THE SERAMPORE PORTRAIT.

IS IT MADAM GRAND?

BY

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Now hanging in the Library of the Baptist Mission College at Serampore and identified as the Portrait of Princess Louisa Augusta of Denmark.

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By Dr. H. E. Busteed, C.I.E.

A carefully reasoned contribution over the signature of "C," regarding the well-known portrait at Serampore, which is referred to in the title as a mystery, and which is popularly supposed to represent Madam Grand, attracted my attention a couple of years ago in the *Overland Englishman* of Calcutta.*

The occasion was a review of a most interesting article in *Macmillan's Magazine* for September 1900 on Serampore, in which the story of Madam Grand was referred to in more or less detail. The author of the article was Mr. Julian Cotton of the Madras Civil Service

"Will Mr. Cotton forgive us," writes the reviewer in the *Englishman*, "if we take the liberty of expressing our doubt whether the portrait at Serampore represents his heroine at all? Although the question, so far as we are aware, has not previously been raised in print, it is evident, from the description given of the picture in his *Echoes from Old Calcutta*, that Dr. Busteed, while he reproduces it as that of Madam Grand, is by no means convinced of its identity."

Let me interpose here that whenever Mr. Cotton has had to refer to Madam Grand in his most pleasant writings, it has been as a warm enthusiast in her strange and fascinating career; but though he shows an ardent trustfulness in the fitting tradition that her fair face still looks out on Hughli's water, the scene of so many of her young witcheries, he too is not without misgiving that the story which ought to be true may not be so after all. For I came across this passage in a letter of his in the *Madras Mail* addressed, I think, to a gentleman connected with the Baptist Mission, where amongst other things he is generously

* See Appendix A.

deploring the ill-cared for condition of the picture. "The real point upon which the Serampore portrait can be made a theme for discussion is not so much whether it is worthily or unworthily housed in a Missionaries' Museum, but whether it is really by Zoffany, and is really a likeness of the future Princess Talleyrand."

Being thus as it were indirectly challenged in a friendly way by the reviewer, to give an account of the faith that is in me touching this question of identity, I looked again after several years into a matter which had always been much of a puzzle to me. It then occurred to me that possibly information might be procured from sources not hitherto tried.

Indifferent health in the meantime has delayed my winding up the subject as far as I may now be in a position to do so.

With the object stated I think it desirable at the risk of going over ground recently travelled, and possibly familiar to many readers, to repeat once for all what are the facts which have come down to us regarding the alleged portrait of Madam Grand at Serampore.

With these facts before them thus brought together and in order, readers will be in a position to draw their own conclusions upon the following points:

1stly. Whether there are reasonable grounds for believing in the existing so-called tradition.

2ndly. Whether the expert opinion furnished from the new sources of information just referred to, and which I shall bring forward, helps us to the conclusion that the identity of the Serampore portrait is no longer a mystery.

In the second volume of the *Calcutta Review* there appeared, in the number for December, 1844, an article on Philip Francis by Kaye, the Historian: in it he refers to Francis' entanglement with Madam Grand and its consequences, adding, "She was a very young and very charming French woman. Her picture painted by Zoffani (*sic*) now adorns the walls of Mr. Marshman's residence at Serampore. There is more of feminine softness than of strength of character in her fair countenance, the sensual prevails everywhere over the intellectual." The authority of Mr. Cotton is quoted by "C," for the fact that Mr. J. C. Marshman in his paper, *The Friend of India*, when commenting in the same year on Kaye's article, refers to and emphasises the fact of his being the possessor of the portrait so alluded to.

Seven years before that, Miss Eden, sister of the Governor-General, had written in her "Letters from India" (19th April 1837): "I have such an interesting picture to copy now: a picture by Zoffany of Madam Talleyrand when she was in this country as Mrs. Grand. It is so pretty. Captain * * * * borrowed it of the owner to have a copy made of it for himself, and as there are hardly any artists and none good in Calcutta, I am copying it for him."

Nothing surely could be more provokingly vague than these two allusions. No recognizable detail is given or even general description. As "C" writes, "Neither Miss Eden nor Marshman (Kaye?) afford any assistance to the enquirer who desires to connect the subject of their references with the faded derelict at Serampore." But judging from the place whence Miss Eden wrote (Barrackpore), the facility of borrowing, etc., we may perhaps reasonably assume that both referred to the same picture.

When I first had occasion in 1885 to seek the whereabouts of this alleged portrait and instituted enquiries, I was agreeably surprised to learn that it was still at Serampore. It will be sufficient if on this point I quote the courteous answer which I received from one gentleman who had been Principal of the College, *viz.*: "I know the portrait of the lady you refer to and the tradition about it. It has ever been spoken of by the Marshman family as very superior to others they possessed as a work of art and of historic interest. It is in the College library at Serampore, or was rather when I gave all over to my successor in 1879. The artist's name is as you represent, according to the tradition I have received. There was doubtless more interest in it with many from the connection of the lady with Sir P. Francis than with Talleyrand."

Here was the old tradition in vigorous existence more than forty years after Miss Eden relied on it.

How and when did this portrait get to its present refuge? I did not find this out until much later, but I may as well dispose of it here. When Mr. J. C. Marshman left Serampore in, I think, 1852, his able successor in the editorship of *The Friend of India* and in his dwelling-house was Mr. Meredith Townsend. This gentleman took over all his predecessor's belongings left by him except four pictures, *i.e.*, the portraits of the King (Frederick the Sixth) and Queen of Denmark, that alleged to be of Madam Grand, and one other to be more particularly referred to later. These pictures remained on the walls during Mr.

