

## MY NEIGHBOUR'S WIFE.

BY FREDERICK LOCKER.

Hark! Hark to my neighbor's flute!  
You powder'd slave, that ox, that ass are his.  
Hark to the wheezy pipe; my neighbor is  
A worthy sort of brute.

My tuneful neighbor's rich—has houses, lands,  
A wife—(confound his flute—a handsome wife!)  
Her love must give a gusto to his life.  
See yonder—there she stands.

She turns, she gazes, she has lustrous eyes,  
A throat like Juno, and Aurora's arms—  
Per Bacco, what a paragon of charms!  
My neighbor's drawn a prize.

Yet, somehow, life's a nuisance with its woes,  
Sin and disease—and that eternal preaching.  
We've suffered from our early pious teaching—  
We suffer—goodness knows.

How vain the wealth that breeds its own vexation,  
Yet few appear to care to quite forego it!  
Then weariness of life (and many know it)  
Isn't a glad sensation!

And, therefore, neighbor mine, without a sting  
I contemplate thy fields, thy house, thy flocks;  
I covet not thy man, thine ass, thine ox.  
Thy flute, thy—anything.

## ANGELA'S PRAYER.

BY LYNN WOOD.

I.

It is night in the streets of a fair Italian city and the lonely queen of night is passing gently as a pure and sorrowful lady over the sleeping heedless children of the South, casting a veil of obscurity over all that is unlovely, and arraying in snowy vestiture the tall shafts and broad walls of marble that rise here and there, quivering and spectral, from a bed of darkness.

The great bell of the cathedral sounds forth one solemn quavering note into the still blue night. The sick and the watchful mark the iron tones, and pine at the leaden feet of Time. Sweet sleep, the boon so freely bestowed on the thousands around, is not for them. Lagging lovers, homeward returning, chide the clanging voice which records the swift passing of those precious scanty hours, fleeting as minutes, to their charmed hearts.

At the base of a broad flight of white steps a young man stands, holding in a parting embrace a beautiful girl, whose dark upturned eyes receive in languid acquiescence the passionate gaze of her supporter. Again and again he presses her to his bosom, ere with a sudden effort she springs from his arms, and, tripping lightly up the steps, is lost from his transfixed gaze in the darkness of the portico. The closing of a heavy door disturbs for a moment the sleeping echoes, and the young man turns upon his heel, and paces slowly down the narrow street, casting many a backward glance at the massive insensible walls which so effectually guard his precious jewel. This street led into a wide piazza, on one side of which rose the noble pillared façade of the beautiful theatre. One hour since the piazza swarmed with the gay and noisy throngs which poured into it, like tumbling waters, from the enormous building. Snatches of melody and fleeting gusts of choruses rise now and again into the clear night air, intermingled with bursts of merry and mischievous laughter and the continuous buzz of many wagging tongues. Now solemn silence reigns, and the great theatre sleeps wrapped about in a broad cloak of shadow. Now methinks might the fairy world have deserted itself in mazy dances, fearless of human interlopers about the glorious statue of Apollo, which graced the centre of the piazza, bathed in the fullest splendour of the moonlight. Answering beams appeared to stream from the kingly countenance of the god, lending to it a semblance of life that was at once beautiful and fearful. In such guise did it present itself to a pale slender girl who crouched, scarcely perceptible, at its feet. The poor upturned face which Beauty had passed by wore an expression of utter dejection most mournful to behold. The grinding hand of poverty had no part in this, as her rich, though quiet, attire testified. She rises, and fixing her gaze on the statue, says, in low moaning tones.

"Knowest thou not that I am Angela, poor silly Angela, thou beauteous one, that thou lookest with such gracious eyes upon me? Other men look and smile and jest with me, poor silly Angela, as with one who is without the pale of womanhood. And why? Because I am not handsome as my sister Sylvia. Because I cannot charm them with sweet songs as she does. Because I cannot smile and jest and laugh as she does. Yet am I not a woman, O thou beauteous one? Could I not love as other maidens love? Ay, thou knowest! From henceforth I am thine! Thou art not light and scornful with me, like to other men, or to my sister Sylvia. Thou wilt love the poor outcast Angela whom they despise."

As the sad girl spoke these words she flung her arms about the feet of the god, and knelt there in prostration.

"Long have I prayed the blessed Virgin for the power to sing, even as my sister Sylvia sings; but she hears me not. Thou, thou canst bestow that gift! Thou shalt, or I will never rise again!"

