

## A FAMOUS FRENCH PORTRAIT PAINTER

(Copyright, 1900, by Seymour Eaton.)

THE OREGONIAN'S HOME STUDY CIRCLE DIRECTED BY PROF. SEYMOUR EATON

## BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES FOR GIRLS

BY CHARLOTTE BRUNSWICK JORDAN.

## IV.—MME. LE BRUN.

(1765-1842.)

When a reader happens upon the name of Mme. Le Brun he is aware of a pleasurable feeling at first indefinable, but which, traced to its source, is generally found to have been produced by some one of the many pleasing portraits of herself now so widely and favorably known. Each gives an impression of a vivacious and winsome personality, and it is the portrait which she painted of herself as a turbaned young woman looking out with a smiling countenance from her easel—the one which, in the Uffizi gallery, Florence, elicited so much notice from Goethe—the similar painting in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg, or those charming pictures of herself and daughter known as the "Little Mops on canvas," which hang in the Louvre.

In her ingenious autobiography she has supplemented these brush portraits with accounts of the brilliant court pageants which she witnessed in the various countries of Europe, in sharp contrast to the meager poverty of her home surroundings, of the terrors of the Revolution, of the wit and pedantry of the salons she met, together with shrewd little character sketches and impressions of her travels. This self-illustrated autobiography is something unique in the history of art, and throws a curious side light upon the circumstances attending the painting of the immense number of pictures, nearly 1000 in all, which make the most monumental to the life-long industry of Mme. Vigee Le Brun.

A less pretentious painter than her fair contemporary, Angelica Kauffman, the greater beauty and simplicity of her work has better stood the test of time.

Daughter of a third-rate Parisian copyist whose chalk studies and pastels after Watteau were pleasing but artistically devoid of originality, Mme. Vigee attracted notice by her precocity while a very tiny child. At the time of her father's death, a girl of 13, she was a portrait painter of some ability, already beginning to fulfill her father's prophecy: "You shall be a painter, my daughter, or there never was one!" Vernet, the eminent master painter, urged her to present an excellent portrait of her mother, which she finished at the age of 15, for admission to the Academy; but her application was refused on account of her extreme youth.

Besides the fond encouragement of her father, the young girl was favored in having Briard, Davesne, Doyen and Claude Joseph Vernet, her teachers. The last named frequently cautioned her against following the methods of any particular school. "Only consult, my child, the works of the great Italian and French masters," he would say, "and I will be your guide." "Do as much as you can from nature. Nature is the best master. If you study it diligently, you will never get into mannerisms," he would say. "I had much to do with the formation of Mme. Vigee's original style which was quite apart from the contemporary academic influence. Her self-government was largely due to her untiring copying of Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Rubens (whose chiaroscuro she considered marvellous) and Greuze. Much of this work was quickly sold for the benefit of the artist, who might support her beautiful but indolent mother and educate her younger brother.

In order to satisfy that longing for expensive wardrobe and amusements which Mme. Vigee considered necessary to her existence, the widow married a wealthy jeweler. This man proved to be a miser, who greedily withheld the old clothes of the dead artist, but refused to provide the necessities of life for his new family, compelling the already overworked Elise to double her efforts to support her tenance. On account of that superb health which enabled her to work unceasingly until her death in her 87th year, the young girl's beauty did not fade under this ill treatment, but developed so charmingly that between the ages of 14 and 20 sitters flocked to her studio, and her orders multiplied amazingly, chiefly that her admirer, the painter, might enjoy her vivacious society. This implied flattery never cost the young artist the loss of her simplicity or reputation, her mother's enforced presence pressing any suggestion of stain upon her name.

At that time the family lodged in the house of a picture dealer, Jean Baptiste Pierre Le Brun, a man whose judgment upon pictures was considered the most reliable in Europe. His unusually fine collection of paintings and prints was obligingly placed at the service of the eager young painter. When the artist had offered himself in marriage six months later, Mme. Vigee yielded to the persuasions of her worldly mother, who fancied the picture dealer to be very rich, and, reluctantly, consented to a secret marriage until Le Brun could clear himself of certain obligations to the daughter of a picture trader in Holland. Meanwhile the infatuated bride, not knowing of this, strongly urged her not to marry the man, insisting that she would better cut her throat or drown herself than ally her interests with those of a man whose low taste would mar happiness an impossibility. All too late the young wife learned the bitter truth of her predictions, and found that she had simply exchanged her slavery to her stepfather for a lifelong servitude even more galling. Her husband compelled her to take pupils and gambled away her money as fast as she earned it, so that in 1790, 13 years after her marriage, she left France without 20 of the 1,000,000 francs which she had meanwhile earned.