Townsend's occupancy; and when he returned to England, his successor, Dr. George Smith, C.I.E., whose memory must be still green in Calcutta, acquired in due course by purchase what his predecessor left behind, with the exception of the said four pictures which were regarded as still belonging to Mr. Marshman. When Dr. Smith was leaving Serampore in 1874, he, not knowing what better to do (I fancy) with the four pictures, sent them over to the College to await Mr. Marshman's orders. Marshman was a trustee of the College, and made it over to the Baptist Missionary Society in London.

Thus only twenty-eight years ago did the traditional Madam Grand come to hang in the Serampore College.

Having learned where the portrait was, my next step was of course to visit it, and see whether it presented the characteristic features of hair, colouring, &c., on which Madam Grand's great beauty depended as recorded by her contemporaries. On my visits to the Serampore College for this purpose, I was fortunate enough to receive the co-operation of an artist, who then lived, I think, at Serampore, Mr. Alexander Caddy. To the intelligent assistance of this gentleman and to his zeal amounting to enthusiasm in behalf of my object, I was much indebted. I need not dwell here on the deplorable condition of disrepair in which we found the picture. However, Mr. Caddy shewed me the painting by daylight and by brilliant artificial light which better brought out its warm colouring. Nearly the whole of the original hair had been obliterated, and some incompetent person had made attempts at restoring it; the few original ringlets left were of a golden tint. The face was that of a young attractive woman. As one grew accustomed to it, one could see that it disclosed many of the features, especially as to the wearing and colour of the hair, the complexion, the large eyes ("bien ouverts et caressants") which characterized the recorded beauty of Madam Grand. So far as the painting told its story there was nothing to contradict the tradition. From the colouring of the face and the treatment of the drapery and also from certain faulty drawing, Mr. Caddy inclined to the belief that it was a portrait by Zoffany, though I do not remember that he committed himself further to this opinion. The painting was in a very unpromising condition for photographing, still, with the kind permission of the Principal, Mr. Caddy made several photographs of it for me, some by sunlight, some by artificial light; he also made an exact copy of it in oils for me.

During one of our visits to the library, Mr. Caddy drew my attention to the fourth portrait which hung near that of the lady. It was that of a strikingly handsome noble-looking man, wearing a frilled or ruffled breast-front and a broad green riband. This picture was in as sad a condition of repair as its neighbour. Mr. Caddy gave it as his opinion, that, judging by the canvas, the frame, the backing, the stretchers and other details, the pictures were a pair: not only that, but that they were painted by the same hand, who resorted to similar technical handling in each to bring about similar effects. If the lady was Madam Grand, who was her companion? This introduction of a fresh element of puzzle gave me even at the time no little perplexity. This painting was even in a worse condition for photographing than the other, but I thought it wise, before decay's effacing finger had wrought more spoil upon it, to get Mr. Caddy to take the best photograph of it for me that he could; and this he kindly did. Let me dismiss here what further I have to say of the male portrait. I afterwards shewed the photograph of it, as well as that of the lady, to several artists, picture-dealers and engraving sellers in London, but none could offer any opinion as to the identity of the originals. It was not until I had seen 'C's' article that I become aware that the College authorities at Serampore no longer hold to the Madam Grand tradition, but profess to believe that the two paintings just referred to, are copies of the portraits of the King and Queen of Denmark, now at the Baptist Missionary Society's Head-Quarters in London, which were presented by His Majesty to Joshua Marshman in 1827. Some similarity of pose and dress may at a superficial glance support this idea, but its error will be disclosed when the details come to be looked into. Moreover, the Library at Serampore, as previously explained, already possessed portraits of the same King and Queen.

Matters had gone thus far when information reached me rather casually through a friend (who had spoken for me on the subject to a connection of Mrs. Marshman's family) that the portrait of Madam Grand was after all, where one would *primâ facie* have expected it to be, amongst Mrs. Marshman's pictures at her house in London. Here was a conflict with the Serampore tradition!

However, as I was then about returning to England, I could do nothing but resolve to take the earliest opportunity that I could, of waiting on Mrs. Marshman and asking her to let me see

the portrait. This, in due time, I did, being received with the utmost courtesy and cordiality by the old lady. The richly coloured painting, which was then shown me as the one I was in search of, was that of a beautiful young woman taken as Cleopatra dropping a pearl into a vase held in the left hand. But it bore no resemblance whatever to the kind of beauty and blonde colouring associated with that of Madam Grand.

I hinted this as delicately as I could, pointing out that I had just come from interviewing at Versailles the portrait of Madam Talleyrand (Grand) by Gerard, which handed down the traditional character of Madam Grand's beauties, and which differed as widely as it was possible from the beauty of the portrait before us. While I could confidently tell my hostess whose the portrait was not, I could not (being very ignorant about pictures in general) tell her whose it was. If I could have, the question so far would have been settled. This I did not ascertain until a couple of days afterwards when my search for an engraving of it was successful.

At all events, I could see that my scepticism made no impression on Mrs. Marshman, and I was reluctant to urge it as she quoted her late husband's authority for her belief. I do not think I misinterpret Mrs. Marshman when I say, that I certainly gathered from her that the picture we were looking at had been with them in India, and was a portrait of Madam Grand. I came away from our otherwise pleasant interview wrought upon and perplexed in the extreme. Madam Grand, even in her grave, was evidently destined not to cease from troubling. On the whole I felt impelled to the conclusion that Mrs. Marshman was under some grave misapprehension, and was possibly confusing the name of one notoriety with that of another.