Now did the dark Italian eyes lose their languor and blaze with the intensity of the passion which wrung her slender frame and caused her to tremble from head to foot. Was it not sufficient to animate even the cold marble? What is it she sees and hears that causes her to rise

with a wild articulation, and clasp her hands upon her bosom with a fervid violence that bruises the tender flesh?

The strains of a love-ditty, sung in a high tenor voice by some one at no great distance, warned Angela to forsake her shrine and flee. Scarcely, however, had she departed six paces from the statue when, in her heedless haste, she fell into the hands of the man whom she would escape.

"Well, my pretty-night-bird, hast thou found a nest?"

"O Antonio, is it thou?"

"Angela! What, Angela!" exclaimed in his turns the gay Antonio, as he withdrew his arms from about the trembling girl. "Is it well done," he continued in reproving tones, "for a young girl to wander at large these dangerous hours of night?"

"Nay, dear Antonio, fear not for me. Who will molest the poor Angela?" and she laughed a low secret laugh. "Give thee good-night, dear Antonio." Like a shadow the girl flitted noiselessly across the piazza, and was lost in the darkness of a narrow street.

II.

Signor Antonio conceived extremely well of himself as he lounged luxuriously in the *impresario's* chair. Had not the great singer departed for England, that foggy home of wealth, and did not Antonio reign in his stead? Therefore in every sip of his matutinal chocolate he sucked satisfaction, and in every whiff of his cigarette blew blessings on that careless light-hearted Italian world, with whom he so sympathized, who acquiesced so heartily in him, their illustrious first tenor.

Leisurely and daintily he looked through his correspondence, making here and there a careless note for the guidance of his writer. At length, over a blank sheet, the delicate white hand lingered, and with many a hasty erasure, and many a contemplative perusal of the painted ceiling, he traced the following lines:

"O Sylvia, by thy soft dark eyes  
Antonio lives, Antonio dies:  
Held ever captive by one tress  
Of the silken loveliness."

In vain he gnawed the luckless quill; the Muses were refractory. His roving glance now fell upon a white scarf that lay neglected at his feet. He raised it with tender enthusiasm to his lips, exclaiming, "How earnest thou to fall so low, my precious relic? Would not my gracious little saint recall her favour if she knew how it lay neglected on the floor?" Again and again he bathed his face in the soft whiteness, and thus relieved the feelings he was unable to pour out in verse. Antonio's passionate phase gradually calmed, and he at last found himself gazing with an intensely absorbed air at the bottom of the bit of porcelain, from which he had drained the last drop of chocolate, his mind being engaged in endeavouring to elucidate the, to him, very unpleasant phenomenon of Sylvia having such a sister as Angela. "If we but knew how to dispose of the poor thing, I might this night hold their matchless sister in my arms. What greater delight does this bright world contain? A dewy light was in his eyes, and he roved in that paradise, indeed, albeit yeleft the fool's. A tap on the door from without, and the quick paternal wish caused the colour to mount and the eyes to brighten and the ready voice to utter blithely,

"Enter, and right welcome, my Syl—"

"It is but poor Angela, Signor Antonio. Forgive me if I intrude. Sister Sylvia hath sent me to thee with a message."

"Still art thou welcome, Sylvia's sister. Say, quickly, what commands hath she to her slave?"

"She craves the deputy *impresario's* forgiveness that she is unable to come herself this morning, as she promised yesternight."

"What hindereth, my Angela?"

"Sister Sylvia is indisposed, and fears she will be unable to sing to-night."

"Indisposed! Not sing to-night! Maria Madre!" Antonio's countenance expressed the wildest consternation. Here was a pretty beginning. Truly an *impresario* lies not on a bed of roses.

He exclaimed, not to Angela in particular, but taking every article in the room to witness.

"Is not this distraction? How shall I find a substitute for my peerless *prima donna* in less than eight hours withal? The town will be in an uproar."

"Be not troubled, good Antonio," said Angela in quiet assuring tones, even as one who speaks the words of truth and soberness; "I will sing for Sister Sylvia this night."

Antonio answered, with a gentle smile,

"Ay, my poor Angela, thou wilt sing as thy sister Sylvia sings, and this night also, if this night the all-wise God seeth fit to make good thy baptismal name."

Angela also smiled, and as gently.

"That may be; and blessed be God and the Mother of God if it be. Yet will I sing before thee—even as my sister Sylvia sings—this night."

