

## THE BOHEMIAN SIBYL.

"Superstition was the Sibyl's magic."

DURING the war between Austria and Turkey, in 1788, a Baron Von W. was sent with recruits to the Austrian army, which was then near Orsoway. Close to the camp, in a village on the road, lived a gipsy sutler, to whom the soldiers applied to have their fortunes told, and the baron, ridiculing their superstitions, in a jeering manner held out his hand to the oracular sibyl. "The 20th of August," said she, and in a manner so peculiar and impressive, that she was urged to explain what was meant, but she would only repeat the same words, bawling after the baron, as he rode away, "The 20th of August." About a week before the period mentioned, the gipsy entered the baron's tent, and begged he would leave her a legacy in case he should depart from this world on the twentieth day: offering, on the contrary, that should he live to claim it, she would compliment him with a hamper of Tokay, with which to drink his kind remembrance to her. "The gipsy," said the baron, in his after relations of the adventure, "seemed to me to be mad; for though a soldier is always in danger of dissolution, I certainly had not supposed mine as near as the '20th of August'; I therefore acceded to the bargain, and pledged two horses and 200 ducats, against the old woman's Tokay; and the paymaster of the regiment laughed heartily while writing the contract, which was regularly signed, sealed, and delivered."

The "20th of August" arrived: it was the baron's regiment which had to furnish a picquet for the night. Of the two officers that preceded in command, the senior was on a sudden taken extremely ill; the other in mounting his horse was thrown by the animal, and had his leg fractured in the fall; the duty therefore necessarily devolved upon the baron, who, with 200 men, proceeded to his post, which was a mile distant, in front of the army, protected by a marsh covered with rushes; where, with swords drawn and carbines ready, they waited the approach of day. All was silent till a quarter before two o'clock, when shouts of *Allah! Allah!* were heard, and, in an instant, the whole of the first rank were overthrown by the fire and shock of 700 or 800 Turks. The baron received eight wounds from a sabre; his horse was shot dead, and, in falling, fixed under him the leg of his rider. In a short time, the whole of the Austrians having fallen, the victors, after pillage, cut off their heads and put them in bags, which they had brought in consideration that they were to receive a ducat for each head produced; and frequently advised each other not to leave any one behind; but a convulsive start of the horse liberating the leg of the baron, he succeeded in reaching the marsh, where he sank up to his knees in mud, and, fainting with the loss of blood, he lay senseless for several hours. At length, however, he reached the advanced posts, and was thence conveyed to the camp, where, in about six weeks, he recovered, and joined his regiment.

On his arrival, the gipsy brought him the Tokay, assuring him that several of her predictions had been verified, and that, consequently she had obtained many legacies.

This mysterious affair was, however, shortly after explained by the desertion to the Austrians of two Christians of Servia; who, upon sight of the prophetess, declared that she often visited the Turkish camp by night, to report the movements of the Germans; that they had heard her describe their various positions, and that a Turkish cipher was her passport; which cipher being found upon her, she was condemned to death as a spy; and being interrogated previous to her execution, she gave the following detail of her predictions:—She confessed, that by her double office as spy, she had learned many things from both parties; that from those who came previously to consult her as to their future fortune, she had obtained a variety of secret particulars; and that she was not without some obligations to chance. That as to what immediately concerned the baron, she had fixed on him in order to make him a striking example, and to confirm her authority by having predicted his fate so long beforehand. At the approach of the time appointed, she had excited the enemy to attempt, on the night of the 20th of August, an attack against the post of his regiment. Her knowledge of the officers enabled her to ascertain their rank in the service: she had sold wine to his commander, which had produced his illness; and the moment before the second was setting off, she had approached, as if to sell him something, and had unperceived slipped up the nostrils of the horse a piece of lighted *amadou*, or vegetable tinder, which had occasioned his unusual violence.

## THE MAID OF CIUDAD RODRIGO.

War has a fearful ubiquity of mischief. The soldier is not its sole victim, nor the field of battle the only scene of its woes; but it sweeps like a moral simoom over the peaceful families of every place which it visits, and leaves not a few of them in sorrow and utter desolation.

