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ORIGINAL POETRY.

[For the Literary Transcript.]
GREEK SONG.

BY A BARBARIAN.

Some fondly love a dark grey eye,
And some the laughing blue,
And jetty orbs can raise a sigh,
With smiling hazel too.

But red for me, the sparkling red,
For that's the hue of wine—
Here, boy, a chaplet for my head
From blossoms of the vine.

While on the sword I lie along,
And strike the trembling lyre,
To Bacchus consecrate my song,
While Phœbus shall inspire.

Around, in fancy's vision, come,
The lovely sister mine,
Far from their desecrated zone,
Avail to hallow mine.

Yet ere the goblet's lip, adored,
To mine is prest in love,
Do each libation duly poured
To heavenly powers above.

And first, thou God of light, to them,
—To whom the lyre we own,
The poet's guardian deity,—
The brimming drop shall flow.

Then next to them, the sister best,
The maids of Helicon,
Who'd desolate their own dear land,
Their native worship gone!

Yet not for ever,—Greece again
Hath caught the Spartan spear,
And Grecian maids, and Grecian men,
Athena's soil shall rear.

Bend, Pallas, from thine awful throne,
To foes, thine ægis send,
Their bodies blast to living stone,
As long their hearts have been.

Oh, place again thine olive crown
On Athens' beaming brow,
Will tyrants tremble at her frown,
And Kings be proud to bow.

Fill first in arts and arms our shores,
And beauty's gentle reign,
Peace, pleasure, smile along our shores,
Thy worthy land again.

Evo, Bacche, thy vintage begin,
The conqueror of Ind,
The vine wreath, thy type of joy,
Around my brows I bind!

And stretched along the flow'ry sod,
I sing with jocund glee,
Be with me now thou merry god,
I pour this last to thee.

A. G. L.

THE WRECKERS.

BY JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

It was a March morning—dark, yet without a drop of rain or breath of wind—that kind of murky-black, compact sky, which is the sure forerunner of a storm. The night had been a raw and cold one—too cold to sleep with comfort in the open air; yet such was the chamber which a peasant girl, a native of a little fishing hamlet upon the coast of Cornwall, had chosen for repose. Her couch was a hard and fearful one—the verge of a cliff that rose nearly a hundred feet perpendicular from the sea shore; and yet not the softest couch that ever was spread in hamlet, town, or city, contained a tenant, in form, for symmetry—in feature, for beauty, the mistress of her own occupied that strange, appalling place of rest. Her slumbers were disturbed, yet deep. Neither the full dawn could break them; nor yet the pressure of a hand that had taken hold of hers, nor the tears that fell upon her face from the eyes of one who was hanging over her—a young man about her own age, or a little older, and who seemed to belong to the profession of the sea.

“And hast thou slept out again all night?” he murmured, his tears still flowing. “And does it grow worse and worse with thy poor wife? and shall I never see the day when I can make thee my wife? They will not let me marry thee, because, as they say, thou art mad, and knowest not what thou dost; but when thy mind was sound, I was loved by

thee! Had I married thee then, thou still hadst been my wife!—thou still hadst been cherished and loved! Why must I not marry thee now? I could watch thee then at night. My arms would enfold thee then, and prevent thee stealing from thy home to sleep in such a place as this.”

The attachment which united this young man to the being whom he so pathetically apostrophized, was of that pure and steadfast nature which can never take root except in the unsophisticated heart. She had lost her reason in consequence of having been witness to a transaction of blood, which made her an orphan. She was to have been married to him; but, in the unfortunate state of her intellects, no clergyman would celebrate the rites. But she did not the less enjoy his protection. Beneath his mother's roof she lived as a sister—the object of a passion in which frustration, and almost hopelessness, had only produced increase of strength.

“Kate, Kate!” he called, “rouse thee. Don't be frightened; it's only William. Get up, and come home.”

He offered to raise her, but she checked him—looked round and fixed her eyes inquiringly upon the sea.

“Where is it?” she exclaimed, her voice tremulous with intense emotion. “Where is the storm? I see the black sky, but I want the thunder and the wind; the white, white sea, and the big ship driving upon the reef; or is it all over? No,” she added; “'tis coming—I will be here; I see it.”