Antonio gazed in amazement at the insignificant little woman's form as, with a slight inclination of the head, she glided from his presence. Poor fellow! He was not accustomed to the vicissitudes and cares of office. The previous night he had left his Sylvia apparently in perfect health, the fairest thing beneath the moon; and lo, in the morning comes this little dark bird of ill-omen, with its bit of bad news and crazy consolation. One thing must be done,

and that at once—namely, to see or hear from Sylvia herself what the probabilities were of her appearance this night. Accordingly he dashed off, and was met in the portico of her dwelling by her attendant, who handed him a little scented capricious note, stating, with many protestations of regret, his mistress's utter inability to appear. This was conclusive. The next thing to be done was to pour his grief lavishly, and with much passionate gesticulation, into the ears of his many sympathisers, and to telegraph to a brother *impresario* at Rome to rescue him, for the love of Heaven, from his difficulty, and send him the first *prima donna* he could lay his hand upon. To his exuberant delight, news arrived shortly that the great Signora L— had graciously consented to appear.

III.

The sun, which has burnt at white heat all the livelong summer's day, now nears the horizon, and his burning finger is laid with a lingering touch on the lofty cathedral spires above, as if loth to leave playing in amongst their matchless tracery; while the gay laughing lower world turns out in the refreshing coolness, enjoying the bare fact of living as only Italians can. The broad piazza before the theatre swarms once more with merry expectant throngs, all bound in the same direction.

It was not in the time of Paul the Apostle that people began to spend their time in nothing but telling and hearing some new thing; and his preaching did not end it. Curiosity to hear the new *prima donna*, notwithstanding the pride they took in their own unrivalled native songstress, had brought the people together in unusually large numbers. They pass on in apparently endless streams, and are lost in the vast interior of the theatre.

The cathedral clock is within a hair's-breadth of the hour at which the opera is to commence, when two figures, the very opposites of each other, pass in quick succession over the now almost empty piazza on their way to the theatre. The first, a veiled and demure little woman, pauses for a moment with bowed head by the statue of Apollo, then enters the building. Her follower, a handsome man in evening dress, pauses also at the same spot; and as he lifts his head, upon his countenance is visible an expression in which indignation and despair strive for the mastery. Our *impresario* entertains serious thoughts of putting an end to an existence in which such days as he has this day experienced are possible. Now, at the last moment, a telegram has arrived, conveying the distracting news that the Signora L— has suddenly been visited with severe indisposition, and is consequently unable to appear. He enters at the private door, and is at once assailed by a dozen excited inquirers: "Is the signora coming?" "What is the matter with her?" "Who will sing in her absence?"

The orchestra, in happy ignorance of the smouldering mine, are now bringing the introduction successfully to a close; and before the maddened Antonio can tear himself away in order to present his apologies to the house for the unavoidable absence of the *prima donna*, and the consequent necessary postponement of the opera, the curtain has risen, and the soft music which introduces the first appearance has commenced. A slight pause ensues, and a thousand pairs of eyes are fixed upon the spot where the heroine of the evening shall appear. To his intense astonishment Antonio finds, on reaching the side scenes, a lady fully attired for the part, with her back to him, and in the act of entering upon the stage. To his still greater bewilderment a voice, musical and clear as to transcend even the voices of the most ecstatic dreams, rises over the hushed crowds. His being was so paralysed by this wonderful apparition that he scarcely wondered when, upon the songstress turning, he discovered the pale little face and great burning eyes of Angela.

Here he remained during the whole performance, hearing and seeing things which were burnt in upon his mind with such a fiery vividness, and in all the years to come those great dark eyes, full of an awed enthusiasm, and those unearthly sweet tones, never lost one tittle of their reality; and no sooner was this chord of memory touched than the world would recede for a time, and his whole being would become entranced, as at this moment.

The rest of the company sang through their parts according to their respective abilities; but it was evident that that great assembly saw and heard but one.

At length came that wonderful passage which is at once the climax and the end of the opera—where the young heroine, torn from the bosom of her murdered husband, and with all hope fled, rises before her vindictive and exulting persecutors, and, in a torrent of impassioned song, calls upon Heaven to destroy the inhuman murderers. In sharp and wringing tones, each of which was the throe of an agonised heart, she utters the impassioned cry for vengeance, until, at a fresh sight of the prostrate form of her idolised husband, her voice changes, and in a few low heartrending tones she tells that her heart is broken, and sinks with a sigh upon his bosom.