The picture shown me was not that of Madam Grand, and I reasoned therefore that her portrait must have been left in India. The result was that I reverted to the Serampore painting which presented features that might have been Madam Grand's ; and accordingly a very unsatisfactory presentment of her, produced from a touched up photograph, appeared in the then forthcoming edition of the "Echoes from Old Calcutta."

I may as well explain here that the painting which Mrs. Marshman showed me was a copy of Sir Joshua Reynolds' portrait of Miss Kitty Fischer as Cleopatra.* This young lady

* The painting is now in the possession of Mrs. Rowe, daughter of John Clark Marshman, C.S.I., to whom it was bequeathed by her mother. In spite of the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, it is still believed by the family

PORTRAIT OF KITTY FISCHER AS CLEOPATRA, 1760. BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, P.R.A.

From the proof Engraving of the Picture by Houston in the British Museum Collection. A copy of this Picture is in the possession of the Marshman Family and is believed by them to represent Madam Grand.

was the loveliest Thais of her day. She was introduced to Reynolds' Studio in 1759, when only 20 years old, by his friend, Captain Keppel, R.N., under whose protection she then was. There are no fewer than seven well-known portraits of her by Reynolds. The most celebrated "for its colouring and for its languor of repose" is the Cleopatra painted in 1760 for his friend, Mr. Parker of Saltram, near Plymouth, afterwards Lord Morley. It is now, I believe, in the collection of Miss Rothschild at Waddesdon Manor. In addition to many other winning attractions (her small talk alone, in two or three languages, is said to have been bewitching) Kitty Fischer had rare beauty of face and form. So frequently was she in the Leicester Square Studio (before she married Mr. Norris in 1766 a year before her death), that it was conjectured that the great painter had, with audacious but acceptable flattery, occasionally lent her bust and neck and arms to Dowagers and other sitters to whom nature had not been so kind. This probably was a calumny started by envy, but I mention it to illustrate my point that notorious as this beautiful creature was (*see* Horace Walpole's letters), her features must at one time have been still more so through Reynolds' portraits and their engravings. Before going further, I must not neglect to say that I have it on the high authority of one who knew Mr. John Clark Marshman well, that he was the most accurate of men. If he said he had a portrait of Madam Grand, he had it, or conscientiously believed he had it. This must be accepted, no matter whether he was right or not as to the artist's name, or whether the picture be in existence now or not. Why then, it has been reasonably asked, should he leave a painting behind him in India which he evidently set store by?

It has been suggested, I see, that Mr. Marshman may have been deceived all along into mistaking the Reynolds' painting which he possessed, and brought home, for a portrait by Zoffany, but why of Madam Grand of all women in the world? If Mrs. Marshman's memory was not at fault after all, her testimony might be quoted as favouring this idea. Still I cannot bring

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to be the portrait of Madam Grand by Zoffany. Mr. Reginald G. Marshman, writing to the *Englishman* on March 20th, 1901, says: "The original portrait of Madam Grand by Zoffany was brought to England by my father in 1853, and since my mother's death in 1899 has been in the possession of my sister, now residing in Liverpool, so that the portrait in the Serampore College must be a copy" (*sic*).

myself to acquiesce in it. During all the years that the painting was a show thing in Mr. Marshman's house, and (if this theory be adopted) was represented as the portrait of a former Calcutta beauty, surely some one of the many visitors out from England who enjoyed Mr. Marshman's hospitality, would have recognised the well-known painting by Reynolds, engravings of which were to be seen in the print shops of London. Would not a man of the world like Lord Auckland at all events have recognised it when it was taken on loan across the river to Barrackpore; or when Reynolds' Cleopatra stood on Miss Eden's easel in all its opulent handsomeness, would this artist have contented herself with no more appropriate comment than "it is so pretty?"

So the question stood for years when, for the reasons already given, I took it up again and thought whether I could not have the puzzle referred to Copenhagen.

I was luckily enabled through a friend to obtain the assistance of the Danish Minister in London, who became interested in the story of Madam Grand which he read I had with me still the two original photographs, such as they were, of the unknown portraits at Serampore. These I was allowed to send to the Minister, and His Excellency most kindly undertook to have them forwarded to a gentleman in Copenhagen, who, he believed, could pronounce on their identity, if any one could.

In due time the answer from this gentleman (whose competency to form a trustworthy opinion was thus so highly vouched for) came back and was conveyed to me through my friend.

"He tells me," writes His Excellency, "that there is not the slightest doubt as to whom the two portraits, of which I had sent him Mr. Busteed's photographs, represent. They are Prince Frederick Christian of Augustenburg and his wife Princess Louisa Augusta."

To understand who these personages were, and how appropriately their portraits might find a place in a Danish Colony, especially in the reign of Frederick the Sixth, and also with a secondary object touching the personal appearance of one of them, it will be desirable to take a glance at a limited portion of Danish Royal Genealogy. This will involve the allusion, in merest outline, to a sad episode in Danish history, now scarcely remembered, but once an exciting topic in England.

Frederick the Fifth of Denmark* was twice married, first to Louisa, daughter of George the Second of England, a most popular Queen, secondly, to Julianne Marie, a Princess of Brunswick. By each he had a son. The child by the English Princess succeeded his father on the throne as Christian the Seventh in 1766 when seventeen years old. He was shortly afterwards married to Caroline Matilda, the youngest and posthumous child of Frederick, Prince of Wales, who was then aged 15 years.

When the child-Queen arrived, a stranger in her new home, she was well received by the Danish Court and people, whose warmth was increased, when, in due time, she gave birth to an heir to the throne. This event, however, did not endear her to the Queen Dowager, whose own son was thus deposed from the hope of succeeding his half-brother on the throne.

