

RONDEAU.

[After Voiture.]

Ah, done at last for am I, well I know,
My mistress having ordered a Rondeau!
When was a poet's trouble more extreme?
What! thirteen lines to rhyme with *ow* and *eme*!
This would have puzzled Edgar Allan Poe.

Yet, notwithstanding, here are five I throw:
Perhaps I may get up to eight or so.
(Sweet Isabel, to please you how I scheme!)
Ah, done at last!
Now, could I find but five more lines to show!
If rhyming with exactitude or no.
Hurrah! is this the eleventh? or do I dream?
Then this in hand must be the twelfth I deem,
And there are all the thirteen in a row!
Ah, done at last!

G. G. CHALLICE.

THE GALWAY MARE.

[AIR:—"Nora O'Neale."]

In the course of my wand'rings, from Cong to Kanturk—
And a man of his honour is Jeremy Burke—
I've seen many horses, but none, I declare,
Could compare with Jack Rafferty's fox-hunting mare.

She was black as the sut,
From the head to the fut,
And as nate in her shapes as a Royal Princess;
Twenty miles in the hour was her lowest horse-power,
'Twould destroy her intirely to go at a less!

No Arabian charger that's bred in the South
Had so silky a coat or obaydient a mouth;
And her speed was so swift, man alive! I'd go bail
She'd slip clane away from the Holyhead mail.

Her asiest saunter
Was quick as a canther,
Her gallop resimble a lightning express;
Twenty miles in the hour was her lowest horse-power,
'Twould destroy her intirely to go at a less!

There was never a fence so contráry or cruel
But she would contrive to surmount it, the jewel!
And Jack on her back, without getting a toss,
Clared ditches, no matter how crabbed or cross.

An iligant shteppe,
A wondherful lepper—
Don't talk of Bucephalus or of Black Bess—
Twenty miles in the hour was her lowest horse-power,
'Twould destroy her intirely to go at a less!

They were clifted,* the two of them, Jack and the mare,
Returning one night from the Blackwater fair;
Bad 'cess to that road! in the worst place of all
There isn't a sign or a taste of a wall.

Sure the Barony's grief
Was beyant all belief—
'Twas the loss of the mare caused the greater distress;
Twenty miles in the hour was her lowest horse-power,
'Twould destroy her intirely to go at a less!

* *Anglicé*, "Fell over a cliff."

CHARLES L. GRAVES.

Spectator.

THE VENUS OF ILLE.

[Translated for THE WEEK from the French of Prosper Mérimée (somewhat abridged).]

II.

THE breakfast bell interrupted this classical parley, and, as on the previous evening, I was obliged to eat for four.

Then came some of M. de Peyrehorade's tenants; and while he was occupied with them his son took me to see a carriage which he had purchased for his betrothed at Toulouse.

At last he spoke to me of his intended, the subject being brought up by his referring warmly to a grey mare in the stable, which he desired to give to his bride.

"We shall see her to-day," said he. "I do not know whether you will find her pretty. You are hard to please at Paris; but everybody here, at Perpignan, finds her charming. The best of it is she is very rich. Her aunt at Prades has left her her whole fortune. Oh! I will be very happy!"

I was profoundly shocked to see a young man appear more concerned about the dowry of his intended than about her fine eyes.

"You are an authority in trinkets," pursued M. Alphonse, "how do you like this? It is the ring I shall give the bride to-morrow."

Thus speaking, he pulled off from the first joint of his little finger a large ring set with diamonds, and formed in the shape of two hands interlaced; an idea which appeared to me rather poetical. The workmanship was old-

fashioned; but I judged that it had been retouched to set off the diamonds. On the inside of the ring were these words, in Gothic characters: *Sempr' ab ti*, that is to say, "ever with thee."

"It is a pretty ring," I remarked; "but these diamonds that have been added to it have made it lose a little of its character."

"Oh! it is much handsomer like that," he replied, smiling. "There are twelve hundred francs worth of diamonds on it. My mother gave it to me. It is a family ring, very ancient . . . of the times of chivalry. It was my grandmother's, who got it from her grandmother. God knows where it was made."

"The custom at Paris," said I, "is to give a plain gold ring, usually manufactured of two different metals, such as gold and platinum. Now, that other ring which you wear on this finger would be more suitable. This one with its diamonds, and its hands in relief, is so bulky that one couldn't put a glove over it."

