

Poetry.

MAN WASNA MADE TO MOURN.

Man a' the bonnie Scottish lays
The Ayrshire ploughman wrote,
That crown'd him wi' the world's praise,
There's yin should be forgot.
In lordly ha' or humble hame—
I find at every turn
Margaret has herself to blame—
He wasna made to mourn.

Along the streets baith ear' an' late,
I hear the mournfu' cries
O' wretched pair, wi' whose hard fate
I deeply sympathise;
But when I keek ahint the scene,
An' gie the screen a turn,
I find they might ha'e better been—
Man wasna made to mourn.

Fell dissipation ruins health,
Vice stunts his trusty freen';
They cawp the highest peaks o' wealth,
Mak' life a drumly scene.
An' when starvation—gaunt an' grim—
Appears at every turn,
Can we wi' justice bauldly say
That man was made to mourn?

Ah, no! my working brithers a',
Though humble be our lot,
Some chance we've had to raise or fa'—
That chance has been forgot.
Sae while we daily toil for bread,
Ne'er "fortune's fav'rites" spurn;
'Tis aften through the lives we lead
That we ha'e cause to mourn.

REWARD OF TOIL.

The wealth that labor gets,
To pay its honest debts,
Is here in plenty found,
Above and under ground.
In crops rewarding toil,
In wells of flowing oil,
In mines of solid lead,
In fields of gold and red,
In streams no drouth can halt,
In basins filled with salt,
In rivers deep and shoal,
In ebon veins of coal,
In lakes wide as the sea,
In prairies broad and free,
In vineyards rich with vines,
In gold and silver mines,
In land the tiller tills,
In cattle on the hills,
In quarries filled with stone,
In forests vast and lone.

The wealth that labor gets,
To pay its honest debts,
Is earned in forge and mill,
With force of hand and will,
The hands that turn the wheel,
Heads that think, and hearts that feel,
Make us richer every day,
And help us on the way.
The furnace fires aglow,
Show trade the path to go:
The red plumes of the night,
The ships with wings of white,
Are beacons night and day
To nations o'er the way.
Let honor be the rule
In shop, and court, and school;
Put vice and meanness down;
Let virtue wear the crown,
And we shall then behold
The promised age of gold.

Tales and Sketches.

RACHEL AND AIXA;

OR,

The Hebrew and the Moorish Maidens.

AN INTERESTING HISTORICAL TALE.

CHAPTER XLII.—Conclusion.

Meantime, Aix, who had remained immovable, contemplating the fulfilment of her revenge, felt herself pushed suddenly aside by a new comer with mud-stained doublet, haggard eyes, and gestures wild as those of a madman. It was Don Pedro. "Woe, woe to me," he cried, on finding he had arrived too late. Then, bending over Rachel, he raised her in his arms, and pressed his lips to those of the expiring girl.

"Rachel, Rachel," he murmured, "do I then see thee dead in this place, where not long since thou didst appear to me so lovely and so faithful to thy duty! This then is the reward of virtue. Thou hast sacrificed thy love; thou hast satisfied the emotion of thy heart; thou hast repulsed thy lover; and behold, thou hast no longer a smile to cast on me, nor a voice to answer me." And again he pressed his lips on those of the Jewess.

Under the influence of his tender caresses Rachel opened her eyes; her lips moved, for she felt the presence of her lover. At length she spoke.

"Thank Heaven," she said, in a voice fainter than the first breath of morning, "for having permitted me, in the dread silence that already surrounds me, to hear again the voice of my beloved. He has not forgotten me; he has not disowned me; he has not abandoned me. I knew he would come. Look at me well, my Pedro, my eyelids are heavy, my sight is dim, yet strange, I still plainly perceive thee as a brilliant circle of light. Oh, how I love thee,

my Pedro," continued the dying girl; "thou didst never know how much thou wert beloved; no other will ever love thee as I have. Do not pity me; since I die in thy arms, I die too happy." Then turning round, she asked for Duguesclin, saying he also had defended her.

"Duguesclin!" repeated the king, starting; when turning round he saw the Breton, who had just finished tying up the Levites; the two enemies were soon separated only by the body of Rachel.

