of Disraeli’s ‘diphtheria’ comment of 1878.
- <sup>35</sup> *Marie of Romania* i 115.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* 116.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* 117.
- <sup>38</sup> RIG unsigned fragment 8°x 4, Eastwell Park to St Petersburg [28] Dec. 1885.
- <sup>39</sup> HL MS 62 MB1/U24, Windsor Castle to St Petersburg 8 May 1889.
- <sup>40</sup> RIG unsigned fragment 8°x 4, Coburg to [?] [Apr. 1890].
- <sup>41</sup> RIG A.I.s. 8°x 4, Malta to St Petersburg [Nov. 1888].
- <sup>42</sup> RA VIC/Add. U 181/21, Marie (San Antonio) to Lady Harriot Poore 2 Jan. 1888.
- <sup>43</sup> *Marie of Romania* i 156-7.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* 158-9.
- <sup>45</sup> RIG A.I.s. 8°x 4, Malta to Coburg [June 1888]. This is another letter that does not appear to have survived Beatrice’s fastidious cleansing of her mother’s papers after 1901.
- <sup>46</sup> *Bachmann* 29.
- <sup>47</sup> RA VIC/ADD A 20/1649, Coburg to Windsor Castle 13 July 1888.

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- <sup>48</sup> *Marie of Romania* i 101-2.
- <sup>49</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1651, Marie (Coburg) to Queen Victoria 28 Aug. 1888.
- <sup>50</sup> CAC Churchill Papers CHAR 28/46/13-15, Coburg to London 2 Jun. 1886.
- <sup>51</sup> *Marie of Romania* i 32.
- <sup>52</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1620, Marie (Coburg) to Queen Victoria Sep. 1883.
- <sup>53</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1634, Marie (Coburg) to Queen Victoria 14 Jun. 1886.
- <sup>54</sup> *Marie of Romania* i 4-5.
- <sup>55</sup> *Pope-Hennessy* 76.
- <sup>56</sup> *Waddington* 200.
- <sup>57</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1558, Marie to Queen Victoria 13 Apr. 1879.
- <sup>58</sup> RIG A.I.s. 8°x 4 Clarence House to St Petersburg 11 May 1879.
- <sup>59</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1620, Marie to Queen Victoria Sep. 1883.
- <sup>60</sup> RIG A.I.s. 8°x 4, Coburg to St Petersburg May 1885.
- <sup>61</sup> RIG A.I.s. 8°x 4, Moscow to Coburg 3/15 Jun. 1896.
- <sup>62</sup> *Marie of Romania* i 71.
- <sup>63</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1694, Marie to Queen Victoria 16 Nov. 1897.
- <sup>64</sup> *Todd* 39.
- <sup>65</sup> PML *Sullivan Papers* 106107, Affie to Sullivan 5 Sep. 1873.
- <sup>66</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1438, Marie to Queen Victoria 6 Jun. 1874.
- <sup>67</sup> *Cornwallis-West* 182.
- <sup>68</sup> RA VIC/Add. U 181/5, Marie (Clarence House) to Lady Harriot Poore 27 Dec. 1879.
- <sup>69</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1058, Marie (St Petersburg) to Wolseley 21 Jun./3 Jul. 1883.
- <sup>70</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1064, Marie to Wolseley 10 Aug. 1883.
- <sup>71</sup> *Cornwallis-West* 184.
- <sup>72</sup> RIG A.I.s. 8°x 4, Malta to St Petersburg Nov. 1888.
- <sup>73</sup> *Athlone* 86.
- <sup>74</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1610, Marie (Clarence House) to Queen Victoria 6 Jun. 1882.
- <sup>75</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1611, Marie (Rosenau) to Queen Victoria 27 Jun. 1882.
- <sup>76</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1612, Marie to Victoria 8 Jul. 1882.
- <sup>77</sup> PML *Sullivan Papers* 106114, Affie to Sullivan 1 Jul. 1882.
- <sup>78</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1613, Marie to Queen Victoria 10 Sep. 1882.
- <sup>79</sup> *Fulford: BM* 132.
- <sup>80</sup> *Marie of Romania* i 4, 12.
- <sup>81</sup> CAC Churchill Papers CHAR 28/46/1, Eastwell Park to London 23 Dec. 1885.
- <sup>82</sup> *Kennedy* 140, Clarendon to the duchess of Manchester 26 Feb. 1861.
- <sup>83</sup> *Corbett* 132-3.
- <sup>84</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1665, Marie (St Petersburg) to Queen Victoria 7/19 Feb. 1890.
- <sup>85</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1674, Marie (Devonport) to Queen Victoria 24 May 1893.
- <sup>86</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1681, Marie (Coburg) to Queen Victoria 1 Jan. 1895.
- <sup>87</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1682, Marie (Gotha) to Queen Victoria 28 Jan. 1895.
- <sup>88</sup> RA VIC/Add. A 20/1693, Marie (Coburg) to Queen Victoria 22 May 1897.
- <sup>89</sup> *Pakula* 120, Marie to Missy 20 Mar. 1898.
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* 33, Marie to Missy 10 Dec. 1895.
- <sup>91</sup> YUL *Sullivan Diaries* 1881 f.70.
- <sup>92</sup> YUL *Sullivan Diaries* Jun. 1881 [no folio].
- <sup>93</sup> *Jacobs* 164.
- <sup>94</sup> One of Sullivan's best-loved pastimes while in Paris was to visit his favourite *bordello*, as accurately depicted in Mike Leigh's film 'Topsy-Turvy' (1999). If the received interpretation of Sullivan's curious entries in his diaries is correct, during this stay in Paris he not only had sexual relations with his long-term lover Fanny Ronalds, but also visited his brothel on at least seven occasions [*Jacobs* 176]. Had Sullivan been in Paris with Bertie, this is what they both might have done; but Affie was not the type for this. What the two men did do on the evening in question, or at any other meeting in Paris, has not been determined as both Affie and Sullivan were most circumspect about their relationship.
- <sup>95</sup> *Jacobs* 176. Affie was of course always referred to formally by Sullivan in both his diaries and letters.
- <sup>96</sup> *Forbes-Robertson* 110.
- <sup>97</sup> YUL *Sullivan Diaries* 1883 f.104.
- <sup>98</sup> *Jacobs* 208.
- <sup>99</sup> YUL *Sullivan Diaries* 1885 [no folio].