"Passing through a narrow street of Ciudad Rodrigo," says Kennedy in his *Recollections of the War in Spain*, "I heard the shriek of a female. Looking up, we saw at an open lattice, by the light of the lamp she bore, a girl about sixteen, her hair and dress disordered, her expressive olive countenance marked

by anguish and extreme terror. A savage in scarlet uniform dragged her backward, accompanying the act with the vilest execrations in English. We entered the court-yard, where the hand of rapine had spared us the necessity of forcing a passage. My companions were brave, conscientious men, with the resoluteness that, in military life, almost invariably accompanies these qualifications. Armed for whatever might ensue, they kept steadily by me until we arrived at a sort of corridor, some distance from the extremity of which issued the tones of the same feminine voice, imploring mercy, in the Spanish tongue. Springing forward, my foot slipped into a pool of blood. Before I could recover, the door of the apartment whither we were hurrying opened, and two soldiers of my own company discharged their muskets at us, slightly wounding one of the gallant Scots. Intemperance had blinded the ruffians, and frustrated their murderous intentions. We felled them to the ground, and penetrated into the chamber.

The room wherein we stood had been devoted to the festivities of a retired family of moderate fortune. It contained the remains of those decent elegancies that properly appertain to the stranger's apartment in a dwelling of the middle class. Mutilated pictures, and fragments of expensive mirrors, strewed the floor, which was uncarpeted, and formed of different kinds of wood, curiously tessellated. An ebony cabinet, doubtless a venerable heir-loom, had suffered as if from the stroke of a sledge. An antique sideboard lay overturned; a torn mantilla dropped on a sofa, ripped, and stained with wine. The white drapery, on which fingers steeped in gore had left their traces, hung raggedly from the walls.

On investigation, the sergeants found the dead body of a domestic, whose fusil and dagger showed that he had fought for the roof that covered him. His beard had been burned, in derision, with gunpowder. One of his ears was cut off, and thrust into his mouth. In a garret recess, for the storage of fruit, two female servants were hidden, who could scarcely be persuaded that they had nothing to fear. Having flown thither at the approach of the ferocious intruders, they had suffered neither insult nor injury. They came to a room where I lingered over an object unconscious, alas! of my commiseration; and, in accents half choked by sobs, called upon Donna Clara. I pointed to the alcove where the heart broken lady had flung herself on the bleeding corpse of her grey-haired father. She, too, might have had a sheltering place, could her filial piety have permitted her to remain there when her high-spirited sire feebly strove to repel the violators of his hearth.

Master of a few Spanish phrases, I used them in addressing some words of comfort to the ill-starred girl. They were to her as the song of the summer-bird carolled to despair; her sole return was a faintly-recurring plaint, that seemed to say, 'Let my soul depart in peace.' I motioned to her attendants to separate her from the beloved source of her unutterable sorrow. They could not comply without the application of force approaching to violence. Bidding them desist, I signified a desire that they should procure some restorative. The sergeants withdrew. One of the women held the lamp; the other gently elevated her mistress's head. Kneeling by the couch in the alcove, I poured a little of the liquor in a glass, and applied it to her lips; then took it away, till I had concealed my uniform beneath the torn mantilla.

Affliction, thou hast long been my yoke-fellow; thou hast smitten the core of my being with a frequent and a heavy hand; but I bless an all-wise and all-merciful God, who tries that he may temper us, that I have not a second time been doomed to witness aught so crushing to the soul, so overwhelming in woe, as the situation of the young creature over whom I watched on the baleful night of our victory. She had baffled, with a might exceeding her sex's strength, against nameless indignities, and she bore the marks of the conflict. Her maiden attire was rent into shapelessness; her brow was bruised and swollen; her abundant hair, almost preternaturally black, streamed wildly over her bosom, revealing, in its interstices, froth waving streaks of crimson, which confirmed the tale of ultra-barbarian outrage. Her cheek had borrowed the same fatal hue from the neck of her slaughtered parent, to whom, in her sensibility, she clung with love strong as death.

Through the means adopted, she gave token of revival. Her hand had retained a small gold cross, and she raised it to her lips. The closed lids were slowly expanded from her large dark eyes; a low, agonizing moan followed. I hastened to present the wine. In the act, the mantilla fell from the arm which conveyed the glass; appallingly she shrieked—became convulsed—passed from fit to fit—expired!"