The young King Christian was of weak health and of self-indulgent disposition and habits which readily threw him into the hands of favourites. However popular his Queen may have been in society, it was early remarked that the King showed indifference for her.

Soon after the birth of the Prince, His Majesty, unaccompanied by the Queen, made a prolonged tour to various European countries including England. When he returned to Copenhagen he brought in his suite, in the capacity of Court or Private Physician, a gentleman named Struensee, a native of Halle. Struensee, a man of ability, ingratiated himself with his master and was eventually raised to the rank of Cabinet Minister and endowed with all but royal power. The young Queen, whose

* The following table, showing the succession of the kings of Denmark from 1730 to 1863, will be acceptable to those whose knowledge of Danish history is not their strong point.

1730. Christian VI.
1746. Frederick V, his son, married the Princess Louisa of England, daughter of George II.
1766. Christian VII, his son, married Princess Caroline Matilda of Wales, daughter of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and sister of George III.
1808. Frederick VI, his son, who had been Regent since 1784 in consequence of the mental derangement of Christian VII.
(1814. Norway annexed to Sweden, January 14th.)
1839. Christian VIII, son of Frederick, brother of Christian VII, married Amelia, grand-daughter of Christian VII, and daughter of Princess Louisa Augusta, the lady of the Serampore portrait.
1848. Frederick VII, his son.
1863. Christian IX (now reigning), son of William, Duke of Schleswig-Holstein Sonderburg-Glücksburg, a descendant of Christian III (1533-1559).

confidence and favour the favourite had won by his attentions to the health and education of her little son, showed marked preference for his counsel and society; and so made the judicious grieve. To allude further to this or to any of the *chroniques scandaleuses* touching the notorious infidelities and excesses of the young King would be out of place. The great and sudden elevation of Struensee, and the acts of government in the King's name for which he was responsible, gave the gravest offence to the Danish Ministers and officers of State. The inevitable ensued: the favourite's down-throw was determined on, and was brought about mainly by Court intrigue. Rumours derogatory to the Queen's character were sedulously spread about, and the sympathies of the Queen Dowager and her son were easily enlisted on the side of the conspirators. She was shown (forged) evidence of an absurd scheme by which it was intended that the Queen and Struensee (alleged to be her paramour) should shut up the King and proclaim the young Queen as Regent. The plot for meeting this visionary scheme was hatched in the palace of the Queen Dowager, and a certain night (that after a court fancy ball) was fixed on for its birth. A party of Court officials accompanied, some accounts say, by the Queen Dowager, effected an entrance in the very early morning into the King's bed-room (January 1772). Partly by menace, partly by acting on his easily aroused fears, he was made to sign an order for the immediate arrest of Count Struensee and some of his alleged abettors, and also of the young Queen. Their rooms were then invaded in the same way. Struensee and his friend, Count Brandt, were thrown into prison in fetters. The Minister, Count Van Rantzau, himself with some military officers proceeded to the Queen's apartments. Her Majesty was in bed, but hastily and in alarm came into her dressing room, where the order signed by the King was shown to her and where she protested against the groundless indignity. She was nevertheless arrested and hastily driven off with her youngest child, which was but a nursling eight months old, to the castle and prison of Kronborg near Elsinore. Special commissions of State were soon appointed to investigate the charges of treason, &c., formulated against the accused. It was not until the third day of his interrogation that Struensee "under pressure" confessed to improper familiarity with the Queen. On this signed confession being brought to the Queen, who was before another tribunal, with the assurance that her

acquiescence in its truth would mitigate the fate of Struensee, she is said to have signed the confirmatory form brought prepared for the purpose.* Eventually formal trials were instituted, and verdicts and sentences pronounced. Struensee and Count Brandt were condemned to be mutilated and beheaded, and the sentence was publicly carried out with circumstances of horrible barbarity. The Queen's marriage was declared dissolved, and her banishment was resolved on. There is a vast amount of fiction and sentiment mixed up with fact to be found in the ponderous literature relating to this subject. The Danish authorities do not seem to have promulgated very much of the State proceedings. Indeed, it is not plain that they entertained very strong convictions as to the degree of criminality attaching to the Queen's intimacy with Struensee. For we read that questions (to Struensee) affecting the legitimacy of her youngest child were satisfactorily answered and the legitimacy was held established. Her Majesty's name was not allowed to be mentioned in the capital sentence passed on Struensee, and notwithstanding the pronounced divorce, she was allowed to retain the title of Queen. Any tenderness in the treatment shown to the young Queen was probably due to her own countrymen standing by her in this crisis. The British Minister at the Court of Denmark, Keith, was instructed to protest against certain overt-acts of insult towards her under a threat of the rupture of diplomatic relations, while the British Squadron was got ready to sail for Copenhagen.†

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* It may be remarked that Struensee did not at this time know that the Queen had been arrested ; and in his exhaustion and terror he may have come to think that he would save his own life by dragging in the Queen's name. Her safety he assumed to be inviolable, as also that the scandal of interrogating her would be avoided. It has even been suggested that his crafty interrogators may have led him into this belief

† However, opinions may have varied as to the extent of the Queen's moral guilt, there was little, if any, difference of opinion in England as to the legality or fairness of the evidence brought forward to support it. When the charges and evidences against the Queen reached England, they were submitted to some of the ablest lawyers who separately gave their opinion that, so far from being sufficient for conviction, the evidence was scarcely enough for a bare presumption. Sir C F. Wraxall, in a work published in 1864, says on this subject, that he was allowed to examine the private archives at Copenhagen, and had access to the hitherto unpublished reports of Judges, and other documents, and that these (in his opinion) establish that the evidence on which the divorce was pronounced was worthless