"Sir Bertrand," said the king, "thanks to you for having, like a loyal knight, succoured the poor Rachel, without stopping to remember that she was beloved by your mortal enemy."

Duguesclin replied, that he had arrived too late, perhaps, to save her, though in time to secure her murderers.

"What reward do you claim from the King of Castile, sir," demanded Don Pedro; "the knight who has endeavored to save my beloved shall never be my enemy—my hand shall never more be raised against him."

"That is an indiscreet oath, Sir King," answered Duguesclin, "for I am still the servant of Don Enrique. I do not make or unmake kings, but I must always serve my master."

This menacing answer at such a moment made the king shudder; but Bertrand immediately called his attention to the Levites whom he had secured.

"Justice shall not be long delayed," answered the king.

The dying Rachel now made another effort, in exhorting the king to show mercy to her murderers; she called on her father, also, to come and embrace her.

But Samuel, picking up the stone which had struck his daughter, stood upright before Zedekiah, and saying in a grave and solemn voice, "He that killeth any man shall surely be put to death," he threw the stone with supernatural force at the fanatic, who received it unflinchingly on his forehead, and fell without uttering a cry. The poor old man then approached his daughter, and embraced her with heartfelt tenderness.

"I die," murmured she; "adieu, my father! adieu, Don Pedro! adieu all those who have loved and served me. And thy foster-brothers, Pedro, where are they! Why have they not accompanied thee? Love them well, for they only, with thy old nurse, will defend thy right and watch over thy welfare, when thou shalt no longer hear the voice of Rachel."

The head of the affectionate and devoted girl fell back heavily; her hair having escaped from its bonds, lay loose and negligent on the damp cold ground; and those features, once radiant with perfect loveliness, shedding a light and glory on all around them, were fast assuming the unchanging rigidity of death.

"Heaven is against me," uttered Don Pedro, in a voice broken by sighs; "all who love me perish!" Then turning slowly to Duguesclin, he besought his assistance to carry the dead body out of the enclosure, intending to bury it with regal honors.

The pages and varlets of the Black Prince having now arrived, the body of the unfortunate Jewess was removed according to the king's desire. Don Pedro fell almost inanimate against a broken column, absorbing in a gloomy and prophetic reverie.

The Morisca, who had remained in the shade, a silent and satisfied spectator of Rachel's death, now came forward, saying, "Ah, I knew very well that the Jewess would never enter the Alcazar again alive!"

Esau advanced suddenly towards her. "Aixa," said he, in a low tone, "I heard thee answer the rending shrieks of poor Rachel with thy hyena laugh, but I did not believe thou wouldst venture to come forth and boast of thy crime. Woe to thee, since thou hast not hastened to hide thy cowardly and shameful joy from the companion of Rachel's childhood."

"We must meet for the last time, Esau," answered the Morisca, disdainfully: "I can now return to Granada."

Esau smiled ironically. "Ah! thou reckonest on returning freely to Granada, Aixa," he said.

"Who will prevent me?" demanded she, haughtily.

"I will," replied the leper, "for thou art about to follow me."

"Follow thee, insensate leper! I forbid thee to touch me," she said, retreating with a gesture of anger and contempt.

"Why," answered Manasses, "is it not my right? Have I not bought thee from the hangman? Did I not claim thee for my wife, and didst thou not accept the bargain? Ah, thou repulst me? Thou bravest me, now thou hast obtained thy revenge, and Rachel sleeps in her winding-sheet. But now I, in my turn, wish to live only to avenge her on thee." And he continued to approach Aix, who still retreated with uneasiness and alarm.

"Away, wretched leper! Help, help!" she cried; but the king remained immovable, and Duguesclin smiled to see the vindictive Aix reduced to the character of a suppliant.

"I did not dare to touch Rachel, even to save her," resumed the leper, shuddering; "but I shall be bolder with thee, noble daughter of Mohamed. I will carry thee in my arms, to punish thee for thy unworthy triumph."

"Sir Bertrand, will you abandon a woman?" said the Morisca, advancing to the Breton, "By your knighthood, I conjure you to succor me."

"The leper does not threaten you with death," answered Bertrand, "but you have caused the death of Rachel."