"Oh! Madame Alphonse will arrange that as she likes. I believe she will be well pleased with it. Twelve hundred francs on one's finger is not to be despised. This little ring here," he added, looking with an air of satisfaction at the plain one he wore on his finger, "this one was given to me by a lady in Paris on Shrove Tuesday. Ah! how I did enjoy myself when I was in Paris two years ago; that's the place for pleasure!" . . . and he sighed with regret.

We dined that day at Puygarrig, with the parents of the intended. I will not speak of the dinner, nor of the conversation which ensued, and in which I took but little part. M. Alphonse, seated at the side of his intended, spoke a word in her ear about every quarter of an hour. As for her, she hardly lifted her eyes, and, every time her intended spoke to her, she blushed with modesty, but replied to him without embarrassment.

Mademoiselle de Puygarrig was eighteen years old; her lithe and delicate figure contrasted finely with the well-developed form of her robust betrothed. She was not only beautiful; she was seductive. I admired the natural simplicity of all her replies; and her air of goodness, which, though not exempt from a slight suspicion of malice, called to mind, in spite of myself, the Venus of my host. In this comparison, which I made to myself, I asked if the preëminent beauty, which one was forced to accord to the statue, did not in great measure recall the expression of a tigress; for energy, even in ill-passions, excites in us always astonishment and a kind of involuntary admiration.

"What a pity," thought I, on leaving Puygarrig, "that so engaging a young lady should be rich, and that her dowry should cause her to be sought after by a man quite unworthy of her."

On returning to Ille, and not knowing well what to say to Madame de Peyrehorade, to whom it was proper now and then to address a word, I ventured to remark:

"It is clear you are all free thinkers at Roussillon! Why, Madame, you have a marriage on a Friday; at Paris we are more superstitious: nobody would dare to take a wife on such a day."

"Gracious goodness! do not speak of it," she replied; "if it depended on me they would certainly have chosen another day; but Peyrehorade would have the marriage on Friday, and we had to yield to him. It gives me anxiety, however. If any disaster should happen! There must be some reason for the common apprehension, otherwise why should all the world be afraid of Friday?"

"Friday!" cried her husband, "it is Venus's day; a most appropriate day for a marriage! You see, my dear colleague, I think only of my Venus. Upon my honour, it was on account of her that I chose Friday. To-morrow, before the wedding, we shall sacrifice two wood-pigeons, and if I knew where I could find some incense . . ."

"For shame, Peyrehorade," interrupted his wife, scandalized in the highest degree. "To shower incense on an idol!"

"The arrangements for the morrow were ordered in the following manner: Everybody must be ready and in full dress by ten o'clock precisely. The chocolate taken, all must repair in the carriage to Puygarrig. The civil marriage would take place at the Hotel de Ville, and the religious ceremony in the castle chapel. Then would follow the breakfast. After the breakfast they would spend the time as they best could till seven o'clock. At seven o'clock they would return to Ille, to the house of M. de Peyrehorade, where the two families together would sup. The rest of the time would be passed in a simple and natural manner. Not being permitted to dance they would have to eat as much as possible.

At about eight o'clock I was seated in front of the Venus, a pencil in my hand, recommencing for the twentieth time the head of the statue, without being able to catch the expression. M. de Peyrehorade kept moving around me, giving me advice; then placing Bengal roses on the pedestal of the statue, and in a tragi-comic voice supplicating good fortune for the couple, who were going to live under his roof. Towards nine o'clock he went into the house to put the finishing touch to his toilet, and at the same time M. Alphonse made his appearance, tightly buttoned up in a new coat, white gloves, polished shoes, scroll-chased buttons, and a rose in his button-hole.

"You are sketching the portrait of my wife," said he to me, leaning over my drawing. "It is very like her."

Just at this moment there commenced on the tennis-ground, of which I have already spoken, a game which at once attracted the attention of M. Alphonse; and I, being fatigued, and despairing of interpreting this diabolical countenance, soon quitted my drawing to look at the players. There were among them some Spanish Muleteers, who had arrived the night before. They came from Aragon and Navarre, and almost all of them showed wonderful dexterity in the field. The Illois, although encouraged by the presence and the counsels of M. Alphonse, were easily defeated by these new champions. The national spectators were dismayed.