The birth of her little girl, Jeanne, two years after her marriage, was the first of sunshine in the deplorable life of this ill-treated wife, who worked uncomplainingly from dawn until dark, declaring that her whole life was a sacrifice devoted to two objects, her daughter and her art.

During the infancy of little Jeanne the artist-master while walking in the park was accosted by Marie Antoinette, who invited her to paint her portrait. This Mme. Le Brun accomplished so successfully that she was commissioned to paint 20 more portraits of the gay young Queen. As painter and subject were about the same age, they soon discovered many tastes in common. Mme. Le Brun had a silvery voice, frequent sallies of wit with the Queen when the latter was weary of sitting for her numerous portraits. Marie Antoinette soon became truly fond of the unassuming, simply dressed little artist, who in turn felt the most romantic affection for her royal patron, who she declared to walk "better than any woman in France, holding her head upright with the majesty which denoted the sovereign in the midst of her court, without this majestic bearing detracting in the least from the sweetness and grace of her whole aspect."

Mme. Le Brun's friendship with royalty naturally subjected her during the Revolution to many terrifying experiences. She was thrown into her cellar, and ominous murmurings and fist-shakings plainly hinted that if she would escape the scaffold she must leave France at once. Her husband being fortunately absent, she took 300 francs which she had just received for a portrait and, in the disguise of a working woman, arrived penniless in Rome.

Here her busy brush reaped for her the same golden harvest that she had garnered in Paris. Orders for portraits of distinguished foreigners poured in upon her, not least among them was one from the Pope, Pius VI. When Mme. Le Brun learned, however, that she must be

while painting his holiness, she doubted her ability under such trying circumstances to do justice to the subject, and therefore declined the honor. Besides many other famous portraits, she painted two noteworthy ones of Lady Hamilton, one as a bachelorette reclining on the seashore, another as a sybil—fine pictures of a beautiful subject, which as works of art afterward sold in London for many times their original value. In Rome she also met Angelica Kauffman, with whom she was most favorably impressed.

Leaving the Eternal City, the artist sailed for England, where she was received with distinction, and admitted into the membership of the Academies of Parma, Rome, Bologna, Berlin, Geneva, St. Petersburg, Rouen and Paris.

In Prussia she painted a portrait of the king, Frederick William III., and another of the queen, Sophia Charlotte. In England she painted a portrait of the king, George III., and another of the queen, Charlotte.

At the end of her life, Mme. Le Brun was a woman of 87 years, and she died in 1842.

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to lay on the ground longer than 36 hours at one time. Roses, snapdragons and wallflowers are now blooming out in the open. The country is traversed by numerous streams that are cold and clear as crystal, and abound with trout and salmon in their season. Salmon is an important factor, and fishing forms the chief occupation during the salmon season.

We have daily mails, except Sunday, from two places, and twice a week from two others. Freight between here and San Francisco has been from \$2 to \$4 a ton, but seems to be fluctuating a little above that now. Freight to Portland might be cheaper on the establishment of a line of transportation.

If asked about the chances to take up Government land or get a home, I would say that the choicest places that are handy to get at have about all been taken, though there are some to be had by going a little further back. But I can call to mind over 60 places that are vacant, and I do not doubt but what they are nearly all for sale, and probably some of them for almost any price. A good many of the settlers made plain proof near the coast.

The writer of the above has aired his logic at the expense of his good sense, and to a glimmering of the fact, for he proceeds to enumerate certain possible modifying factors, although in the end he returns to his idols, and raises a cry which, if any one is foolish enough to believe what he says, is calculated to produce an immense amount of harm.

He says: "To what extent the possibility would become a reality is, of course, a matter of conjecture. The whole mass of old bonds may not be converted into new ones, and if they are, it is scarcely to be expected that the banks will be able to buy them all. The bill, moreover, limits the amount of notes by each bank to the amount of the capital, and the total of national bank capital is at present only \$600,000,000. Then, too, the notes are to be of comparatively large denominations, while the currency is to be restricted to the demand for them, and 5 per cent must be allowed for the fund required by the national bank act to be maintained at Washington for their redemption. If, too, should, as it seems likely they will, command a premium in the market, that also will have to be considered.

The Profit on Circulation.