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<sup>100</sup> PML *Sullivan Papers* 106116, Affie to Sullivan 28 Sep. 1888.

<sup>101</sup> BL Ms Mus. Misc. Dep. 1999/14, Sullivan to Sybil [Seligman] 23 Sep. 1896. It is tempting, in the light of future events, to identify the 'one woman' ruining Sullivan's life as Marie, but it was in fact the soprano who nearly ruined *The Golden Legend*.

<sup>102</sup> *Arthur* 295.

<sup>103</sup> YUL *Sullivan Diaries* 1892 f.43.

<sup>104</sup> *Longford: Loosy* 242-3, St Jean de Villefranche to Windsor Castle ('Friday night' but otherwise undated). Elizabeth Longford dated this letter to between 1894 and 1900, but a more accurate dating can be given. The letter was written from the Villa Mathilde, which Sullivan rented on two occasions: from late December 1896 through to mid-April 1897 (back in England by 4 May), and again for almost the same duration in the following year (in Paris by 21 April). Affie was at Nice in March/April 1897, and aboard the *Surprise* moored by Villefranche in March/April 1898, with only a brief period in Nice. However, in the second of these visits, he was operated on for a rectal problem and was not alone but first with Missy and her family and then Bertie while he recuperated. On the first occasion, on the other hand, Sullivan had written to his nephew of his desire to go to Nice and visit 'the poor old Duke of Saxe-Coburg, who is very lonely' [*Jacobs* 381]. This, coupled with Sullivan's wish that Affie had 'one of his children with him to save him from the loneliness of that big house', makes Friday 2, 9 or 16 April 1897 the three almost certain candidates for the date of the letter.