

THE VIOLINIST.*

BY E. L. C.

UNISIERRE entered his solitary apartment in a tumult of thought and feeling, which, in his rapid walk from the palace, he had not been able to subdue. He felt too surely that his fate was now sealed, that henceforth the vengeance of the angry countess would pursue him to blight his prospects, and rob him of the favour and patronage of the bishop, from whom he had received so many marks of kindness, and in whose power it was to advance his interest, in whatever course he should decide hereafter to pursue.

Yet even in view of this calamity, he could scarcely bring himself to regret the scene of the morning; nor would he have recalled the brief and passionate avowal, which had escaped his lips in that moment of lonely communion with Ianthé, since the deep emotion she manifested at his words, brought to his heart the sweet assurance of her reciprocal love.

"And yet," he said, his generous nature triumphing over his selfish joy, "what matters it that I have stirred up the deep fountains of her affections, since she is forbidden to pour them out in their fullness upon me. Why should I rejoice that I have troubled them for nought, or feel one emotion of gladness that I suffer not alone? Let me rise above this weakness, and now, even now, striving to conquer it, I will write to her, and tell her to forget me! Yes, I will bid her bestow her precious love on some more favoured and gifted child of fortune, and pronouncing an eternal farewell to love and to ambition, will turn my steps from Padua, and bury my dreams and aspirations in an obscurity which shall consign the name. I hoped to link through all future time with melody, to deep and endless oblivion."

He caught up his pen as he spoke, and spreading the unsullied sheet before him, began with a resolute hand, but an agitated spirit, to impress upon it, in his first and last letter to Ianthé, the passionate outpourings of his enamoured and despairing heart.

"Scarcely dare I address thee," he commenced, "at whose feet I have ventured to breathe forth the guilty secret of my presumptuous love. But it is as a suppliant that I approach thee, and I know that I shall not plead to thee, who art the

very spirit of gentleness, in vain, for pardon. I may not aspire to win thee, but the love I cherish for thee will ever animate my heart, and, while life endures, fill my whole being with joy. Chide me not for the utterance of these words, nor let them give thee pain, for it is enough that I suffer; be thou happy with one more fortunate, yet ever bear in mind, my sweetest Ianthé, that no other can love thee as I do. And though I may never gaze upon thy angel face again, still shall its radiant beauty, like some vision of delight, haunt me in that sad and distant solitude whither I hasten, to nurture the deep heart's-wound, which time may never heal. There, will I live over again those white-winged hours which fled so swiftly in thy presence; there will I repeat with never-wearying hand the strains which we have played together, and dedicating my every thought to thee and heaven, pass on my joyless way, unknowing and unsought, till the dark portal of the tomb at last uneloses, to admit me to its rest.

"My offence is known to the Countess Bertha, and through her, doubtless, to the bishop; let their wrath, I humbly entreat, fall on me alone, though methinks the expiation I am about to make, should purchase their forgiveness, and erase from their minds the remembrance of all, save my sufferings and my exile. I could write on to thee, beautiful Ianthé, till the sun, which this morning for the last time lighted me to thy sweet presence, sinks to his evening rest, and again in his glory arises to fill the world with brightness; but I may not, for the moment hath arrived in which I am constrained to bid thee adieu—shall it be forever? My heart sinks at the thought, for without one ray of hope, however distant and however faint, life itself would become to me an insupportable burden. I go without naught to speak to me of thee, save the bunch of violets which fell from thy girdle on the first day that I met thee; they are withered, but still they breathe of thee, for thy smile once bathed them in sweetness, and so I wear them upon my heart, in whose secret chambers thy image is enshrined.

"Farewell! my first, my only beloved—the one pure light of my starless sky, which though