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## Poetry.

### CONFESSIONS.

FROM THE MANUSCRIPT OF A SEXAGENARIAN.

Youth, when pen and fingers first  
Coined rhymes for all who chose to seek 'em,  
Learing hope's gay bubbles burst,  
Or Chitty was my sad success,  
By years had characterized my brow  
With the deep lines that well become it,  
I told me that warm hearts could grow  
Cold as Mount Blanc's snow covered summit;

Then my slow step and solemn wing  
Were staid and somewhat brisk;  
And velvet collars were "the thing,"  
And long before I wore a whisker;  
I had measured six feet two,  
I bought Havanas by the dozen,  
I was in love—as many do—  
I was an angel—hem—my cousin.

Then my eye, its furthering glance  
Came back on memory's short-hand record;  
Under—if by any chance  
Life's future page will be so cherished!  
I angel cousin!—ah! her form—  
Her lady brow—her curls of raven,  
So darker than the thunder storm,  
As lightnings flashing from their heaven.

My lip with music eloquent  
Was own grand upright piano;  
Never yet was Peri lent  
To us. Alike these, sweet Adriaan,  
My not—dare not—call to mind  
The joys that once my breast elated,  
My eye, methinks, the morning wind  
Sweeps o'er my ear, with thy types freighted;

And then I pause and turn aside  
From pleasure's throng of pangs-hearted,  
I sweep! No. Sentiment and pride  
Are by each other always thwarted!  
I was my hand upon my brow,  
To still the throbbing pulse that leaves it  
All my boyhood's fallow row,  
And marvel if she still believes it.

She is woman and her heart,  
She her tears' brightest jewel,  
I shed till kindled by some art,  
Then speechless burns—itsself its fuel—  
I say. Well! 't is pass,  
And those who list may yield it credit;  
I am for constancy, alas!  
I never know—I've only read it!

'T is a roving life, at most,  
The *carpe anna* of life's ocean;  
I flung through the storm, now lost—  
The trust, 't is true, was their devotion—  
I was a moored crew—  
I have my doubts, and it—believers,  
I am no faithless—where's the need  
Of flouncing all as gay deceivers!

And I loved. I did. But ours  
Was felt, not growled byna fashion!  
I wandered not at moonlight hours,  
I was dignity restrained passion;  
I loved—I never stooped to woo;  
I met—I always dodged my beaver;  
I smiled a careless "how d'ye do—  
Good morning, sir." I rose to leave her.

I loved—she never told me so;  
I never asked—I could not doubt it;  
There were signs on cheek and brow;  
I was asking! Love is known without it!  
I understood—we were content,  
I rode, and sung, and waltzed together!  
I was, without embarrassment,  
I talked of something—not the weather!

I rolled along—the parting hour  
With arrow speed brought his distresses,  
I was a miniature—a flower—  
I singlet from those raven tresses;  
The tears that would unhidion start,  
I saw perhaps, and they had perished.)  
I was chambers of my heart,  
I wore her image should be cherished.

I looked on perill—it has glared  
Fashionable forms upon me,  
I leveled aim—from weapon bared—  
I doctors three attending on me!  
I never did my sternness wane  
I sang by shot or steel imparted.  
I recall that hour of pain  
I years of bliss—it passed—we parted.

I parted—though her tear-gummed cheeks,  
I leaving breast had this unnamed  
I forgot me in three weeks!  
I other beauties soon trepanned me.  
I did not find it hard  
I overbelming tide to another—  
I was a "Mrs." on my end,  
I she—was married to another

## ROT YOUR ITALIANOS!

BY A MAN BEHIND HIS AGE.

(From *Blackwood's Magazine*.)

"Rot your Italianos! for my part I loves a simple ballad!" At the risk of being excommunicated from civilized society for the next twenty years, I honor the memory of the country mayors, who gave vent to her outrageous nationality in that most passionate and unspiculated ejaculation. The spirit which gave birth to it was British to the backbone—a despiser of fashions, and a hater of Frenchmen. I can picture her to my mind's eye, seated by the side of her magisterial spouse on the front bench in the Town Hall, glorious in crimson velvet and orange trimmings, majestic in feathers and furbeles, pre-eminent in paste, and magnificent in mosaic gold—listening with open mouth and kindling eye, to the "uprilled strain" of some one of those great metropolitan stars, which every now and then descend to shoot like meteor through our rural hemisphere, to turn the leads and empty the pockets of the wondering leges by their "most sweet voices." I can fancy her speechless astonishment at the first sound of the unknown tongue upon her unprepared ear—her glance of dignified expostulation at the unbecoming man of semiquavers—and, finally, her indignation at the audacity which offers such an insult to her understanding, bursting forth, uncontrolled and uncontrollable, in that most energetic of anathemas—"Rot your Italianos!"

