

A TALE OF THE FAIRY VALLEY.

(Translated from the Irish.)

One eye of late, as the sun's last ray
Had lit the distant horizon gray,
Down yon lonely valley I chanced to go
Where the mingling streamlets in silence flow.

I gazed awhile on that pleasant scene,
On the gloomy groves of that valley green,
When from the waters before my sight
Rose, in fairy splendour, a spirit bright.

Scarcely had I glanced at the charmer fair,
When I sunk enraptured in magic's snare;
And in that swoon my last breath should take
Did enchanted music not me awake.

On the snowy breast of that ghastly fair
Hung her waiving tresses of golden hair,
And on her arm a lyre that gave
Vibrations such as would rouse the grave.

With form angelic she then did glide
To where I lay, o'er the river's side,
And on a bough that beside me hung
The lyre did lay with its chords well-strung.

Then fast regaining her former track,
O'er the sparkling waters she hurried back;
And all that lone night re-echoed long
The soul of sweetness in fairy song.

As often as on the lyre I gazed
A blush of gladness her features blazed,
While shrill resounding her accents wild
Bespoke her nature's celestial child.

Sang, but to sweeten the desert air,
Was the "chord sheet" of this charmer fair;
For the veil of anguish was o'er her drawn
When the woodland night-bird announced the dawn.

She fiercely darted across the stream,
To "scape the rays of the morning beam;
And wildly seizing the lyre she gave
A shriek and dashed it into the wave.

The golden ringlets that flowed so fair
Hung now a mass of dishevelled hair,
And oh! it grieves me while this I tell
The words of pain from her lips that fell.

"Ah! woe betide, why did I dare
This weary night on the waves to roam?
'Twas that I thought you would pity take
And with one sound my enchantment break.

"For, had you touched but a single string
Of that bright lyre, a sweet tune would ring;
The lands of magic would but have flown,
And I should ever have been your own."

Then slowly turning to the wave,
That opened like a yawning grave,
"Adieu, adieu, now ye waves close o'er"
She said and vanished for evermore.

And here sweet music is heard at dawn,
Resounding far through the wooded lawn;
And travellers oft are surprised to view
Whence come the strange words—*adieu, adieu*.

* This affords a fair specimen of some of the desultory, superstitious "rhymes" among the lower Irish; the original style and rhythm are retained, and the words are, as nearly as possible, verbatim translations.

† Chord sheet or enchanted song, the Irish tell us, is frequently heard in lonely valleys, dark groves and other places supposed to be haunted by an invisible genii, the *Banshees*, or by the disembodied spirits of the dead.

"D. SNOY."

A PATTI CONCERT.

BY OCTAVIA HENSEL.

Spring showers were softly falling over the woodlands and moistening the mossy pathways of the Gradiua in the little town of Czernowitz, the capital of the once crownland of Beekowina. Sparrows were hopping over the wet grass, and swallows, flying low, were hiding in the rock-eries near the lake, storks stood pensively gazing across the green waters which sparkled with flash of emerald as the crystal rain-drops fell upon its placid bosom. "And will these showers never cease?" asked the prima donna, letting down the window of the coroneted carriage in which she was slowly driving along the lovely avenues of the garden, the fashionable resort of the citizens in springtime, before summer days called them to their castle homes in the mountains.

"Yes, after our concerts are over and we are on our way back to Paris," slowly replied a young gentleman lounging on the seat before her, his head resting on the satin cushions of the carriage, whose dark purple hue made the death-like pallor of his face and the hectic flush on his cheek most startling.

The prima donna laughed, exclaiming, "Courage, mon ami, you speak in desponding tone, as if rain would interfere with a concert of mine in this God-forsaken corner of the world. Ah! there is a gleam of sunshine," and she pointed down a vista of poplar trees. Another carriage rapidly approached. "The rest of our company! Sivori and Ritter as I live!" she cried, "and they are braving the showers too." She waved her kerchief and the landau drew up beside the covered carriage.

"Call this pleasure! Ugh!" and Camillo Sivori drew up the folds of a richly embroidered carriage rug over his knees.

"It is the only way in which I've taken a drop of water for a year," said Theodore Ritter. "I wish it would rain a little of the 'Burgundy' for which I am longing."

"Go back to the hotel and ask my maid for some, I have at least three bottles left in my trunk."

"You travel with 'Burgundy' in your trunk?" questioned a lady beside her, "when Austria, Hungary and Moldavia, countries through which you have journeyed, are famed for their vintage?"