Finally she was liberated and permitted to retire with the title of Queen and a pension of £5,000 to the Castle of Célle in the Electorate of Hanover (provided for her with an annual stipend of £8,000 by her brother King George the Third), where a small Court was organised. Her enforced withdrawal from Denmark involved the separation from and entire deprivation of her children whom she ardently loved. Her entreaties at her departure to be allowed only to see her son, the Crown Prince, were refused, and a lady of the Court was deputed to go to her and bring away the younger child. It is told that during the last moments she pressed her baby to her breast for some time, weeping over it, and when at length she was gently forced to give it up, she said, "Let me go now, I have nothing more to do with this country!" She quitted the Danish shore under a Royal Salute and the escort of some British ships of war. In her final home, where she endeared herself to all, she led a very retired quiet life, occasionally receiving visitors of distinction. She died after a very short illness in May 1775 before she had reached her twenty-fourth year. Caroline Matilda was highly attractive in person and had many natural and acquired accomplishments. She bore a pleasing likeness to her Royal brother (George the Third) when a young man. A contemporary, writing of her, enthusiastically says: "She might be described without flattery as fairest of the fair: her hair was very light flaxen and of luxurious growth. Her eyes light blue, clear, large and expressive. Her lips, particularly the under one, were full and pouting, her teeth white and regular." After leaving Denmark, she became inclined to stoutness. Her fairness, according to Horace Walpole, displeased her husband. This gossip relates that the Princess Amelia told Lord Hertford that when the King of Denmark was in England, she observed how coldly he spoke of his wife, and asked him bluntly why he did not like her; his unappreciative Majesty answered, *mais elle est si blonde.*

As regards the application of the foregoing excursion into Danish history to my object, it remains only to explain that the interest for Serampore attaching to the personality of the ill-fated Caroline Matilda, rests on the fact that she was the mother of the good King Frederick the Sixth, who was so kind to the Baptist Mission and who presented them with his portrait and that of his Queen. Also on the fact that the subject of the painting which hangs near, the lovely blonde whom tradition has told us to admire as Madam Grand, is the portrait of Frederick the

PORTRAIT OF MADAM GRAND, *née* CATHERINE NOEL WERLÉE (LATER PRINCESS TALLEYRAND).

[*From a Painting by Gerard in the Musée at Versailles.*]

Sixth's sister, the baby girl (grown up) over whom a bereaved mother and Queen, sister of the King of England, shed bitter tears when parting with her for ever. This Princess, Louisa Augusta, was born at Hirscholm in 1771 and was married at the age of 15 to Prince Frederick Christian of Augustenburg, whose portrait, as that of the King's brother-in-law, hangs with hers.

Apart from the value of the Copenhagen opinion, are not all the probabilities so entirely on the side of confirming it, that it would be hypercritical to doubt that the puzzle as to the identity of the portraits has at length been solved?

May we speculate as to how the name of Madam Grand came to be associated with this portrait at Serampore? One must, in the first place, keep in mind the fleeting character of the individual European's sojourn in India the lightness of his footprint there, the ever-changing community, the fixed desire of each member to return to the old country. No connecting link to sustain a memory is left behind: the fate of *all* is to disappear and with them the memory of their doings, social and official, which have not been committed to record. In such a condition of things oral (European) tradition in the strict acceptation of the word cannot exist in India.

Some blending of fact with fiction regarding certain events which were once prominent may maintain for a time a shadowy existence, but it is found sooner or later to be engulfed in total oblivion. In hazarding a guess, however, in answer to the above question, we may, I think, assume that Madam Grand's name would never have been associated with the Serampore painting if the latter did not furnish or suggest, directly or indirectly, coincidences in the story of the former and convey in a remarkable degree the idea of personal resemblances. If we recall the description, which I have purposely extracted, of Caroline Matilda's beauty (inherited by her daughter), it would serve in each detail given for that recorded of Madam Grand. Then there was the coincidence of each being connected with a judicial enquiry in relation to a breach of the marriage vow, and of all three being married when mere children. But, putting aside any consideration save that of the strong resemblance which must be presumed between the portrait and Madam Grand, one has but to conjecture the possibility of a visitor to Serampore (soon after the arrival of the paintings) remarking to his neighbour "how wonderfully like that portrait is to a lady who was the toast of Calcutta in my young days, the lovely Madam Grand!"

Here probably followed her story (with embellishments), and this reminiscence went from mouth to mouth all the more readily that the subject lent itself to piquancy and to the alluring of curiosity. Later on we may imagine the seed thus sown by the wayside bore fruit by affording an opportunity to the inaccurate gossip-monger, one of those people with a talent for getting hold of the wrong end of the story, of retailing *his* version of the above reminiscence with a circumstantiality that ensured its acceptance. When this person added that he understood that the portrait of Madam Grand herself had been now for some years *en évidence* at Serampore his tale needed no further confirmation.

Zoffany as a portrait painter was a name to conjure with in India; he had painted several Calcutta, and other, celebrities; why not this one? It was but a trifle for untraceable rumour to tack his name on to the portrait of this alleged Calcutta beauty. So the legend took root and grew into a popular article of faith which could not be corrected. In fact, there was no one left with better information to correct it. Eventually, when the picture passed from the custody or possession of the elder Marshman (Joshua, who died in 1837) into the hands of his son, it is just conceivable that the latter may never have heard any names associated with the portrait save those of Zoffany and Madam Grand.

Has not the foundation of many a sturdy myth had a genesis just as accidental or unsubstantial and ridiculous as the one conjectured here?