"Nevertheless, the inflation of bank currency, if it is to be a success, is a matter of course, will be very great, is not to be gained. On the basis of existing conditions it will be, as we have seen, a matter of \$44,000,000, and with the indubitable fact of printing it, it cannot fall to be many millions more. Even if the new bonds should bring 100, and the tax on the circulation issued against the new bonds should be 10 per cent, the net profit would not be less than 14 per cent per annum."

The Pacific Coast to Be Greatly Benefited and Should Appreciate It.

Another of the letters requested by The Oregonian on National expansion has come to hand, it being from Senator Foster, of the State of Washington. It speaks for expansion in very clear tones as follows:

"As the Pacific Coast will reap the greatest direct and immediate benefit from the Republican policy of expansion, it seems to me that it is but fair to presume that all persons and parties having an actual and positive interest in the prosperity of the Coast will lend a hand—and at the proper time, a vote, also—in sustaining and upholding this policy."

"There are men who have actual interests in the Coast, but who do not feel justified in supporting what they consider 'expansion' means and will lead to. But when we face the proposition that territorial control or expansion is now the only means of paying the way for successful commercial expansion in certain quarters of the continent, we are not to be misled by the fact that the territory is not a mere practical standpoint, to sustain expansion? And if our institutions are the best in the world, if we lead in education, invention and the like—as we certainly are—it is described in the following language:

"The danger from the increase of bank currency with which we are threatened is not the liability to lose those to whom the currency is paid, that is, to whom the property is sold, but the fact that the property will be sold at a price which will be less than the value of the property. The danger from the increase of bank currency with which we are threatened is not the liability to lose those to whom the currency is paid, that is, to whom the property is sold, but the fact that the property will be sold at a price which will be less than the value of the property."

"We must expand or shrink and contract, we will not be still. The great commercial powers of the world are active and advancing in those quarters of the globe where expansion will bring the greatest benefits to the United States. We must find markets for our manufactured products. Home consumption is not sufficient, and we must look elsewhere and create and capture new markets. And, inasmuch as some of our friends in the East and the Atlantic are not pleased with the prospect of the Pacific enjoying the fruits of expansion to the extent promised in the direction of Oriental countries, because they fear the growing power and possibilities of the Pacific, because of these considerations it seems to me our Coast people should stand united. This is the golden opportunity, and I have reason to believe the active and wide-awake people of the state to the north of Oregon fully realize it and will so declare when given clearly defined issues to decide at the polls. Oregon, in June, will undoubtedly go overwhelmingly for expansion and Republicanism. Surely people residing in somewhat disinterested sections of the East might be expected to regard the question of expansion with indifference if the first state on the Coast to declare its convictions does not indicate that its familiarity with the great issue warrants it in sustaining it. This question interests the Pacific Coast more directly than the Atlantic Coast and, therefore, the East will look to the West, so far as fair-minded men are concerned, for an indication of what seems best for those most concerned."

The Cash Premium.

Such nonsense as the above would never have been accorded a place in these columns were it not for the fact that a well-known personage, who pretends to have devoted many years to the study of the financial situation, and that his remarks were printed in one of the leading papers of the country, and have been widely copied and commented on. There is so much that is ridiculous here that one is at a loss to know where to begin in holding out the folly. Let us start with a fact which in itself we should consider rather important but which in comparison with other stated by the writer in the issue of 11th March is of no importance. He assumes that the currency will be inflated by \$20,000,000,000 taken from the Treasury to pay the cash premiums on the bonds exchanged. But if this should be a matter of fact, he paid out of the \$20,000,000,000 of Government deposits in the National banks, that would materially change the situation; there would be no increase in the money in circulation by reason of the payment of the cash premiums.

The Available Bonds.

Then, too, what warrant have we that the banks will be able to increase their holdings in any such measure as the writer in the Sun seems to suppose? Some speculation in the new bonds is likely to take place at first, because of the general impression that they will go to a premium. But the chances are that the people who now hold the bulk of the bonds of this Government will continue to do so after the exchange. Most of the National

The British Lion, strong and great, One might have a spring at it, And landed in the Orange Free State, And didn't do a thing, sir. But put its paw on Cronje, the Boer, And held him tight and fast, sir; And when he could not fight no more, He gave it up at last, sir.

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## THE INFLATION SCARE

## ABSDURD PREDICTIONS ON EFFECT OF REFUNDING MEASURE.

Remarks of Well-Known Person, Who Pretends to Have Devoted Years to Study of Finances.

