

POETRY.

SPANISH BALLAD.

Hark! hearest thou the tolling
Of one soft bell from the cathedral tower,
Its solemn sound deep rolling?
It is the vesper hour,
And all of gay and grave confess its holy power.

Before the altars kneeling,
A mingled crowd their humble prayers are pouring;
And with an earnest feeling,
Above the vain world soaring,
The mother of our God are fervently adoring.

Their orisons are over,
And lighter bells are now more gaily ringing—
And many a gallant lover
His serenade is singing;
And many a dazzling eye its beams around is flinging.

Yet at this hour of even,
When in the sky a single star is beaming,
As 'twere the eye of heaven,
So brightly conscious seeming—
Art thou, my lady love, asleep and fondly dreaming.

Oh! blessed be thy slumbers,
Light be the winds that scatter thy dark tresses—
And be the soothing numbers,
Which my guitar expresses,
Sweet to thine ear as thy Eolian harp addresses.

More stars begin to glisten,
And the moon rises over tower and dwelling;
And other ladies listen—
Their gentle bosoms swelling—
To vows that lovers at their feet are softly telling.

And all is joy around thee—
Awake and hear the echoing sounds of pleasure,
Shake off the dreams that bound thee;
The light bolero's measure
Awaits but thee and me, my bosom's dearest treasure.

(Continued from first page.)

'O Picardie! O Picardie!
No home for me like Picardie!
The sun may rise
In other skies,
But nought like the sun of Picardie.

'The grape is bred in Picardie,
And the apple is red as e'er you'll see,
And the yellow corn
Where I was born,
Is the best in all good Picardie.'

'And the girls dance light in Picardie,
And their eyes are bright where I would be,
And the men are fleet,
And the song as sweet,
As ever was heard in Picardie.

'But what is all else in Picardie,
Dear home of mine compared with thee?
When the wars are o'er
I'll march no more,
But dwell till I die in Picardie.'

"The song was repeated at the urgent request of the sentinel? but, at the conclusion of the encore, the quick ear of Sophy heard a gentle splash occasioned by the immersion of some body in water, and she hastened, after a few more words, to quit her military acquaintance.

"The rain is coming on," said she, "and I must bid you good night."

"Good night, my little Demoiselle," returned Blaise in a dull tone, which announced that during the singing he had employed himself in copious and effectual libations; "Good night, you will come and sing me Picardie again—eh?"

"Never fear," answered Sophy, and left him to certain slumber.

"She found that Dacre had arrived safely on the other side of the moat, but that his companion was still within the limits of the prison. The rope had somehow become entangled, and he had just reached the ground with great difficulty. There was still another impediment, and the moat also to ford.

"Come," said Dacre, when he saw her, "let us be off. I should not have waited here a second, but that I could not find the way without you."

"But your friend?" inquired Sophy; "Where is Mr. Carlton?"

"Oh, by Jupiter! I can't wait for him; he must take his chance," was the reply.

"He has risked his life to aid your escape; and if you leave him, you leave him to certain punishment—perhaps to death. This was the language of her apprehensions.

"Tush!" said Dacre, hastily; "in these cases we must not be too nice. Let us be gone. Every minute is worth a thousand pounds to me, and I must proceed accordingly. Adieu!"

"But Sophy still continued to look at the place whence she expected Carlton to come, and did not move, notwithstanding the urgent entreaties of her lover. He was violent and impatient, but she remained firm to her principle. 'Stay, sir, stay!' said she; 'this is not the way to do our duty. Your friend must be saved,—ah! see—he comes—the wall is scaled—he is in the moat—hush!—gently—he is over—is safe! Now then, take up the portmanteau, and let us be gone, as you say.'

