

little more than thirty years of age, having married in 1875 Viscount Castlereagh, eldest son of the fifth Marquis of Londonderry, who succeeded to the title in 1884. Lady Theresa Helen Talbot she was, daughter of the nineteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, a family as old as the Conquest. She has given her husband one son, the little Viscount Castlereagh, who was born in 1878. Lady Londonderry's youngest sister, Mariel Frances Louise, also a beautiful woman, is married to Viscount Helmshley, brother of that other famous beauty, the Duchess of Leinster.



A DAUGHTER OF THE TALBOTS.  
(Lady Londonderry.)

Lily Langtry is, perhaps, the most famous professional beauty in the world, and has made her beauty of more pecuniary value to her than any woman alive. Her noted loveliness is said to be the product of the cream and brown bread, the peaches and sunshine of the island where she was born, and where she ran about a wild, tomboy girl until her fifteenth year. Her father, the Dean of Jersey, was said to have been the handsomest man in England, and her mother was also good-looking. The Le Bretons were rather an odd family. Each one looked out for himself and left the others to their own devices. 'The Dean's delightful daughter' was allowed to grow up pretty much as she pleased, and pleased to grow up extravagantly pretty. At seventeen she married an obscure London lawyer with very little money, and going to London suddenly found herself so great a rage that for the first years of her reign even royalty in its walks abroad attracted no attention if she was by. A colonial thus describes his first view of her: 'It was at a tea in the Tower of London, given by the Guards, and all the smart world was there. I was chattering away to my neighbour when I suddenly saw everyone craning necks and jumping up on chairs. 'Is it the Queen?' I asked. 'No; it's the new beauty, Mrs Langtry! Then I climbed up on a chair, too, to see this royal progress of loveliness. She was not more than twenty then, and was dressed in a plain little black silk frock and wide hat with feathers, that she wore everywhere, for she was very poor then. But such a dream of beauty! A skin of milk and roses, silken chestnut hair, blue eyes, and a dazzling smile. The people quite went out of their senses over her. But then the Londoners have always been far more enthusiastic about beauty than anyone else. Fancy respectable people in New Zealand waiting for an hour to see the most beautiful colonial that ever lived come out of her house and pass to her carriage. The English did that often for Mrs Langtry, and they tell even more wonderful tales of their enthusiasm in the past generation for the famous Ganning sisters.'

'When you dance, I would you were a wave of the sea,  
That you might dance for ever.'

Shakespeare makes the young pines say to Perdita, and would have said it with twice the fervour had he happily lived to a green old age of two or three hundred years and

seen the fair Pearl of Seville—Carmencita, who has found a new expression for the fire and passion of youth, for the young joy of life, and the ecstasy of love. Born in Malaga, of Andalusian parents, nineteen years ago, instead of learning to walk the first year of her life, like the average child, she learned to dance. Not the tipsy pironette of the Italian or French baby, who is artistic and artificial by hereditary instinct, but 'like the wave of the sea,' like the tossing of fuchsia bells in the wind, like a wind-blown flame, a flashing, vivid bit of Spanish life, deep coloured as pomegranate flowers, full of the untamed, animal grace of a people who have touches of the wild desert blood in them, and perchance, somewhere, far away, a strain of the Zingari. At sixteen she was in full blossom of womanhood—the most exquisite type of Spanish beauty. Brought up on grapes—she says—the warmth and bloom of them got into her blood, and gave her a loveliness that was as intoxicating as wine. And she danced. No steps that masters could teach her. No wriggling on iron toes down the length of the stage with coarse exposures. She wore modest skirts to her ankles; she was slender as a reed, and her slim feet, under whose instep water would flow, were cased in satin slippers, whose high heels clicked with her castanets. When the heart runs over with the first joy of love, soul and body yearn for wild motion, to spread wings for the stars, to cry, to leap, to run; and it was that ecstasy of life and movement that Carmencita danced. Spain went wild over her, and Seville called her its 'Pearl.' She danced before the baby King, and he watched her with round eyes and clapped his hands when she was done—the most spontaneous applause she has ever had. Paris heard of her. For two years she danced before them, and they struck a gold medal for her. In the home of art, nature and genius were triumphant.

Lady Hermione Dancombe was the eldest daughter of the Earl of Feversham, an impoverished nobleman with three sons and four beautiful daughters, who have all married wealthy men of high rank. Lady Hermione is but twenty five years old, and in her twentieth year was wedded to the present Duke of Leinster, who was then Lord Kildare. In 1887 they succeeded to the title, and an heir was born. Her husband is premier, Duke, Marquis, and Earl in Ireland.

Europe has given encouragement to the culture of beauty by bestowing prizes at occasional contests. The most famous beauty show is that at Spa, Belgium, where beautiful women of all nations assemble every summer. Seven prizes are given, the first of five thousand dollars, awarded by a board of disinterested judges to the ladies who are pronounced the most beautiful; but none can enter the contest a second time. Many of the fortunate gainers of the prizes have become distinguished in society and on the stage.

Beauty shows are a favourite tribute of European taste to the reign of beauty, and an encouragement of its popular culture and recognition. Even the Paris Exposition was not complete without its awards to the most lovely women of all nations. There were twelve prizes, and six *prix de consolation* for those unfortunate dames who were deemed beautiful, but not quite beautiful enough to win the chief prizes. The crowd of ambitious ones was almost as great as that which besieged the Exhibition proper; but out of this *embarras* of female charmers the committee allowed only twenty-five to compete. Of these lucky ones, five were French, two English, one Irish, one American, two South American, one Algerian, two Russian, one Austrian, two Italian and one Romanian.



THE DUCHESS OF LEINSTER.

But the types of beauty that have moved the world have not been such as would draw a prize at any posing contest. Instead of the calm, statuesque qualities that win there, they have been varied, brilliant and captivating. The great triumphs of beauty have however been in a moment, as when the old men of admiration of her forgave all her sins; or when the Troy gazed on Helen, after the wars she had caused, and Duchess of Cleveland looked from her coach door on the howling mob of London, who attributed to her all the burden of their taxes, and stopped their frenzy to exclaim 'Bless her handsome face!'

Talleyrand once skillfully extricated himself from a dilemma between allegiance to intellect and to beauty. The witty but plain Madame de Staël, and the beautiful but un witty Madame de Récamier were sitting with Talleyrand, and to embarrass him Madame de Staël abruptly asked, 'Suppose Madame Récamier and I both fell into the water, which would you save?'

'Madame, you know how to swim,' replied the imperturbable diplomat, thus adroitly complimenting her accomplishments, while maintaining his devotion to beauty. And so he showed the spell of beauty over the masses of men and women alike, though it must be conceded that the women who inspire the deepest emotions as a rule are not beautiful.



'THE JERSEY LILY.'  
(Mrs Langtry.)