She rose, and passively accompanied her watchful lover to his mother's cottage; where leaving her under the custody of his mistress, the young man repaired on urgent business to a town at some distance from the hamlet.

That morning the storm came on; three days it continued—it was now the third day, a lee shore, a boiling sea, and on the coast of Cornwall. A wild and fearful offing. Foam, foam, foam, which way soever you looked—nothing but foam. Black reefs of rocks, that even in the highest spring tides were never completely covered, discernible now only by a spot here and there—so quick the breakers fell upon them. The spray flying over the cliffs, fifty, sixty, ay, a hundred feet and more above the level of the sea, and spreading over the land for acres.—And all above pitch black though at noon day. Every thing seemed to cover before the spirit of the storm—every thing except man. The shore—which consisted partly of huge masses of rock, partly of shingle—was lined with human beings; some in groups, some alone, promiscuously furnished with boat-hooks, gaffs, grapples, hatchets and knives, ready to dispute with the waves the plunder of the fated ship that might be driven within the jaws of that insupportable bay. Expectation glistened in their eyes, that kept eagerly prowling backward and forward, far and near, over the waste of waters—they were wreckers. Not a few women, as well as children, were among them; nor were these unprovided against the approach of the wished for prey—all seemed to have their appropriated places; for which, if they stirred, it was only a step or two, to be the next minute retraced. Little was spoken.

At one and the same moment almost every head was turned toward the cliff, at the wild and shrill howl that wrung from it.

“'Tis only Kate,” cried one, here and there as the maniac rapidly descended by a crevice, which few of the lookers-on would have attempted, and that with wary feet.

“The crazy slut will break her neck,” carelessly remarked one to another. But she was safe in her recklessness or unconsciousness of danger, and in a second or two stood among them.

“A lovely day—a fair lovely day,” she exclaimed to the first she came up to. “Good luck to you! Any thing yet. No, no,” she continued, replying to herself; “white to the north—white to the west—white to the south—all white; not a speck upon the water. But 'tis coming,” she reiterated, dropping her voice to her lowest pitch; “I saw it here last night—a big black hull—one mast standing out of three—cannons and stores overboard

—rising and sinking—rocking and reeling—driving full bump upon the reef where the William and Mary was wrecked seven cursed years ago; I saw it,” she repeated, eyeing the standers-by with a look that dared incredulity; then all at once, her voice sinking to a whisper, “hist, hist!” she added; “'twill be a haulful or two for you—and a load for you—and more than one can carry, for you,” addressing this person and that successively; “casks, cases, chests, gear and gold—but what will it be for Black Norris? It will be a brighter day for him than for any of you. When do they say his time is out?”

“Whose time?” inquired one among the group she was addressing.

“One, two, three,” she went on without noticing the question until she had counted seven; “his seven years were out last May, he was transported three years before his hopeful son murdered my father.”

“Hush, you crazy wench,” exclaimed those around her; “if Norris hears you, you may chance to take a swim in the creek where he is standing.”

“Crazy!” she echoed. “Yes! I bless heaven that made me so! It knows best what it does. I saw my father murdered, though his murderer saw not me; they were struggling which should keep possession of the prey; Old Norris's knife decided it! I was powerless with fright! I could not speak. I could not stir! I became mad, and the judge would not believe me! I could tell my story better now, but it would be of no use, for they say I am crazy still. There she is!” vociferated she, pointing toward the offing at the southern extremity of the bay.

“Where—where—where?” inquired her auditors.

“No, no,” she resumed after a minute or two of silence, during which her eyeballs kept straining in the direction toward which she had pointed. “No,” she resumed, dropping her hand; but she is coming; and Black Norris will neither want roof nor board, gold or gear, to welcome back the father that bred him up to his own trade. But where is he?” inquired she; “where but upon the lee reef where I saw him!” Saying this, she proceeded to the southern extremity of the bay.

A stalworth figure, in advance of the regular line, sat stationed upon the landward end of a huge reef of rocks, that gradually dipped into the sea. His hair, black and lank, thrown back from a swarthy, ill-favoured visage, hung half way down his shoulders; his eye dark, small, and glistening bright, directed toward the sea, in quick and restless motion, was everywhere at once. A long boat-hook, clenched with both his hands, rested across his knees; and in a belt, which encircled his waist, were stuck a clasp knife of more than ordinary size, and a hatchet. The wave repeatedly washed more than half way up his lower extremities, but he paid no more heed than if he were a part of the rock that scattered it in his mist.