"They took their way for about a quarter of a mile straight in the direction of Huine-

gen. At this point, they retired and clad themselves in dry habits, leaving their wet clothes and some fragments of rope (as indeed they had once or twice previously done) to mislead pursuit. They then turned round a path pointed out by Sophy, and took a westward course towards the forest. 'Observe,' said she to them, 'you will skirt the left bank of the lake; then take the green path into the forest—keep on straight for nearly half-a-mile, and, at the cross roads, where the great chestnut tree stands in the middle, wait for me among the bushes on the road side. I will call out *'venez,'* and you will know then that it is I.' At this moment the roll of a drum, and a musket-shot from the fortress, announced that their flight had been discovered. 'Come along, Carlton,' said Dacre; 'those ropes which you left hanging on the window have betrayed us.'—'Farewell,' said Carlton, approaching our heroine and taking her hand, 'if we meet no more, God bless you, and farewell!'—'We shall meet,' replied she, 'I shall be with you shortly; but now speed and away! There was no need for entreaty; for while Sophy was weighing the careless words of Dacre, and the solemn farewell of his friend, the quick walk (almost the run) of a small body of men struck on their ears, and they turned rapidly on their course towards the forest. Sophy herself went home to the fisherman's cottage, for some provision which she had been unable before to bring, and also to answer any visit that the soldiers might make there. 'I shall be with you in half an hour, or an hour,' said she; and the prisoners and their liberator parted.

"Harry Dacre and his companion reached, without much difficulty, the cross-roads in the forest of Bitché, and there, concealing themselves amongst the fern and brambles that skirted the green pathway, they awaited the coming of their preserver. All was solitary and still on their arrival, except that now and then the winds broke upon the forest in huge gusts, and made the cones of the pine-trees rattle, while over-head in the sky large masses of cloud began to assemble, threatening rain. Occasionally, the fall of a leaf disturbed them; or the willows or sycamores, sighing with all their boughs, appeared to lament their destinies forlorn.—Dacre gave way to despair, and cursed the unkindnesses of Fortune; while Carlton, of a more steady temperament, collected all the energies of his soul, and awaited the result with a brave patience. In this state they remained at least half an hour, when suddenly Carlton exclaimed, in a quick whisper, 'Hark!—I hear footsteps.'—'She is come at last, then,' said Dacre, rising; 'I never before so much wished to see her.'—He was about to walk onwards to meet her, when his companion pulled him down.—'Stop!' said he, 'drop down amongst the bushes, or you will be lost: 'tis the tramp of a horse; and he pulled him down without ceremony, till the danger, if such it were, had passed. Once or twice, after this first alarm, the two freedmen were compelled again to hide, till at last, after an hour of terrible anxiety, and some peril, a light quick footstep was heard coming along the path from Bitché. The person was hurrying, and almost running onwards, and her short and loudly-drawn breath showed that she was almost spent with fatigue. 'It is our little friend, at last,' said Carlton; and our heroine stood before them.

"I have had great difficulties," said she, after a moment's pause for breath. 'I am suspected, notwithstanding all my pains; and I fear that I too must fly. At all events, however, I have brought you something necessary to your expedition.' Saying which, she took from her shoulders a bag containing some small loaves of bread and cold meat, the amount of the good dame, Bernard's larder. Dacre seized the provision. 'We will divide the labour between us,' said he to Carlton; 'I will carry this for the first hour, and then I will shift it upon you. Sophy, my girl, good by t'ye: you're a devilish clever lass, and have managed the matter famously. One kiss, and then tell us which way our route lies out of the forest, and we will be gone.' He was proceeding to take his farewell in the fashion he mentioned, when Sophy once more spoke: it was with great hesitation and evident pain. 'I told you, if you remember, that I must leave this place. I am suspected—and my life is threatened. I am very unwilling to encumber your flight, but—' 'But what?' inquired Dacre impatiently. 'Why—I thought—that you would not refuse, perhaps, to take me with you.'—'Impossible!' said Dacre, 'we should be retaken in a couple of hours. I know you would not wish us to be imprisoned again. It is quite out of the question, believe me.' But Carlton could not brook this selfishness of his associate. 'Dacre,' said he, 'she must go with us. What! after having saved us both, shall we do nothing for her?'—'I tell you she cannot go,' replied Harry. 'Sophy my dear,' continued he, 'you must see that the thing is impossible. Depend on't, the rascals won't harm you: 'tis only us—'tis men, child, that they put in prison. Come, come, all will be safe. Go back to your old fisherman and his wife, and all will turn out well, I engage. Come along, Carlton, we have'n't a moment to lose.' Sophy stood in bitter wonder at