But this guess at the origin of one name being confused with another will not help us to account for John Clark Marshman having left behind him in India a painting which he valued while he took home the others. Did he in later years light by accident on some record or information which showed the mistake and induced him to quietly leave the portrait in its proper company? This is a riddle which will probably never be solved.

I have written the foregoing, shrouded as it were in the white sheet of a penitent: of one who is sorry that he adopted too hastily at one time (and did his little to gain it credence and currency) a story more or less popular, but so vulnerable and inconsistent with probability when looked into, that the so-called tradition on which it was believed to rest crumbles away.

I can only try now to atone for this misleading by thus tardily letting Serampore know that if she has lost Madam Grand

she has still two portraits richly endowed with interesting historical associations. The lady who has thus deposed the famous beauty of old Calcutta was the daughter of one Queen of Denmark and the mother of another (Amelia, wife of Christian the Eighth), and was also the mother of Christian Augustus, Duke of Schleswig-Holstein Sonderburg-Augustenburg. And he, who for want of a name we could only refer to as the handsome noble-looking knight with the ruffles and green riband is connected with our own time through his grandson, so popular in London to-day, the Prince Christian who married our Princess Helena, and through his great-grand-daughter, the German Empress Queen Augusta Victoria.

APPENDIX A.

THE SERAMPORE PORTRAIT.

A MYSTERY.

(*Englishman*, February 1, 1901.)

THERE is not very much about the Serampore of to-day to arrest the attention of the sentimental traveller. Jute-mills and paper-works furnish the slenderest of materials for a romance: and the faded factory, which once bore the name of Frederick the Fifth of Denmark, has, to all intents and purposes, settled down to the most prosaic and humdrum of existences. But, like many another bit of forgotten India, Serampore is rich in memories of the past, and there will be many who will have read with interest the gossipy and well-informed article in the September number of *Macmillan's Magazine*, in which Mr. Julian Cotton, of the Madras Civil Service, has told the story of her bygone fortunes and her dead associations. It is more than fifty years ago since the English purchased the settlement from its Danish owners, and almost everything of historic interest has vanished out of sight or been hidden under the whitewash of an undiscriminating municipality. The Hôtel de Ville has become the Collector's office. With an ineptitude that has not shrunk from such enormities as Oxford Street and Covent Garden Market, the very thoroughfares have been renamed. Nothing serves to remind the visitor of once powerful Fredriksnagore, except the monogram of their Most Christian Majesties, which still lingers, shamefacedly enough, over the Jail and the Church and the Court-house.

But it is not among these melancholy relics of an old world prosperity that Mr. Cotton would have us loiter. We are transported to the riverside and bidden to gaze upon the big, white house, exactly opposite Barrackpore Park. Herein, our guide avers, lurks a romance which is enough to immortalize any place. "We pass through heavy iron gates and up a flight of massive steps into the basement. On the left stands a cast-iron staircase, the gift, like the lavishly worked gates outside, of the King of Denmark. Up and beyond them let us step into the great hall, over a hundred feet long. The servant opens the shutters, and there, on the wall opposite you, is an old-fashioned portrait, hanging to a nail by a simple bit of string. It has become so dingy that you need to look at it twice before you can make out what it is. Modern Serampore clangs on outside with the whir of the steam-crane and the mill engine: but, here in the Mission College, our thoughts are a thousand miles away. We have drifted into the wrong century. No one can see without emotion that beautiful face on Zoffany's canvas and not recall the famous Madam Grand. To be the *belle* of Chander-

nagore as a child, to be married to a Bengal civilian before the age of fifteen, to be only twelve months later the subject of a *cause célèbre* with a Member of Council, who had already written the letters of Junius, and then after a lapse of years to reappear in Paris as the wife of Talleyrand—these are vicissitudes sufficient to awaken our curiosity. There can hardly be any story more full of human interest than the romance which turned Catherine Noel Werlée, the daughter of the port officer at Chandernagore, into the Princesse de Benevento."

Hard-hearted and deplorably matter-of-fact must we be, if we do not echo Mr. Cotton's note of enthusiasm. For there is something altogether bewildering about the career of Madam Grand. As we recite her astonishing adventures, we feel as though we were dealing with the heroine of a three volume novel. So unreal are the surroundings that we are startled to discover it was not until the year 1835 that she died. In Mr. Cotton's practised hands, the story loses nothing of its pathos or of its piquancy. It is a veritable pleasure to renew one's acquaintance with Madam la Princesse under such auspices. But will he forgive us, if we take the liberty of expressing our doubt whether the portrait at Serampore represents his heroine at all? Although the question, so far as we are aware, has not previously been raised in print, it is quite evident, from the description given of the picture in his *Echoes from Old Calcutta*, that Dr. Busteed, while he reproduces it as that of Madam Grand, is by no means convinced of its identity. Nothing but mystery attaches to its presence in the Baptist Mission College. All that is known is that it came into the possession of the College authorities, when John Clark Marshman left Serampore in 1852, and that it was brought over from his bungalow along with the books presented by him to the Mission Library. There is no mark on either side of the canvas to afford a clue to artist or model. It is true that Marshman, when commenting in 1844 in his paper, the *Friend of India*, on the very bitter account of Francis by Sir John William Kaye, which appeared in the second volume of the *Calcutta Review*, speaks in so many words of a portrait of Madam Grand by Zoffany as adorning the walls of his residence at Serampore. But there is nothing to show that the picture to which Marshman refers is identical with the painting, which confronts us in the great hall of the Mission College. Similarly vague and unsatisfactory is the oft-quoted allusion made by Miss Eden, the sister of Lord Auckland, in her well-known *Letters from India*. "I have such an interesting picture to copy just now," she writes on April 10, 1837, "a picture by Zoffany of Madam Talleyrand when she was in this country as Mrs Grand. Captain ——— borrowed it of the owner to have a copy made of it for himself, and as there are hardly any artists, and none good, in Calcutta, I am copying it for him." That is all: and not a word is said as to place or possessor. Beyond stating the fact that there was in existence in 1837, and again in 1844, a picture of Madam Grand by Zoffany, neither Miss Eden nor Marshman afford any assistance to the enquirer who desires to connect the subject of their references with the faded derelict at Serampore. We do not even know whether the copy made by the Governor-General's sister has been preserved; and Mr. Cotton is evidently quite as much in the dark as the rest of us, for he contents himself with repeating without comment the extracts we have just given.

