

LONDON SOCIETY

Princess Victoria (1819–1901) to Leopold I (1790–1865), King of Belgium

14 March 1837

...We had a dinner on Saturday which amused me, as I am very fond of *pleasant* society, and we have been for these last three weeks immured within our old palace, and I longed sadly for some gaiety. After being so very long in the country I was preparing to go out in right earnest, whereas I have only been *twice* to the play since our return, which is marvellous! However, we are to have another dinner to-morrow, and are going to the play and opera. After Easter I trust I shall make ample amends for all this solitariness. I hope to begin singing with Lablache shortly after Easter. But to return to last Saturday's dinner. We had the Archbishop of Dublin, a clever but singular man, and his lady; Lord Palmerston, with whom I had much pleasant and amusing conversation after dinner—you know how agreeable he is; then Lady Cadogan, who enquired much after you and Aunt Louise; Lord and Lady Rosebery, Mr. and Mrs. E. Stanley, Lord Morpeth, Lord Templetown, Sir John Cam Hobhouse, Dr. Lushington, and Mr. Woulfe, the Solicitor-General for Ireland, a Roman Catholic and a very clever man. Lady Cadogan, who is not long come back from Paris, says that the Duke of Orleans has been going out very little and is remarkably well. I saw a report in the papers that he and the Duc de Nemours were coming over here, which I fear is not true; I wish it was....

There is one thing in your former letter which I must answer, or, rather, more advert to. You said to me, that if it was not for me, you would regret Greece very much. Now, I assure you, dearest Uncle, you ought not to regret it, though there is not a doubt that *Greece* would be much happier were you there. But I have heard from various people who have been staying in Greece that they very soon got to like the Turks much better than the Greeks, who are very untrue, and are quite bandittilike; then, again, the country, though undoubtedly fine in parts, is a rocky and barren country, and also you are constantly exposed to the effects of the Plague, that most dreadful of all evils; and then, lastly, how very, very far you would be, how cut off from all those who are dear to you, and how exposed to dangers of all kinds!

I much grieve that they are quarrelling so much in the French Chambers. I must now conclude.

Arthur Christopher Benson, ed. *The Letters of Queen Victoria* (London: 1908), I:62–63.