the hard levity and detestable ingratitude of her lover. Even love, if love can so soon perish, seemed growing cold in her own bosom, and receding. All that she had done and suffered for him shot in a single instant through her brain, and flashed despair upon her. 'Will you not save me, then?' said she, timidly and slowly; 'I—I saved you.' Dacre turned on his heel, but his more magnanimous companion took her hand tenderly, and with respect. 'You have saved us both,' said he, 'and may God desert me if I leave you till you are safe. Mr. Dacre,' he continued, 'you may go—you may do as you like; but I and Miss Ellesmere go together. If you choose to leave us—why be it; but remember, Sir, that the first person who attempts to betray her, or impede her flight, shall have a bullet through his brain—and so let us understand each other clearly.'

'By this time the rain, which had begun to fall gently, came down in formidable showers. They set off, however, Carlton and his friend, followed by the gloomy Dacre. The plashy and slippery ground rendered their course difficult even at first, and finally it became desperately fatiguing. The two men, although accustomed to rougher exercise than their companion, did not, however, stand up better against the troubles of their progress than the little light-footed, brave-hearted girl, who had come so many miles to their rescue. She walked on stoutly, and with almost a merry heart. Even the men caught a tone from her courage, and seemed rising into hope and exhilaration, when the short sharp whistle of a bullet amongst the trees near them, turned their attention to their own safety. They stopped, but had not remained a minute stationary, when the sound of heavy feet treading amongst the brambles and leaves told them that some one was close upon them. In an instant a figure stood before them on the path. Their eyes had grown so accustomed to the dim light about them, that they could see it was an armed man who opposed their progress. 'Qui vive?' exclaimed a stern voice, while at the same time the cocking of a pistol announced a formidable foe. Carlton, who was a good linguist, began a statement of their having lost their way, when the soldier (for such the new comer was) bade him be silent in an imperious tone, and lifting something that looked like a bugle to his lips, was about to call in a reinforcement. Not a moment was to be lost; and not a moment was lost. The intrepid Carlton plunged directly upon him. So sudden was the onset, that the pistol was dashed from his hands, and the horn or bugle instantly displaced from his mouth. Neither spoke, but a short struggle was heard, like that of two animals fighting for life amongst the crackling leaves. Once or twice a blow resounded amidst the panting and short-breathing of the combatants, whose strife was made doubly terrible by the darkness about them. It was evident that the death of one or the other must conclude the affray. Dacre and the now agitated Sophy awaited the event in frightful anxiety, when suddenly a short cry, a curse, and a rattling of the voice in the throat, announced that the victory was won—and lost! A slight blow ensued, and was itself followed by a sound like the bubbling of blood or water. At last one of the men rose up, with a deep sigh, and staggering to a tree, exclaimed, in English, 'He is dead!—I could not help it. It was necessary that one should fall—or three. He is dead. Let us leave this place at once—silently—and quickly,—quickly!' His companions made no reply, but followed him quickly and silently through the melancholy forest darkness."

Our sexagenarian could get no farther with his story; he would, indeed, have gone on telling every minute and tedious particular of the escape (for the three people of his story *did* escape), but that the time limited for the evening's labour was exhausted, and the old gentleman was obliged to pause.

"It is too bad to leave off before the story is concluded," said I, (desirous of paying the old gentleman a compliment); "come! we have still ten minutes left before supper. Mr. — shall tell us the remainder of his tale in half a dozen sentences, and then we shall go to rest contentedly. Did your party escape, Mr. —? or were they sent back to the prisons of Bitché?"

"They escaped," replied Mr. —, "and are safe enough, I faith! and two of them are merry enough, also."

"I am sorry for that," retorted I; "I like that there should be poetical justice in all stories, and your lover deserved rather to be hanged than married."

"He is not married," was the answer, "and he *may* be married. Far more improbable things have occurred in the history of the world."

"But what became of your heroine? She is really a heroine; for she had a man's courage in her woman's heart."

"Oh!—" said Mr. —. "Why, Sir, it was impossible, you see, that she could link herself to such a lump of selfishness as the scoundrel to whom she gave her girl's heart away. Her travels had improved her reason; so she turned off the worthless lover, (if I may profane that pretty word, Sir,) and

took an excellent fellow to her arms, and is as happy as the day is long. I do not know a more beautiful sight, indeed, than to look at my friend Mrs. Carlton, with all her children about her."