A writer in the New York Sun has recently raised a hue and cry over the awful consequences which he believes will flow from the refunding measure. We have commented this measure as one of the most vicious that could be proposed, remarks the United States Investor, but we must confess that the evils foreseen by the writer to whom we have referred have almost all been annulled, as they undoubtedly have that of most other intelligent persons. The situation is described as follows:

"The national bank notes secured by government bonds are now about \$200,000,000. In exchange for \$17,000,000 of these bonds the banks are to receive about \$50,000,000 in cash premiums, paid out of the Treasury bonds, and \$17,000,000 in 3 per cent bonds, against which they are to be permitted to issue \$17,000,000 of their own notes instead of the \$17,000,000 they now have out. They will also be allowed to convert \$20,000,000 of nonconvertible bonds against which they now have out in notes only 90 per cent of their par value, 10 per cent, or, say, \$4,000,000, more. The volume of the country's currency is thus to be increased at least by these additional \$24,000,000 of bank notes, as well as by the \$30,000,000 of cash premiums paid by the Treasury, making an inflation of \$54,000,000 altogether. If this were all, it would not be a very serious matter, but since the total issue of new bonds is to be \$40,000,000, on which \$20,000,000 additional bank notes may be issued, besides a cash premium of \$20,000,000, the bill threatens a possible addition to our currency of \$74,000,000."

Certain Modifying Factors.

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## Health

Henry Jones, of Zenos, Ind., says: "My sufferings were almost unbearable, and only persons having been afflicted with this rare and dreaded combination of diseases can imagine what they were like. I was confined to my bed almost all the time. My doctor finally acknowledged that neither he nor any one else could cure me. I would not give up, so tried different medicines, and finally began the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. The first box of pills helped me some, and I took some more. The second box began to produce the desired result, and before I had finished the fourth box I was at last a cured man. That was last March, and I have not been troubled with these diseases since."—From Banner Plain Dealer, North Vernon, Ind.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People contain, in a condensed form, all the elements necessary to give new life and richness to the blood and restore shattered nerves. They are equally specific for such diseases as locomotor ataxia, partial paralysis, St. Vitus' dance, sciatica, neuralgia, rheumatism, nervous headache, the after-effects of a gripe, palpitation of the heart, pale and yellow complexion, all forms of weakness either in male or female.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People are never sold by the dozen or hundred, but always in packages. At all druggists, or direct from the Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, 111 N. 5th St., New York, N. Y., 50 cents per box, 6 boxes \$2.50.

debt is held today in a fiduciary manner. National banks, for example, hold a note of it against their circulating notes; savings banks hold a part in trust for their depositors; insurance companies hold part in trust for their policy-holders, and various other kinds of trustees have also large holdings. They hold Government bonds because these are the safest investment they can make, and they will probably continue to hold them for the same reason. It is absurd to suppose that hereafter most of them will have to relinquish the bulk of their holdings to the National banks. Barring such exceptional times as we have been passing through in the last year, the tendency of money rates is downward in this country, and the holders of the public debt undoubtedly realize that United States bonds will be an even more attractive investment a short time hence than the non-interest-bearing bonds.

A Detering Feature.

But even if the banks have the opportunity to buy up the bulk of the bonds, it is inconceivable that they should care to acquire them. A moment's reflection shows that the policy which the writer in the Sun that the banks would not be so foolish as to bite off their own noses, as would most certainly be the case if they should pursue the policy which he outlines for them. He figures that at 100 the new bonds would net the banks which bought them for circulation 14 per cent. But if ever a fraction of the amount named by him should be bought as the basis for circulating notes, the currency would be inflated to such an extent as to break the rate on every bank loan now outstanding. In other words, the profit to the banks from the increased circulation would be insignificant in comparison with a general lowering of the money-market rate.

Unquestionably the refunding measure will be productive of a large increase in the amount of national bank notes outstanding; but that it will lead to any such state of affairs as has been outlined by the writer whose remarks we have been discussing is entirely outside the range of probability. Such utterances are mischievous.

Location Secured for Seaming Mill.

The Dallas Chronicle.

The securing mill proposition, which has been before our citizens for the past few weeks, is soon to be a reality. J. M. Russell has decided to build the plant on the corner of the old brick building on the corner of the building occupied by the First National Bank. This property is 100x100 feet, and is located adjoining the railroad track which will make it very convenient for the mill. The building on the corner will be repaired and used for an office and a storage warehouse. On the adjoining property will be built a two