How far my taste and that of the worthy lady in question might coincide in the selection of our "simple ballads," I cannot of course presume to decide; but, however we might happen to differ in the application, in principle we are one—Rot your Italianos!—give me something I can understand.

I shall never forget the first time I ever went to the Italian Opera. Indeed, her Majesty's Theatre (alas that the theatre, *par excellence* of the Theatre, should be the only theatre in London where her Majesty's mother tongue is never spoken) was the first playhouse in which I ever set my foot, and my anticipations were magnificent—though to attempt to describe them, after Charles Lamb's delightful account of a similar speech in his existence, would be worse than idle. Tap, tap, tap, went the conductor's baton, and crash went the whole orchestra at once;—but what was the overture to one whose eyes were riveted upon the curtain, and whose whole soul was wrapt in expectation of the wonders it concealed? I have listened with delight since then to many a noble overture; but at that moment, had it been an angel's lyre, as far as I was concerned, its strings would have been swept unheeded. To me the play, and the play only, was the attraction—of course I need not say that of the nature of an opera I had but a very imperfect conception. I knew that there would be a good deal of singing, but I had no notion there was to be nothing else; and I knew also that I should not understand the language to be spoken; but I thought that if the performance were but true to nature, I might be able, at any rate, to make a tolerably good guess at what was going on, and I pleased myself not a little by the anticipation of my own success in this conjectural species of interpretation. Well, the overture, endless though it seemed, nevertheless gave the lie to appearances, and ended at last. Up went the curtain—and behold! a gentleman with an unexceptionable moustache, and a spick-and-span new suit of "complete steel," amusing his self with parading backwards and forwards before a castle gate only covered with ivy, and chanting at the top of his voice, in what Hamlet calls "a very choice Italian." Now I, knowing nothing in the world of "that soft bastard Latin," and not being beforehand acquainted with the details of the story to be enacted, very naturally concluded, from the armor and uplifted voice, that the worthy gentleman—for he was too smart for a warden—was somebody or other of moderate personal courage, who was supposed to be going about his business in a neighborhood of indifferent reputation, and singing as he went, either to let any lurking clerk of St. Nicholas under-

stand that he was by no means timorous, or, for the old classical reason, because he happened to have no superfluity of broad pieces in his breeches pocket, and consequently nothing to apprehend. As I afterwards learned, I never was more mistaken in my life—but that is anticipating. Well, after a proper quantity of walking, and ditto of singing, enter on the opposite side another gentleman, (whom, for the sake of perspicuity, I will call No. 2,) with a drawn sword and an inflamed countenance. Suddenly perceiving Gentleman No. 1, he stops, and thunders forth three lines of double bass, to which the individual so addressed responds in twice as many of counter-tenor, drawing his weapon also at the close of the sixth; whereupon Gentleman No. 2 turns his back unceremoniously upon Gentleman No. 1, and fortifies his spirits with a considerable quantity of gesticulation, and a trifle more of the double-bass. As it was now pretty evident that he was working himself up into a very murderous disposition towards Gentleman No. 1, I was delighted to observe the Christian forbearance of the latter individual, in not taking advantage of so favorable an opportunity for smiting Gentleman No. 2 under the fifth rib at once; but I suppose that he, like a swan, had a sort of presentiment of his approaching latter end, and was determined to have another song before he took his departure: for when Gentleman No. 2 had ceased, and was most heroically "winking and holding out his iron" before his eyes, he very composedly treated us to another five minutes, in a somewhat more warlike key; and then at it they went like a couple of gamecocks, till the predestined Gentleman No. 1 received a lunge in tierce, which I thought must have most actually and immediately given him his quietus. But no—rearing himself on his elbow, and fixing on Gentleman No. 2 a glance of the most withering scorn and intense detestation, he spake once again, and to my extreme astonishment, like Southey's Enchantress, "still his speech was song."—clear, loud, sustained, "as though he felt no wound," until suddenly the uplifted voice and body fell together, and the unfortunate Gentleman No. 1 breathed his last in B flat.