"But Burgundy is the only wine for meats; Margaux, Lafitte, Latour will do when you are no longer hungry, but think of Tokai with the roasts of venison and wild boar, which we must swallow in this land!"

"I had pigeons for lunch," said Sivori, "pigeons on toast, good, too."

The prima donna shook her head, a look of disgust on her face, "there is too much dirt in Moldavia to fatten pigeons for my palate, the wretched birds would leave a handful of corn for a choice bit of offal any moment, and in this land—quelle horreur to think of it!"

"But the wild pigeons from the mountains," persisted her companion, "I assure you they are good, you'll have some this evening at supper."

"No I'll not. I have declined going. I have sufficiently honored his 'Excellency' by using his carriage for my daily drive, you need not tell him that, however, for I said in my note to him that I was not feeling well, and had begged you to come to my room after the concert, where I hope to receive a few friends."

"And have something to eat?" questioned Ritter.

"Oh the p-i-g" (spelling the word in a whisper to the lady), as the carriages drove slowly onward, "he thinks of nothing but his appetite."

"And yet can play Mendelssohn's 'Rondo Capriccioso' as he played it last night?" questioned the lady.

"That is easy enough to understand," replied the pale young gentleman, who was no other than Kapellmeister Metzendorf. "That is easy to understand. In the first andante movement he remembers he is before an audience, and he throws his whole soul into his music, then he rushes through the presto leggiero superbly, just because as soon as it is over he knows he'll go home to supper, that's the secret of his playing in this country at least, where we have been almost starved, out of sheer inability to swallow the dishes of a Moldavian cuisine."

"Pauvre ami," said the prima donna; "I wonder is that the cause of your increasing weakness and cough? Thank God we are going home to-morrow."

"I was not thinking of myself when I spoke, you have procured everything and more than I needed, but I too am glad we begin our homeward journey to Paris to-morrow. I have been such a care to you, you have been mother and sister both during my illness which has increased ever since our tour began."

"I like you, my dear child, no one accompanies me as you do, with you I can sing as I please, perfectly confident you'll uphold me; oh, how sorry I am that you have not been able to accompany me for the past week. Just think," she said, turning to the lady beside her, "some days I have had to practice with local accompanists half the morning in order to get through the evening programme respectfully."

"Why will not Ritter accompany you?" asked her friend.

"Oh, he likes to smoke his cigarette between his numbers; sometimes he doesn't like my selections, sometimes he is cross and disoblige, especially when I want him to be nice and agreeable."

"You should not tell me these tales out of school," said the lady laughing; "I am not in the charmed circle of the profession."

"It is your own fault then; you might be."

"That is much for you to say, Carlotta, I appreciate it coming from you."

"Yes, I presume my dictum is most assuring," said the artist, trying to look consequential. "Heaven knows I am bored enough sometimes with aspiring vocalists who persist in showing me the charms of their voices and screech me nearly mad with their amateurish howls!"

"My dear you are dreadful on poor teachers and amateurs."

"No, I'm not; I'm 'dreadful' only on conceited ones, and they crop up everywhere. Teachers and amateurs of real merit seldom sing for me; when they do, it is a sincere pleasure. Oh, I remember well when I was earning my bread by teaching singing in New York, how kind Moreau Gottschalk was to me; how he urged and insisted I should give up the life of slavery that teaching is, and engaged me for his concert tour of the West. I pity teachers too much to be 'dreadful' as you call it, but wealthy amateurs, who think money can buy and impart a musical education—I have no patience with them! Come, let us go home, you must direct the coachman, his Moldavian dialect is beyond me."

The great circular Ringplatz brightly lighted before the Hotel zum Schwarzenadler was filled with carriages driving rapidly into the stone-paved hotel court, in the upper portion of which building the concert hall, Adlersaal, was rapidly filling with an audience eager to welcome the prima donna, Carlotta Patti, and the artists of her troupe. Among them was Theodore Ritter, with his wondrous technique, his flashing arpeggios, rippling triplets and thunderous octaves; Camillo Sivori, whose violin wailed or laughed just as the artist willed, the even delicacy of the tones he drew with his diamond-pointed bow from a superbly mellow stradivarius were almost human-voiced in their passionate appeal. Filled at last, "almost to suffocation," the hall resounded with low hum of conversation. It was more like a ball-room than a concert hall; gentlemen in evening dress moved from sofa to sofa of the cercles, complimenting the beautiful Moldavian women, who in exquisite Parisian toilets fanned themselves and

toyed with their bouquets in the languid saloon style of the "grande damen" they were. Chairs of all sorts and sizes, even rude benches, had been pressed into service, for a Patti concert was an unheard of event in this little crownland, and the managers knew that the hall would be crowded.

