

THE ADOPTED.

"Poor boy, the world hath much ill-used thee."

The recent wars in Spain have brought all things connected with that country most vividly before us, and we have become accustomed to dwell with increased interest on all circumstances relating thereto; the wild, untameable dispositions of its mountain peasantry, the war of extermination, and the bitter and relentless cruelty shewn to the unhappy prisoners, who have fallen into the power of either side, have made a deep and lasting impression on all who have observed the progress of events in Spain; and though we may look upon the country as the reign of romance, where the soft and sunny landscape bears away the palm from all other lands; where the orange-grove sheds its fragrant perfume around; and where the beautiful and grand blend to render it the most lovely of all countries in the world, yet has all this been thrown away upon its stern inhabitants, who are only remarkable for their cruelty when any popular commotion stirs the angry blood of men into action, and all ties of humanity are forgotten. May we hope that a change may come o'er the spirit of the drama, and better and brighter days be in store for this unhappy land.

Our readers remember during the recent events in Spain, that the decimation of the Chapelgorries excited unusual attention; the cruelty and injustice of the act was so monstrous that men wondered such things could pass in these days of improvement and civilization. It is to this circumstance our story tends. We need scarcely mention that the Chapelgorries were the elite of the Spanish army; and after that sad event their spirits were broken, and the corps were considered to be so changed in spirit as scarcely to be recognized as the same.

Pietro Rimez was, of all the Chapelgorries, about the most soldier-like and neatest in appearance that an officer could have picked out as a model for his comrades; he was scarce turned twenty, a very Spaniard in his sun-burnt countenance and glossy hair, and though brave to desperation, yet to his comrades was he the greatest favorite, from his mildness and kind good feeling, that ever prompted him to lend a helping hand to assist or relieve them in any emergency that the frequent changes of a campaign called forth.

There was one circumstance connected with him that excited much attention in the corps; throughout all the campaigns he had been followed by a woman; gentle reader, we tell no story of love, of no singleness of purpose that woman in her devotion leaves all the world to follow him she loves the best, and whether in sickness or in sorrow, to be near and minister consolation and comfort in the hour of trial and distress; for Pietro but called the Andalusian Paquita by the name of mother. There seemed something in her affection for her son more than even mothers show; or, perhaps, it requires the wild and stirring scenes of civil strife and war to call them forth in all their force. She was ever near him in their long and tedious marches, to assist and encourage him; and her only comfort seemed to be when with him.

It will be recollected that the Chapelgorries were said to have pillaged a church and killed the priest; the priest was said to have been killed in fair and open fight as an enemy; that he was slain as the aggressor. Be this so or not, and we believe it was the truth, a terrible blow was to avenge this so called atrocity, and as none could point out which were the actual culprits on the occasion, it was determined by the general (and by none but a Spaniard could such an act of blood be perpetrated) that the Chapelgorries should be decimated.

The unhappy men were ordered to march some distance beyond the town, and to pile their arms, ignorant of what was to be the result. This they did, unsuspectingly, and upon a given signal the other regiments closed and took charge of their arms. The Chapelgorries instantly perceived that they were betrayed, and strove to regain their muskets, but it was too late; they then learnt to what they were doomed. Lots were ordered to be drawn, and those who drew the unfortunate numbers were to die.

The lots were accordingly drawn in solemn silence, the betrayed Chapelgorries inwardly vowing vengeance against their betrayer. Among those whose evil chances doomed them to die, was the general favorite of the regiment, Pietro Rimez. His unhappy mother, who had, as usual, followed the regiment, soon learnt the approaching fate of her son. The suddenness seemed almost to bewilder her; she could scarce believe it was not a dream. "To die!" she exclaimed; "so young, so innocent! What! what had he done? Why was he to be a victim, who knew nothing of their misdeeds, if, indeed there had been any?" A sudden thought, however, seemed to have come across her; the major of the Chapelgorries was a stern man, but little known for mercy, of an abstract and gloomy disposition, he seemed to avoid his brother officers; it was said something preyed upon his mind, but whether of love or hate none ever knew; whatever had been the circumstance, it had changed his disposition altogether, for there were those who had known him in his youth, a man of different character, even, as they said, to be mild and gentle. The stern, unrelenting character of a strict disciplinarian was now the general name he bore in the regiment, and none but the unhappy Paquita would have thought of bending to him for mercy.