I would go on to tell how these came on a "fayre lady," weeping and wailing, and tearing her "lang, lang yellow hair," and how she knelt by the side of the defunct Gentleman No. 2, and how she endeavored to recall what the newspapers denominated "the vital spark," by a tremura of a quarter of an hour's duration; and how an elderly gentleman, with a cracked voice and cranium to match, which latter was his only excuse for not knowing better, made dishonorable proposals to the said fair one, in a very long-winded solo for a Sexagenarian; and how, after much sorrow and trouble, the lady, towards the middle of the third act, after singing a passionate song over a small phial of poison, swallowed the contents at a gulp; and how the audience were treated to a specimen of an Italian coronach by fifteen young maidens, all with tresses carefully dishevelled, and as many serving-men in disordered liveries, headed by a Corypheus in the person of the aforementioned old gentleman, by this time driven by remorse into a state of "very midsummer madness." But I should seem as one that mocketh to many a worthy and simple-minded country cousin, and I forbear. I have never been to the Italian C. 3 from that day to this. I look upon it as the greatest outrage to common sense that ever was perpetrated. I regard a ballet with a far more lenient, and even favorable eye. The ballet is a great philosophical experiment to ascertain the maximum degree of indecency which the eye of the most moral public is able to endure without finching; but which, alas! seems destined, like too many meritorious undertakings, never to accomplish its object. My friend the mayors would doubtless have preferred an old-fashioned "threesome reel" to all the elegant improprieties of the "poetry of dancing."

Honestly and seriously, it gives me more pleasure to hear even a street organ play a simple old English air, than it would to occupy the very choicest stall in the whole Italian

Opera House; and yet (though I fear I shall provoke nearly as many sneers as I shall have readers) I claim to be counted among the lovers of music. The dramatic part of the business to me is so irresistibly ludicrous, that the beauty of the music (and far be it from me to deny that of Italy its due share) is lost and gone in the utter absurdity of the *tout ensemble*. I cannot yield myself to any illusion at a spectacle so unnatural. I can no more sympathize with a hero who lives, loves, eats, drinks, fights, and dies singing, than I can sympathize, like the *Morning Herald*, (admirable an editor though he be,) with a condemned murderer. I know many a sweet air, from many an opera; which I can drink in, again and again, with ever fresh delight; but it must not be within the walls of a theatre; there must be no tinsel and trappings—no footlights and finery—the air, the whole air, and nothing but the air—no "chromatic tortures" of "quaint recitativos";—and then I will sit and cry—"Play on—let me have more of it!" till the fair fingers of the minstrel grow weary of their task, and the silvery voice pleads their excuse so sweetly, that the melody of air is forgotten in that of nature.

A theatre is not, to my thinking, the proper place for vocal music; or, perhaps, if may be, nearer the truth to say that vocal music is, for the most part, so awkwardly introduced in our drama, that I am apt unthinkingly to find fault with the practice, instead of finding my censure to its abuse. Nine-tenths of the songs which we hear upon the stage are so lugged in by the head and shoulders, that we cannot be surprised if they suffer from the operation. People in plays sing, for the most part, exactly when nobody in his senses would dream of their being musical. Companies of handiit rove about, shouting out a chorus which cannot by any possibility fail to betray their wretchedness; young gentlemen, head over ears in love, chant beneath their mistresses' window with a strength of lungs which must infallibly awaken the most morose and somnolent of papas; and wicked little songsters display their vocal powers in the drawing room, at the imminent risk of being served out of the house, at a minute's warning, by their justly infuriated "misses."

To be continued.

DIVING FOR TRUTH.—It is related of the African—Joseph—the leader of the slaves in the insurrection, on board the *Amistad*, that, at one time he wanted the vessel anchored at sea, when the wind was ahead. He was told there was no bottom; he told them, to let the anchor go; then seeing the schooner drifting, he jumped overboard and was under so long they thought he would never rise, but he at last appeared, came on board, and said there was no bottom to be found. All the negroes of the sea coast of Africa are excellent swimmers, indeed they may almost be called amphibious. They are often employed in searching after anchors, from which the cables have parted, and the depth to which they can dive and the length of time they can remain under, the surface of the water is almost incredible.—*Boston Transcript*.

"Do you take a newspaper, neighbour?"  
"Yes." "What one?" "I take all I can lay my hands on."

An old New Hampshire Deacon used to say his wife had a certain recipe for testing the quality of indigo. It was to fill a milk-pail with pure water, and to sift some indigo on the surface; if the indigo was good, it would either sink or swim—she could tell which.—*N. O. Picayune*.

Nonchalance.—We saw a fine fellow yesterday call for "gin and bitters," when the bar-keeper told him to pay up his old score first. "Why, Mike," said the fellow, "if I owe you anything I'll drink it out with you—*Id*."

A GOOD UN.—A wag, after reading the statement that the State Prison in Connecticut produced a profit to the State of about \$5080 per annum, recommended that all the citizens of the State be imprisoned on speculation.

Cash is worth one per cent a month in Texas.