At a little before eight o'clock Ritter reached the reception-room where the artists assembled. "You are late," said Sivori, who was to play the Chopin polonaise for violin and piano with him; "the audience cannot be kept waiting any longer—allons."

"Attendez," said Patti, "wait until Veronique gets to her place in the circle, now go—and do not make me laugh," she said, turning to the lady who had accompanied her in her afternoon drive, and playfully pushing her toward the side entrance to the concert hall below the stage; "I feel like laughing and anything sets me off when in such a nervous state. My best effort to-night will be the 'Bolero,' composed for me by Ritter, and which he himself accompanies; so listen and enjoy."

"If you sing it as well as the one from the 'Vépres Siciliennes' you gave us last night, it will be delicious."

"Flattense," she said, tossing her pretty head and putting her lips up as if for a kiss—"no don't," she added, "I'm gotten up for the footlights. Isn't my dress lovely, but now go, come to my room after the concert."

The dress was indeed lovely, dark Prussian blue velvet, heavily embroidered in dark blue pearls, with here and there a spray of diamonds glittering with prismatic fire. Ornaments of diamonds and sapphires on neck and arms, with diamond aigrettes in her black hair, completed the regal splendor of Carlotta's presence. She sang as the Patti's always sing—simply, unaffectedly, with faultless method and most intelligent phrasing. Round after round of applause greeted and recalled her, and when the prelude to the Bendalari laughing-song began, another round of applause greeted this most celebrated of Patti's encores. As she started off in this little trick-of-art song, Patti glanced at Veronique, who was sitting beside a sedate old gentleman of most ancient Boyar descent, a man who rarely, if ever, laughed; once indeed he had reproved Veronique for laughing, when forgetting she was in Moldavia she had carelessly indulged in what is termed in German, "bau-ern müll gelächter," but in English might be described as "an unaffected hearty laugh." The old count had said in most sarcastic tones, "gentlefolks never laugh aloud, peasants only do that, I am shocked at you, Madame."

Madame had told Patti of this and as the friends glanced at each other Patti seemed to know by instinct that the solemnly dignified old nobleman was the one who had reproved Veronique. On him she fixed her eyes, to him she drew the attention of the circle, at him she sent her merry trills of laughter, for him she exerted, with magnetic power, all the mischievous merriment of her nature, and when his stern features somewhat relaxed she gave him such a comical look of surprise that his innate sense of the ridiculous could stand it no longer, and quite forgetting that the nobility never laugh he indulged in the heartiest fit of *bauern gelächter* he had ever enjoyed in his life. In vain the lady beside him reminded him that such loud mirth was unseemly, for once his life he thoroughly enjoyed himself.

A very simple supper of broiled chickens, salad and light Roumanian wines awaited Patti and a few invited guests in the parlor of this artist. Ritter glanced at the table. "Nothing here tempts me," he said, "we are invited elsewhere, and being hungry and tired we are going; come Sivori!"

The violinist raised his eyes languidly and replied:—"No, I'm going to try a bottle of Bordeaux with my chicken if I can get it; then to bed to dream with delight of my joyous departure from this fog end of creation."

"They appreciated you well this evening," said Veronique.

"Ah, applause is nothing worth outside Paris."

"Then you had best remain there, but if you do not care for applause, perhaps Roumania's gold ducats are as good as Parisian francs," suggested one of the guests.

With true artist scorn the violinist glanced at the speaker and turning on his heel walked directly out of the room, muttering, "gold, outside of civilization is of no use."

"He is cross, let him go," said Patti, summoning her friends to table.

Guests who had called to be presented to the artist now took their leave and others whom Patti had invited to sup with her, seeing themselves deprived of Ritter and Sivori, said good night, leaving only a partie-carrée at the table.

Such a quartette never met at a table in Moldavia before, perhaps never will again. Ah, if, as a clever Frenchman writes:—"Rien ne fait paraître l'avenir couleur de rose comme de la regarder à travers un verre de chambertin." If this be true of the future, it is still truer of the past. Château Margaux will never fail to recall, to four people at least, that supper in the diva's parlor. The most witty stories, the latest Parisian bons mots, told by the artist with inimitable mimicry will rise to memory tinged with the rich hue of the ruby wine, while its aroma of southern vineyards will bring the delicate perfume of the floral trophies Patti had that evening won, and if life ever seems "un chapelet de petites misères," they have the assurance that

"Rien n'est plus doux que le souvenir du bon-heur."