She flew to him on the instant, and besought him to listen to her.

He acceded to her demand. She besought him that their interview might be in private. To this, also, he agreed; and they withdrew to some distance.

No sooner were they out of hearing of the rest, than she exclaimed with much eagerness, "Oh! spare my poor boy, he is doomed to die; spare him in Heaven's name, and I will worship thee; oh! spare him to me."

"Woman, I cannot."

"You can; you can: a word from you would do it. Oh! hear me. Do not let him die. One word, and his life is spared."

"I cannot interfere; it is a stern duty, and it must be performed; why should I interfere for one more than another?"

"He is innocent; he was not near the spot; do with him what you will, but spare his life, only spare his life."

"I cannot!"

"Say rather you will not!"

"Then do I say I will not!"

"Spoken like yourself, Manuel Adorio," exclaimed Paquita, with bitterness.

At the sound of this name, not the one he bore in the regiment, the major started, and every nerve seemed to quiver with agony.

"How know you that name?" he demanded eagerly.

"Ah, you seem now to listen more to reason; do you remember something more than twenty years ago, you were in Andalusia, young and handsome, and courted by all? You see I do know you; will you spare him now—"

"It seems you know me; but I cannot spare him; I pity you, but duty must have its way."

"Duty!" said the half-frantic woman, turning her eyes with bitter agony towards the Chapelgorries, "you call that duty? there is no word for such an act, or I know none; listen then farther to me; you know that in Andalusia, the lordly family of Alvez had an only daughter—what can I call her—she was an angel if ever woman was, and you know it; and more—for you see I know you well, Manuel Adorio, at least you once bore that name. Will you spare my poor boy?"

The major answered not, but his hand was pressed upon his brow, some bitter recollections seeming to affect him deeply.

Paquita proceeded, "Manuel, I will tell you more; you wooed the gentle Inez in secret—and more will I tell you—you won her, for in private you married her—look at me, stern man. I say, look at me, and remember who was present then, even the poor degraded being who is now before you; then your wife's maid—but now an humble suppliant for your mercy; then, you were the suppliant for stolen interviews; will you spare my poor boy?"

"Indeed I have not the power!"

"I say you have; you are the general's favorite; he will do all you wish. Spare him, I say, and you will think it the happiest day you have known for many a long year; you hesitate; why, man, your heart has turned to iron that nothing can indent; listen to me, then, for if what I tell you now, will not, then there is no feeling on earth. You know the Lord Alvez, on discovering your secret visits, forced your wife into a convent, and you never saw her more, and there, like a sickly flower, she drooped and pined for him she loved; for alas! she loved you but too well; poor thing, she suffered not many months, as you well know; for she died a victim of her father's cruelty, and I alone closed her eyes in death. Will you spare my boy? Manuel Adorio, oh! spare him to me; think what you felt when you heard of your wife's death, and think what I feel now—"

"Indeed, indeed, Paquita, I have not the power to do it."

"Man of blood, you have, I say; oh, God! he will die, and none will raise a hand to save him. Adorio, you must save him—for die he must not, he cannot die. I said," she continued speaking in a hurried manner, "that your wife died in these arms, bidding me, ere she died, to seek you out, and tell you—look, look, they are closing in—there is time—speak the word—quick, ere it is too late."

"I would save him if I had the power."

"The gentle Lady Inez said not so when I left the convent. After death I bore what she had charged me with, unknown to all; for years, I sought you in vain, but you had changed your name; and when I found you I could not part with my charge, it had so twined itself round my heart, I could not part with it. I loved it more than all the world—more than I can tell you now; oh, look! it will be too late; see—see, they have all closed in—"

The major beckoned to one of the officers, and told him to bring Pietro Rimez before him."

The officer hastened towards them to execute the commands; but just as he arrived at the spot, the report of a volley of muskets told it was too late.

The unhappy Paquita looked pointing in the air with her finger but a few moments; the words could find no utterance; after a time, however, she exclaimed, still pointing to the spot, "Too late, too late—he is dead." She then turned towards Adorio; her countenance was awful; a death-like paleness had come over it, whilst her dark eyes seemed almost starting from her head, and with a sad, melancholy expression, she said, "Manuel Adorio, your wife bade me give you one last sad token of her love, and one you would dearly prize for her sake; poor thing, she little

thought she was wrong, but such as it now is, I give it to you; go, man of blood, and seek amongst the dead bodies of the Chapelgorries, until you find one that was once called Pietro Rimez."