There is yet another point which calls for notice. If Zoffany be the artist, Madam Grand must have sat to him in Europe. The artist did not arrive in India until late in 1783, or three years after the lady had quitted the

country. Dr. Busteed has investigated the question of the date of Madam Grand's departure with his usual diligence and painstaking accuracy, and there can be no doubt, as he says, that the following paragraph in Hicky's *Bengal Gazette* for December 2, 1780, refers to the fact: "Samuel Tolfrey, Esq." (one of Francis' attorneys in the trial), "has embarked for Europe with a fortune of three lacks of rupees: he intends proceeding from Celon (*sic*) or Coringa in the Dutch ship that carries home Mrs. G——d." If this be so, no explanation is forthcoming as to the manner in which the painting found its way to India. The Princesse de Benevento had, it is true, relatives in Bengal. Mr. Cotton has unearthed the fact that a Jean Xavier Werlée was *marguillier*, or church warden, of the Church of St. Louis at Chandernagore as late as 1835. According to the Bengal Directories for the years 1820-30, his secular occupation was that of a planter at Ramnugger, and his son appears to have followed in his footsteps. It may be that it was from these Chandernagore relatives that Marshman acquired the picture which he describes as Zoffany's portrait of Madam Grand: yet it is singular that he does not record the circumstance, and still more singular that, on his return to Europe, he should abandon in such uncongenial quarters a treasure upon which he placed evident value. One doubts, moreover, whether Madam Grand was in a position for such extravagances as a portrait by Zoffany in the year 1783. Sixteen years had still to elapse before her first acquaintance with Talleyrand, and we know little or nothing of the manner in which her life was passed during this period. But, if we are to believe Lady Francis' memoirs of her husband, she refused assistance from her former lover, and went to reside in France under the charge of two ladies, relatives on her father's side, upon whom she became mainly dependent for her support. She was no longer a reigning beauty, and Zoffany could have had no motive in perpetuating her features upon his canvas.

For our own part, the sober company in which the picture now finds itself, suggests an idea which possesses, at all events, the merit of plausibility. Hard by, there hangs a painting of a man in ruffles with the green riband and star of an order giving relief to his sombre coat, "so noble-looking that the visitor longs to know who he was in the flesh." Its identity is every whit as mysterious as that of the legendary portrait of Madam Grand. We cannot agree with Mr. Cotton that this noble personage may represent Sir Philip Francis himself. This is surely carrying conjecture too far. Between the handsome couple is the likeness of Frederick the Sixth of Denmark, once the sovereign of the forgotten town. May not the originals of the mysterious pictures have been subjects of his Most Christian Majesty, a governor, it may be, of the settlement and his lady, in the palmy days of Serampore commerce of which Mr. Cotton speaks, when the sleepy river bristled with the masts of shipping, and when Copenhagen factors in the receipt of salaries of two hundred rupees drank champagne at eighty rupees a dozen? To our mind, the notion is far more consonant with the probabilities than any connection with Madam Grand.

But what do the missionaries themselves assert? Needless to say, they disavow all belief in the possibility of the picture representing Madam Grand: and they have their own explanation to offer. In a volume issued to celebrate the centenary of the Baptist Missionary Society, mention is made of two portraits of the King and Queen of Denmark, which hang in the London Central Committee-room at Furnival Street, Holborn. Rough woodcuts of these portraits are given in the volume, and the likeness to the

two mysterious pictures at Serampore is certainly very striking. There are, it is true, differences of details in the costume and head-dress of the lady, but it is impossible to compare the woodcuts with the pictures without observing the closeness of the resemblance. Danish ladies, moreover, who have visited the Serampore College, have identified the portrait of the unknown beauty as that of a Queen Carlotta of Denmark; and the truth seems to be that the paintings are probably copies of the London pictures, which were presented to Joshua Marshman the elder by the King and Queen of Denmark on the occasion of his visit to Copenhagen in 1827. Their Majesties were consistent benefactors of the Serampore Mission: and nothing was more natural than the presentation of their portraits to its founder Yet there is more than one difficulty in the way of accepting this explanation. There are already at Serampore portraits of King Frederick the Sixth in a scarlet coat and of his Consort with waving ostrich-plumes upon her head. Frederick ruled from 1808 to 1839, and the dates are in favour of the theory: but the two sets of picture are entirely dissimilar, and in one case or in the other, there must be a misdescription.

One more curious story in connection with the Serampore portrait remains to be told. Mrs. Marshman, the widow of John Clark Marshman, who died in London two or three years ago, was in the habit of showing to her visitors a picture which she asserted her husband had told her was that of Madam Grand. Dr. Busteed who examined it, was able to declare without hesitation, that it represented Kitty Fischer, a lady once as famous as our heroine herself, but Mrs. Marshman was not to be convinced. And certainly, it is not a little surprising, as we have already observed, that Marshman should have left behind him at Serampore a picture by which he clearly set much store. He may well have been deceived in the subject of the painting and have brought it to England under the belief that it depicted Madam Grand.