SELECTIONS.

THE INDUSTRIOUS FLEAS.—The exhibition of "industrious fleas," which deservedly attracted so much attention last season, has just been re-opened in Regent-street, with new performers, and a series of still more extraordinary and surprising performances. It is but bare justice to these little insects to state that they seem to have profited in a most laudable manner, and in a spirit well becoming an age when "the school-master is abroad," by the lessons of their very able and ingenious instructor. Indeed, from the progress which they have made in improvement, it would seem that the "march of intellect" is as rapidly on the advance amongst fleas as with gentry of somewhat larger dimensions, and we fancy it would puzzle the most profound political economist, or utilitarian philosopher, to prescribe limits to the extent of the labours and industry of this nimble-footed race. The question, at all events, is a most interesting one, and having mentioned a few of the feats performed by a few of these insects, we shall leave it to such wise and reflecting minds to determine what might not an army of 100,000 fleas, equally well trained, be able to accomplish. We have already said that the performances are altogether new this season. There is, in the first instance, the siege of Antwerp, in which fleas enact the parts both of besiegers and besieged. Gold cannons, mortars, &c. about the size of pins, are discharged at and from the citadel by fleas, led on the one side by Marshal Gerard, and on the other by Baron Chasse, who are both mounted on gigantic fleas, or to use the more appropriate phrase, upon regular troopers. In a ball-room, of proportionate dimensions, four fleas go through the mazes of the dance, like any four well-bred ladies and gentlemen, while 12 fleas are distributed at the orchestra, employed, as it were, in playing different instruments. A mail-coach drawn by four fleas in complete harness, with a coachman and guard, also fleas is exceedingly well managed; and a single flea, (a 'whooper,' certainly, in its generation) performs the Herculean task of drawing an elephant with a tower on his back filled with warriors. This exhibition, is, in truth, worthy a visit, affording, as it does, a surprising instance of of what ingenuity can effect, and an extraordinary proof of the tractability of one of the apparently most intractable classes of the insect tribe.—*Times*.

MARCH OF REFINEMENT.—A Quaker lady was the other day told by her servant, a buxom wench of twenty, that she was determined upon leaving her "situation." "For what reason wilt thou leave me?" asked her astonished mistress. "Why, mum, cos your voshing gives me the *spavins* in my testaments, and I has no time for my epistolatory correspondence!" Leave granted to leave.—*Town*.

AN UNFORTUNATE CRITICISM.—The emperor Nicholas was one day shewing a portrait of himself to a member of the English embassy, who, on being asked his opinion, thus unfortunately expressed himself to the tyrannical Autocrat: "Sire, I think the resemblance of the figure perfect, though your head might have been *taken off with more effect*, when the most enlightened critic must have expressed himself satisfied with the *execution*."—*Critic*.

THE BUTTERFLY HUNTER.—Mr. Dandridge an English naturalist, who lived about a century ago, was a renowned butterfly-hunter, and pursued his sport with such eagerness as to give rise to many amusing incidents. On one occasion a countryman at work in the fields, having, for some time, contemplated him, with his arms extended, hotly pursuing over hedges and ditches, nothing, that he could see, at length took pity on the poor lunatic, as he supposed him to be, overtook him in his mad career, and pinned him down *vi et armis*, that he might not run himself to death; the consequence of which was a bitter exclamation that only served to confirm the countryman in his opinion—"The purple emperor's gone! The purple emperor's gone!"

A "SQUEAKING TOMMY!"—A short time since, at All Saint's workhouse, an inmate was about to cut a slice of *tommy*, when from the centre of the loaf there issued a loud squeak, and out sprang a parish-peculating mouse, which was secured and killed—a most disproportionate punishment for the offence, considering how many greater rogues in the same line escape altogether, and think themselves none the worse for having "waxed fat" on the bread of the poor. On dissecting the loaf, it was found that the little prolific pauper had left behind nine young ones chargeable to the parish! The bread in which this settlement was gained had only been made three days.—*Leicester Chronicle*.

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