"Oh, God! what is it you mean? You will drive me mad."

"Alas! I fear me much you have driven me so, already—but let me tell you all; the poor boy is not my son; he is not born of such lowly blood as mine; he is of noble birth—I say of noble birth; the proudest in all proud Andalusia; the noblest of all Spain's nobles—he is an Alvez by his mother's side, his father is Don Manuel Adorio! Seek him, I say, and let my words ring in your ears by day or night, waking or sleeping. You might have saved your son, and you would not; do you hear me?—you would not. I care not now what becomes of me; the world is all a blank, for I am like yourself, lone and desolate!"

For the Pearl.

THE YELLOW LEAF.

—Now the leaf

Incessant rustles from the mournful grove;
Oft startling such as studious walk below,
And slowly circles through the waving air.
But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
Sob; o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams,
Till, choked and matted with the dreary shower,
The forest-walks, at every rising gale,
Roll wide the withered waste, and whistle bleak.
Fled is the blisful verdure of the fields;
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign."

THOMSON.

WHETHER it be the fault or the excellence of my nature, which others may be left to determine, the fact is, I am very imaginative. This, perhaps, predominant intellectual quality, is not, however, I trust, unaccompanied by other counter-balancing mental properties as well as by moral restraints. Imagination may be like poison in medicine—destructive when unmixed, but conducive to great good when properly compounded and diffused. He who is all imagination will be often a mere enthusiast, and may be guilty of vain fancies and frivolities, while he who is all judgment will be sure to be dull, and for want of a propelling power, may be uninteresting or silent. A man of mere argument, or good sense, as it is called, can look at the visible universe with little emotion, and pass unobserved and unfelt even its vastness as well as its minutest characteristics of grandeur or beauty, whereas every object will be a theme for the man of glowing passion and observant eye. To the one, half the creation is a blank; to the other, every line, word, and letter, is distinctly marked and appreciated on "nature's ample page;" so that not only are our means of mental enjoyment and personal improvement increased by observation, and the play of fancy or thought, but individual amusement is associated with general utility. He who can fetch a thought from a flower, or bring a new and improving association of ideas to a blade of grass, is a real, though not, it may be, so great a benefactor to his species, as he who sows a seed, or plants a tree, where seed was never sown, or tree never grew before.

I must own that a green or a yellow leaf has, like ten thousand other minute, and often disregarded objects in this beautiful creation, a charm—shall I call it a moral charm?—for me. Amidst the expanding verdure of Spring, indeed, I can sympathise with the poet's language—"this is the *lud* of being;" but thoughts not less impressive or beneficial seem to crowd around the steps of Autumn. This may appear a fit subject for poetry, but why should it not breathe in prose?

Perfect uniformity is seldom conducive to the highest effect. We are so constituted as to desire and to be pleased both with change and variety. The green colour of the opening spring is grateful to the eye; but abstractedly, the variegated colours of the season of decay probably please as much, or more, both the senses and the taste. It is delightful to contemplate the effect of autumnal changes at a distance, when the foliage begins to exhibit a yellow tinge. The landscape acquires new beauty, though it indicates decay; yet there is sometimes a peculiar loveliness even in death. Perhaps few scenes of nature are more imposing than the variegations of colour in the landscape, and especially on the thick embowering wood, as observed amidst the tranquil atmosphere of October, and when the sun is just casting his departing ray from his throne of gold. It is the painter's and the poet's hour. The impression I have found to be greatly enhanced by marking the progress of decay, and observing particular objects. If a tree, for instance, covered with its yellow livery, stood alone, it might indeed attract attention from its general gracefulness of form, or the brilliancy of its foliage, but when seen in combination, and in contrast with a verdant mass around, in different stages of discolouration and decay, we become at once sensible of increased effect. It both imparts and imbibes beauty.

Nothing is more pleasing than to pursue the path by the forest side, leafy and soft. The gathering foliage present a kind of pleasing obstacle, which resists, yet yields to the foot. I love to catch the gentle sound of the breeze, to feel the flutterings of his wings, and to follow with the eye, leaf after leaf, swept from the