"Then art thou, Aixa," said Manasses; "we will quit each other no more. Rachel has expiated her love by a dreadful death, and who have been the docile instrument of thy hatred, will make thee expiate thy hate by carrying thee into my last asylum. Thou hast enclosed thy rival in her tomb; I will bury thee alive in the lazaretto." Saying these words, he locked her in his arms.

"No! no! I prefer dying like her," shrieked Aix, struggling.

"Thou art too ambitious, I tell thee," replied Esau, with a fiendish laugh, while she endeavored in vain to resist him. "Receive the kiss of the leper, whom thou hast accepted in the presence of witnesses." Then, notwithstanding her shrieks and transports of rage, he carried her away, shouting to the pages and varlets, "Make way for the leper!" and went off in the direction of the lazaretto.

A few days after Rachel's death, the English arms struck its tents, and impatiently awaited the signal of departure. One knight attached to the suite of the Black Prince was yet absent. It was Burdett.

We left him on the banks of the Guadalquivir; his horse, after dragging him through the rushes and bushes, left him bleeding and insensible. He recovered, however, in a few hours, and not daring to return to Seville, he gained, with much difficulty, the English camp.

Shut up in his tent, he brooded over his shame and defeat, but determined not to quit Spain as poor as he had entered it, he was ever meditating how to regain possession of the famous golden table. He at length conceived the project of entering the house of Samuel with a troop of adventurers, and under cover of the confusion that the departure of Edward and his army would occasion, to possess himself of the much-coveted treasure.

Barillard was commissioned to find men suited to the work, and in the dead of the night, Burdett and his band broke open the house of poor old Samuel.

Burdett having discovered that the golden table was hidden in the cavern where formerly he had seen the body of Rachel, when she was supposed to be dead, hastened to secure it, leaving the pillage of the house to his followers.

Among these were the three adventurers, Bouchard, George, and Richard, who had engaged in the expedition, hoping to revenge themselves on the governor of the Golden Tower, whom they had long mortally hated.

Before following the rest of the band, they set fire to two chests filled with rich stuffs and valuable essences. The flames soon communicated to the wooden partition, and thence to the beams and rafters. Finally, the interior of the building was filled with a thick smoke, which ascended to the rooms above.

The majordomo, who had hastened upstairs with the rest of the band, alarmed at the dense smoke, descended quickly to succor his master, but the passage that led to the cavern was already in flames, and he could only shout, "Fire! fire! the house is on fire!"

Burdett, who had but just succeeded in bursting open the door of the vault, and by the light of his torch could perceive the sparkling carbuncle in the middle of the table, was not to be persuaded to relinquish the glorious prize now almost within his grasp. When Barillard, therefore, again roared, "Come up, sir, if you do not wish to be broiled!" he answered, with an oath, that he would secure what he came for, though he should have to cross bars of red hot iron to attain it. And he sprang into the cavern, the vault of which was already on fire, while the narrow stone staircase was filled with thick smoke.

Notwithstanding the oppression that Burdett felt at his chest through inhaling the thick vapour that now filled the vault, he succeeded in reaching his prize, which, with a cry of triumph, he hoisted on his shoulders.

Just then the voice of Barillard again reached him, crying out, "The roof is about to fall in."

Burdett sprang towards the staircase, and twice he endeavored to scramble up the burning steps, which crumbled under his feet like glowing cinders.

Barillard turned in despair to the three Bretons, and demanded which of them would devote himself to save the noble knight.

"You shall," replied Richard, "either willingly or by force." Then, as Burdett once more called out, "Come to me, Barillard, come to me," the Bretons fell upon the unfortunate Barillard, and dragging him to the edge, pushed him down the burning staircase, saying coolly, "Thy master calls thee, good majordomo; go, then, and seek him."

A last shriek of agony was heard, and immediately all was silent.

Bouchard and his companions now turned to leave the burning dwelling, for the other adventurers had already quitted it with their booty; but the former went not without their burthens also, for they came out of the smoking ruins laden with old Deborah and Samuel.

History records at a later period Don Enrique took his revenge at Montiel for his defeat at Navarretto. In this battle all the foster-brothers fell, while valiantly defending their king.

Don Pedro, having been made prisoner, was treacherously betrayed and delivered up to Enrique.