Such, then, is a brief resumé of the facts relating to his mystery of the Serampore-portrait. For our part we confess we cannot altogether declare our disbelief in the romance with which Mr. Cotton has invested it The spell of Madam Grand's potent personality is still over us. There will be those (no doubt) who will associate her name with something only bad, beautiful and foolish, and will dismiss her from notice as a brazen adventuress. But why should we judge her so harshly? That she was more sinned against than sinning, is established, not only by the evidence given at the famous trial, but also by the testimony of her lover Francis, who always laid stress on her steady implacability to his advances That she was stupid, Mr. Cotton shows to be untrue: for she presided for years over a *salon* which comprised some of the keenest wits of the day. And who will have the heart to criticise or to blame as he thinks of the wilderness of weeds and nettles in the Paris cemetery, which marks the last resting place of one who fascinated Junius in Calcutta and reappeared in Paris as Talleyrand's princess? India, as Anglo-Indians know only too well, is the land of short memories and unrecorded services. It is sad to think that the curse of her birthplace should have followed to the grav the woman whose beauty conquered both the East and the West.

C.

APPENDIX B.

In order to complete the literature on the subject the following verses are (by permission) reprinted which appeared in the *Pioneer* of March 15, 1886, above the then well-known initials of A. C.

"AN ECHO FROM OLD CALCUTTA."

[In the library of the old Baptist Mission College at Serampore hangs the portrait of beautiful girl, whom tradition reports, and Dr. Busteed [author of "Echoes from Old Calcutta"] believes, to have been Noel Catherine Werlée, afterwards Mrs. Grand The lady's adventure with Sir Philip Francis, and ultimate marriage with Prince Talleyrand, have given her what is supposed to be the meed of Anglo-Indian ambition—a European reputation. On a wall nearly opposite is a portrait believed to be that of Joshua Marshman, one of the founders of the Mission and of the College.]

MRS. GRAND. Bonjour, *mon cher!*

BROTHER MARSHMAN. Might I inquire, I pray.
Who honours me, in bidding me good-day?

G. A woman.

M. Greeting! One endued with grace?
Elect? Regenerate?

G. Regard my face.
Time was, it was a toast on Hughli's water,
And half Calcutta drank to Venus' daughter.

M. Venus! oh! fie! Remember, I implore you.
This is a Baptist Seminary, before you
Indulge in metaphor

G. *Mais taisez vous.*
I am a Bishop's relict: who are you?

M. A Bishop's relict? I misunderstood when
You spoke of Venus?

G. Venus was not good then?

M. Ahem! why—well—

G. Well, what? My education
Was the least item in my reputation;
Statesmen have bent to me, a prince espoused me,
An Emperor received, a palace housed me;

But, *à vrai dire*, the charm which brought me lovers
Lay in the surface, not the brain it covers.
And now, once more, life's strange adventure ended,
Fiction and fact inextricably blended,
I gaze upon the stream where, broken-hearted,
Philip and I (and some one else) were parted,
Think of the ayah whom I used to play with,[1]
Dream of the friend I passed so many a day with,
Dote on his—

M. Woman, from your conversation
You seem to have held a somewhat dubious station,
If brother Ward or Carey could have seen us—

G. Fear not, *mon vieux*, there's half a room between us.
Ah! the old days! the rout, the jaunt, the dinner,
Lizzy, the beauty,[2] Lady Anne, the sinner,[3]
Clavering's hot oaths and bounteous Barwell's boldness,
Macrabie's[4] nonsense, crabbèd Hastings' coldness,
His haughty Marian, proud as woman could be—
(Haughty, forsooth? . No better than she should be!)
And that glad dance, when Philip, to gain credence
For his warm vows, vouchsafed to me precedence!
But tell me, can you? (for I must discover),
Have I—I must have—yet another lover?
Who is this man who comes and sits and looks so?
Why does he write? He knows I hate all books so!
He gazes at me as men gazed in old days:
He's very nice, he's got, like them, such bold ways:
I've shewn him secrets—Is he to be trusted?

M. Madam, that gentleman is Doctor Busteed.
Trust him with silver, he'll assay and mint it:
But trust him with a secret and he'll print it!
But hold! There dawns on—"Philip"—"Bishop"—stay!
You are not—are you—Mademoiselle Werlée?
You blush—you smile—you nod—for very shame
I shrink into a corner of my frame!
How entered Magdalene in Martha's closet?
Who brought and left this cuckoo's egg—deposit?
You—Mrs Grand—within a Baptist's gateway?
Shade of Elijah, help me—seize her straightway!

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[1] Mademoiselle Werlés was not fifteen when she was married to Mr. Grand. In her evidence at Francis' trial, Mrs. Grand's ayah stated that when Mr. Grand went out to supper on Tuesday evenings his wife would pass the time in reading or in "playing with her."

[2] Elizabeth Sanderson, first wife of Richard Barwell, Member of Council, the belle of her brief day, and the "celebrated Miss Sanderson" of contemporary chronicle, now asleep in Calcutta.

[3] Lady Anne Monson, divorced from her former husband; also at rest in Park Street.

[4] Francis' Private Secretary.

Purge her with hyssop, wash her, drown her, hide her,
I'm damn'd if I...I mean...I...hang beside her !
A vessel full of wrath, a brand for burning,
A pit from whose abyss is no returning,
Hell gapes before me, devils dance, delighted—
Baptist and Babylonish wench united !
" Joshua and Jezebel ! Birds of a feather !
[I hear swart Satan sniggering] " Burn together !"