**THE LOVE OF CHRIST.**—The love of Christ extends through all lands and ages. It reaches persons in every condition of life. The monarch is not above, the beggar is not below it. The infant, expiring in the cradle, is not without its grasp; nor the hoary sinner tottering on the brink of the tomb. It descended, like the dew of Eden, upon our first parents, speedily after their apostasy. It travelled down through the antediluvian ages, until it entered the ark with Noah and his family, and accompanied them over the

ocean of destruction, to the mountains of Ararat. It wandered as a pilgrim with Abraham, and followed him from Chaldæa to the land of promise. It went down with Jacob and Joseph into Egypt, and returned again with Moses through the Red Sea and the wilderness to the same sequestered ground. It dwelt with the church in the Shechem, until the Babylonish captivity. With Daniel it entered the lion's den; and to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the caverns of the burning fiery furnace, appeared with celestial splendour, in the form of the Son of God. With the apostles, it preached through the Roman world the glad tidings of great joy, which were announced to all people; and proclaimed glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will towards men. From Asia it travelled into Europe; and even in the ages of darkness and superstition, found the cottage of piety and the cell of devotion, and sanctified them for its residence amid a world of corruption. At the Reformation, it lighted the flame of virtue on a thousand hills, and awakened hymns of transport and praise in all the valleys beneath them.

Dwight.

**A DEAD CALM.**—"On this occasion, Commodore Kennedy stated he had been once, for ten days, in so complete a calm, that the animalcules died, and the ocean exhaled from its bosom on all sides a most insufferable stench. Instances of this kind illustrate the utility and necessity of winds and the agitation of the seas: absolute calms, continued for any considerable period, in the winds or waves, would prove equally fatal to all manner of animal life. The respiration of all animals, whether this function be carried on by lungs or gills, or other organs, is essential to their being. Those living on land breathe the atmosphere, and rob it, at each inspiration, of a portion of oxygen, which principle is necessary to existence; those inhabiting the deep derive the same principle from the waters, though by different means; and in both cases, the air, or water, thus deprived of its vital principle, must be replaced by fresh supplies, or in a very short time all the oxygen in their vicinity is exhausted, and the animals, whether of sea or land must perish."—*Voyage Round the World*.

**DEW DROPS.**—A delicate child, pale and prematurely wise, was complaining, on a hot morning, that the poor dew drops had been hastily snatched away, and not allowed to glitter on the flowers like other happier dew-drops, that live the whole night through, and sparkle in the moonlight, and through the morning onwards to noonday. "The sun," said the child, "has chased them away with his heat, or swallowed them up in his wrath." Soon after came rain and a rainbow, where upon his father pointed upwards. "See," said he, "there stand the dew-drops, gloriously re-set—a glittering jewellery—in the heavens; and the clownish foot tramples on them no more. By this, my child, thou art taught that what withers upon earth blooms again in heaven." Thus the father spoke, and knew not that he spoke prefiguring words; for soon after, the delicate child, with the morning brightness of his early wisdom, was exhaled, like a dew-drop, into heaven.—*J. P. Richter*.

The beautiful system of sun, planets, and comets, could have its origin no other way than by the purpose and command of an intelligent and powerful Being. He governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as the lord of the universe. He is not only God, but Lord or Governor: we know him only by his properties and attributes, by the wise and admirable structure of things around us, and by their final causes; we admire him on account of his perfections, we venerate and worship him on account of his government.—*Sir Isaac Newton*.

Living in an age of extraordinary events and revolutions, I have learned from thence this truth, which I desire might thus be communicated to posterity; that all is vanity which is not honest, and that there is no solid wisdom but in real piety.—*Evelyn's Epitaph by himself*.

## SPIRITUAL NAVIGATION.

EVENTS are waves that still do onward roll,  
And Providence the guide that doth control;  
The ocean, life; the bark, the human soul;  
The Word of God, the chart by which to steer;  
Conscience, the watch on deck when danger's near;  
The rock traced clearly on the chart, is sin;  
Hope is the anchor, cast the veil within;  
The cable, the sure promises of God;  
The wake, the separate path by each one trod;  
Reason, the rudder; faith, the magnet true;  
And heaven the harbour to be kept in view;  
Jesus, as pilot, at the helm doth stand;  
The Spirit is the breeze that wafts to land;  
The sails to catch the breeze, the means of grace;  
The masts, occasions given for their embrace;  
Our days to number, is the log to heave;  
Our age, the rate of vessels through the wave;  
Life's pulse, the line the waters depth to find;  
The crew, the thoughts and feelings of the mind;  
The freight, of holy tempers, rich supplies,  
Intended for the market of the skies;  
Death, the last billow, soon to break on shore;  
Eternity, the coast, when time's no more.

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