Upon being brought into the presence of the usurper, Enrique, unable to restrain his hatred, rushed on the king, and, in the presence of whole court, stabbed him with his dagger several times; the blows were not mortal, and the king, applying with his assailant, succeeded in dashing him to the ground; but the combat was too unequal; the dagger of Enrique gave him a fearful advantage over his unarmed captive, who in vain attempted to possess himself of the weapon. Again and again did they struggle, not one of the spectators interfering in the quarrel; at length Enrique buried his weapon in the heart of the unfortunate Pedro, who instantly fell dead; and Count Mexia, by order of the new king, proceeded to sever the head from the body. The former was elevated on a pole, and the latter suspended in chains from one of the towers of the castle of Montiel.

Thus ended the turbulent career of the haughty and impulsive Pedro—he whose character has been always so variously described by historians, each writer according to his bias, affixing either the epithet of "Just" or "Cruel" to the name of that unhappy monarch.

THE END.

TRIED BY FIRE.

In the sombre quiet of a darkened room, a man lay dying. Around the corners of the grand old house the wind shrieked and moaned as if in anguish for the loss of one so noble. He had found his greatest pleasure in the study of nature; and now she mourned him with a wild and passionate sorrow. He had beautified her soil, had made still lovelier the spot where he was born. Now the busy hands were idle and the wrists pulseless. The powerful mind, with its grasp of intellect; the strong, true heart, so faithful to the right; the robust frame, like unto an oak in its strength and grandeur, had been smitten, and the strong man lay as meekly quiet as a little child. His life had been a busy one; with his great, grand powers of usefulness, and his burning zeal, he had sought to elevate the tone of society. A self-made man himself, he had tried to arouse dormant energies in others, and by precept and example, had made his world wiser and better for his living. Steadily and persistently had he striven with wrong and oppression; unflinchingly had he met the sneers of the world; and now, with deeds immortalized, and a name covered with honor and glory, he had fallen into his death slumber. Nothing can touch him further; he sleeps well.

There was one mourner by the bedside, whose face was fixed in speechless agony. It was as colorless as the drifted snow. The eyes, dry and tearless, were seeking to fathom the mysteries beyond; the defiant mouth was compressed, as if to crush down the leaden pain that tugged at his heart-strings.

"He giveth His beloved sleep." The words fell softly, reverently. His heart burning with sympathy, and the trusting, child-like faith that lit up his venerable face with a holy fire, the gray-haired pastor spoke.

"Myron, my son, strive to meet him in the better land."

"A bitter, scornful smile curved the proud lips as they sneeringly asked—

"Is there a better land? Who knows? Is it yours to know the future?"

The old man turned away, grieved and sorrowful.

"Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he saith."

There was a grand funeral pageant. From near and afar they gathered to render homage to the dead. They had grieved his great, benevolent heart, with their petty grievances; they had stung him with taunts and jeers; but now that the last struggle was over, now that his sufferings were past, each and all did homage to the memory of Robert Ashbury.

"Dust to dust, ashes to ashes."

There were choking sobs as the last clod fell upon the coffin-lid; tearful eyes that looked into the fading starlight; but not a spasm passed the rigid face, not a sigh escaped the white lips of the heir of Ashbury.

He was quite alone now, so far as earthly ties go, and cold philosophy chased away every comfort from his soul. He was not generally liked. His proud, reticent nature repelled rather than attracted sympathy, and but few sought to win it. Exclusive and aristocratic though he was, there were those who had seen the white heat of passion written in every lineament of his haughty face, and he was called "mysterious."

From his father's grave to the terrible stillness of home he wandered, musing drearily of the past, and hoping nothing for the future. A heavy hand was laid on his shoulder, and a harsh voice said commandingly,—

"Myron Ashbury, I arrest you in the name of the law."

"On what charge?"

"For the murder of Benedict Aylesboro. He was shot dead an hour ago with your revolver. Though sorry to trouble you at this time, I am compelled to do my duty."

Dead quiet for an instant, and Myron Ashbury surrendered himself to the officer of the law. His manner was icily calm, and his voice low and even. He saw how it was. Aylesboro and he were rivals for Laura Clifton's hand. It was well known, in their circle, that a fierce jealousy existed between the two. Both were imperious; neither would yield his claim to the other till she chose between them. Aylesboro had asked

for his revolver a week before, as they were leaving her home together. Strangely inconsistent, they had kept up a semblance of friendship to the last.