The curtain fell; and whilst the storm raged without, Antonio and the others rushed upon the stage, in order to express to the no longer "poor Angela" their wonder and astonishment. Why do they all suddenly stop short, and look upon each other with startled and fearful eyes?

The murdered husband has risen; but the prostrate form of Angela gives no sign of life. Angela has kept her word: she has sung before the *impresario* as never woman sang before; but her voice is hushed on earth for ever. Angela is she now in very deed.

BOOKS AND BABIES.—An amusing incident occurred recently. The clergyman desired to call the attention of the congregation to the fact that, it being the last Sunday in the month, he would administer the rite of baptism to children. Previous to having entered the pulpit he received from one of the elders, who, by the way, was quite deaf, a notice to the effect that, as the children would be present that afternoon, and he had the new Sunday-school books ready for distribution, he would have them ready to sell to all who desired them. After the service, the clergyman began the notice of the baptismal service thus:—"All of those having children, and desiring to have them baptised, will bring them this afternoon." At this point the deaf elder, hearing the name of children, supposed it was something in reference to the books and, rising, said, "And all of those who have none, and desiring them, will be supplied by me for the sum of sixpence."

KISCHENEFF.—Speaking about the war the other night he told his girl that the Russians had been making Kischeneff their headquarters; "and" he added, "that reminds me that I am somewhat like the Russians, myself."

"Why, how so?"

"Well, ain't this my headquarters?"

"Oh, Pasha! Charles."

"Oh, yum, yum."

"There, there, Turk care!"

"Can't Serbia me that way, Mollie."

"Polish! Polish!"

"\* \* \* m'ym, there, you'll think this is Kischeneff before I leave."

She was Gladova it all the while, too, and was ready for a permanent engagement immediately after the skirmish that night. That'll be a Matchin a short time—see if it won't.

## LINES FOR AN ALBUM.

The dreams of youth must pass away  
With children's hope and fears;  
The aspirations of to-day  
Fly with the fleeting years.

But tho' all pleasures know alloy,  
Yet there is ever found  
Some clear bright stream of purest joy,  
Where all our cares are drown'd.

Such then is friendship on this earth,  
The never failing source  
Of happiness, and peace and mirth,  
Along life's chequered course.

Though in our path some thorns be strew'd,  
Though Fate our lives should sever,  
We oft may think with hope renewed,  
True friendship lasts for ever.

P. E. Island.

M. E.

## ARTISTIC.

THERE is a legend current in the art circles of Paris of a young American damsel who went to call on Gustave Moreau, and who, finding him at work on a painting, was so good not only as to tell him what he ought to do next, but actually to take the brush out of his hand and add the necessary touches herself. The friend who accompanied her, was, of course, overwhelmed with confusion, but the good-natured artist only laughed.

M. THIERS' portrait, by Bonnat—one of the great attractions of this year's Salon—was not seen even by the sitters until the artist felt satisfied with the likeness. Madame Thiers tried to get a sly peep, but was sternly refused. M. Thiers gave the painter eleven sittings, and when Bonnat wished his model to assume a pleasant and natural expression he turned the conversation on the affairs of the Empire, or on former artistic exhibitions, two pet subjects with the ex-President. M. Thiers has a marvellous memory, and has not forgotten a single picture of mark exhibited since his youth.

## "By their Works ye shall Know them."

The Irishman who thought the druggist stingy because the emetic was so small, is only surpassed in his parsimonious drollery by those who persistently adhere to the use of those nauseating, disgustingly large and drastic pills, while Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Purgative Pellets, which are sugar-coated and little larger than mustard seeds, will, by their gentle and steady action on the liver, correct all torpidity, thus permanently overcoming constipation. In South America they have almost entirely superseded all other pills, and are relied on fully by the people, and often used as a preventive of the various affections of the stomach, liver, and bowels, so prevalent in that climate. Pierce's Pocket Memorandum Books are given away at drug stores.

SMYRNA, Aroostook Co., Maine,  
Nov. 6, 1876.

R. V. PIERCE, M. D.:

Dear Sir,—I write to inform you that I have used your Pellets for some time, and find them to be the best medicine that I ever used. I have also used your Favourite Prescription in my family with entire satisfaction. I have seen your People's Common Sense Medical Adviser and think that it is the best thing that I have ever seen.

Yours truly, C. SHERMAN.