THE CEDAR CABINET.

AN AUCTIONEER'S STORY.

As I was making into lots some goods in the auction room a sad looking lady came in and looked anxiously around. "I am looking for a cedar cabinet," said the lady, gently, "which was among the articles I parted with to Clutchem and Keep, and am told it was sent here for sale. I wish to redeem it at any price—"

She stooped suddenly as she saw my face change.

A cedar cabinet!

I remembered it at once. The hurt on my hand recalled it, also that it had been labelled for that day's sale.

She grew frightened at my hesitation. "Do not say that it is gone," she cried, rising quickly, and grasping my arm. "Oh, God would not so afflict me! Look, look everywhere for it, I beg, I pray you."

Her hand shook so on my arm that I could feel the quivering of her thin fingers.

I tried to think to whom I had sold a cabinet that day; then it flashed on me that there had not been one in the catalogue.

Had I made a mistake and sent it away with the bric-a-brac lot? If so, it could be recovered. I felt glad for my error, but the poor little woman mistook my silence, and broke down completely, sobbing so pitifully that I knew then that some great cause was hidden beneath her desire to reclaim the old cabinet.

"It is more to me than life or death," she cried out passionately, looking straight before her. "It means my children's honour. Listen, and you will be influenced by my great need to find this cabinet for me. I believe it contains the certificate of my marriage and my children's baptism, without which I cannot lay claim to my husband's estate in France. It is not the money I want," she added, with proud spirit, "I cannot bear to touch that; but my children shall not be robbed of the right to their father's name."

She paused to look at me. I felt as if a severe tension upon her nerves had given way at last, and crushed by her fear of the cabinet being lost to her, her silence and reserve had broken down, and that she appealed to me unconsciously in her need.

The shadowy pageant passed to and fro across the mirror, and as she went on passionately with her story, it seemed to me I saw the whole sad episode pass in review on the dim surface.

Fifteen years ago my husband deserted me. Evil influences led him astray, and while for my children's sake I would have pardoned him, I never saw him again or heard one word from him until I learned through the paper that he was dead, and had left an estate to his wife and children.

"I could not grieve, except that he had died in his sin, unforgiven by me. I was poor, for he left me only the household furniture, and I have toiled all these years to maintain my children. So, for their sakes, I applied to a lawyer to obtain possession of the estate."

"Oh, the shame, the despair, of finding another claimant in France to my children's name and honour."

"I must prove our claim as wife and children," said the careful French lawyer, 'by the production of the marriage and baptismal certificates!'

"And I knew not where they were!"

"The minister was dead, the witnesses gone I knew not where."

"I felt as if my carelessness had dishonoured my children, and for days could get no relief from horrible anxiety, until by a flash, as from heaven, I remembered that I had placed the certificate with other papers in the old cabinet that I had parted with to Clutchem and Keep. I went to them; they had sent it here for sale, and now you—"

She broke down with a moan of despair. It was more than I could stand. That cry and the pitiful story forced me into action at once.

"You shall have the cabinet, madam," I said solemnly, as if devoting my life to its search.

"Oh, sir, you will do a noble deed if you but find it for me," she cried, gratefully, looking at me with beaming eyes.

Her face looked to me as if a halo came over it, and I dimly felt why I had stood bare-headed before her. Truly I had stood in death's presence—the death of hope and love in this poor woman's life—the requiem of gladness and impulse.

She left me with a hopeful smile, taking my hand with a pretty grace, and I watched her, in the mirror, go down the shadowy room into the sunlight of the street, and the shadows seemed to fall from her for ever.

I telegraphed the bric-a-brac firm. They had the cabinet, and returned it at once; so that before many days the little nervous fingers were searching in the presence of the lawyer and myself, for the precious papers.

She found them! I shall never forget her face when she held them up. The halo was there, as she said, so softly. "Thank God!"

Baron Albert de Rothschild has been entertaining a select party of shooters at his Château Bensechau in Silesia. Among the distinguished circle figured Chevalier Caroli, Count Duchatel, Count de la Rochefoucauld, Count Kilmansegge, Chevalier de Kopack, &c. The result of three days' hard work was 1,950, a number that included 1,650 pheasants and 300 hares, without reckoning small stoters.