Carelessly and unthinkingly he had loaned it. That act might, and probably would, prove his ruin. Laura Clifton could be nothing more to either in this world. There was nothing to do but bear it.

Strange it is how much the human heart can bear in life's extremity! His contempt of public opinion was likely to bring him sorrow. He was thankful that the quently girl was far away. He could endure anything better than her pity or her scorn.

The course of the law was slow; for weary months he languished in prison. Then the general course of proceedings were perfected, and his case was announced. Eminent counsel for the prosecution and the defence were secured. The court-room was thronged with eager spectators. The high standing of the parties concerned stimulated public curiosity to a strong degree. The prisoner maintained his olden dignity, and met the public gaze with calm indifference. Public opinion was against him; nothing less than a miracle could save him.

Ashbury knew it all too well. The old bitterness and unbelief were ever present, and he defied fate.

The trial was long and tedious. The evidence adduced by the prosecuting attorney was fatally convincing. The defence, though ably conducted, did not meet the demand of justice. The feeling of animosity deepened. The counsel on both sides held long consultations. At last the day arrived when the question of life and death would be decided. The prisoner, firm as adamant and cold as the grave, quietly awaited his doom. Amid a breathless silence the verdict was pronounced.

"Guilty!" fell upon the strained ears of the spectators, and there was a low murmur of horror.

The death sentence was repeated, yet not a muscle quivered in the stony face. After a terrible silence, in which men gazed at one another, and women sobbed, a noise was heard about the door, and Mr. Leonard, the revered pastor of Ashbury appeared. In his hand he held a reprieve. Another witness had appeared before the governor, and her testimony, supported by facts, and corroborated by indisputable evidence, had won his pardon.

Unknown to either of the men, Laura Clifton had overheard the request concerning the pistol, and witnessed the transfer of the weapon, which fact had condemned the prisoner. Afterwards she had received a letter from Benedict Aylesboro, in which he announced his purpose of suicide, and ended by declaring that Myron Ashbury's fate should be more tragical than his own. She did not think refusal of his offer could bring such unutterable woe to the men who worshipped her. The one to whom she had given so much, had never asked for her love.

With breathless eagerness she read the course of the trial, hoping to the last that some advantage would be secured for Ashbury. Failing that, she knew that she could save him; but her heart shrank within her when she considered the publicity of the act. Without father or mother to advise her, she sought the counsel of the minister, and he had talked so wisely, and so well, that she had risen above her maidenly fears, and her woman's heart had conquered.

Back again to life and happiness! Myron Ashbury had looked death in the face without a murmur. Uncomplainingly he had borne the sneers and the frowns of the world. But now that relief had come—now that he was saved by her "who was the nearer one yet," the proud head was bowed in gratitude, and a softened light gleamed in the beautiful eyes.

Ring out, ye Christmas bells! Peal forth your gladdened chimes. For he who has been tried by a furnace of fire has conquered, and the peace that passeth understanding has entered his soul.

The mistletoe and the holly beautify the walls of the gray old church. Wreaths and mottoes meet the eye on every hand. White-robed children scatter flowers along the aisles, and the organ fills the church with a flood of harmony.

They are a noble pair. Laura Clifton's face is irradiated with sweet, womanly happiness, and a deep repose is reflected in Ashbury's fine countenance. As the silver-haired pastor pronounces the benediction, and clasps the hand of each, he murmurs, softly—

"It has come to pass."

Myron Ashbury's face reflects the emotions of his soul, and the minister whispers, reverently—

"Father, I thank thee."

The snow falls gently on the new-made grave, but Myron thinks gratefully of the reunion beyond, and, with his beautiful wife, is determined to win the heritage of a glorious immortality.

A good story is told of an old usurer who went one day to visit a former borrower, who had since fortunately grown from poverty to independence. They went into the garden. Passing along a walk flanked on either side with flowers of great beauty and variety, the visitor made no remark until he came to a potato patch, when he exclaimed, "My friend, you'll have a fine crop of potatoes there!" "That's just like you," said the proprietor. "When gentlemen and ladies pass through my garden they look at the flowers; but when a hog comes in, all he can see is potatoes."