“A lovely day—a fair, lovely day!” cried the maniac, approaching him. “How best thou, Black Norris? Nay, I am good now,” continued she, in a deprecating tone; “don't look angry. I'll never say again that it was you.”

The wrecker moved his hand toward his knife.

“Step stop, Black Norris,” cried she coaxingly and hurriedly laying her hand upon his arm; “keep it for other work! You'll want it to-day; before night there will be a hull ashore. There will be need of knife, axe, hook and all; for the storm is lively, yet the sea shows not signs of going down—the breakers keep tumbling upon the shore. Mark how they sweep the shingles up, and back again! By-and-by they will have something else to roll. 'Tis coming, Black Norris! 'tis coming! A huge, black hull—one mast standing out of three—cannons and stores overboard—rising and sinking—rocking and reeling—driving full bump upon the reef where the William and Mary was wrecked; the very reef on which you stand, Black Norris! ay, and the very spot!”

“Silence, jade!” exclaimed the wrecker,

looking from beneath his hand, which with the rapidity of lightning, was raised to his brow, and placed there horizontally, and leaning eagerly forward.

“In the south?”

“Yes.”

“Just clear of the point?”

“Yes—the looming of something; 'tis a sloop—I see but one mast.”

“'Tis a ship, Black Norris; the other two have been cut away.”

“Peace, jade! what know'st thou of the matter?”

“'Tis a ship,” she continued; “I told you so! There is the huge black hull!”

“'Tis there indeed!” exclaimed the wrecker. “Art thou a witch as well as a crazed?”

“'Tis there, indeed; she is driving right into the bay, coming broadside on.”

A huge black hull it was; high out of the water, as if every article of weight that could be spared had been thrown overboard. Reeling and pitching she came on, staggering every now and then, at the stroke of some wave that broke over her. Fast was she nearing the shore.

“Now, now, now,” ever and anon exclaimed the wreckers; but she was floating still, so much had those on board lightened her. At length she was fairly among the breakers. She touched, and touched—yet went on; at last she struck, and a long continued crash came undulating upon the ears of the lookers-on, accompanied with halloo and shrieks. The shore was now all astir.

“That does for her!” exclaimed several voices all at once, as an enormous wave towering, as if charged with her doom, came foaming toward her. In another minute it broke upon her with a fury that sent the spray to the clouds, and totally hid her from the shore. When she again became visible, the whole of her larboard broadside was stove in. In a moment, men, women, and children were up to their middle in the surf. Another billow—she was gone! Planks, pulleys, spars, and cordage, now came floating in, and every one went to work—every one but Black Norris.

He kept his station upon the reef—a post which common consent seemed to have yielded up to him. No one ventured to dispute his right to it. In advance of him stood the maniac, constantly looking in one direction—a kind of cone produced by a forking in the reef. Thence she never took her eye, except to throw a glance at Black Norris whenever he made a movement, as if about to quit the stand which he had chosen.

“'Twill be here,” she kept repeating; “'twill be here—that which will be worth the hull to thee, were it high and dry, and all thine own; wait for it! 'tis sent to thee—'twill be here. Did it not tell you of the huge black hull, and came it not? As surely that will come, which in that hull was sent to thee. Be ready with thy boat-hook. The minutes are counted. The wave that is to bring it is rolling in. There it is! I know it! Here take my place and be ready. Here it is—a body—hook it by the clothes! I keep it clear of the rocks! Round—round—round here in to this nook! Look if it does not lie there as if it were made for it! What think you now of crazy Kate? Softly, softly,” she continued, as the wrecker, substituting his hands for the instrument, began to draw the body up to the beach. “Softly—the pockets are full! Softly, lest any should drop from them—That will do! that will do!”

Scarcely was the body clear of the surf when the wrecker began to rifle it. The pockets were full: one of them was speedily emptied, when a laugh from the maniac, who, squatting, sat gibbering at the head, arrested Black Norris in the act of examining the contents.

“What laugh'st thou at, jade?” he inquired.

“Go on,” she replied—“'tis a fair lovely day, as I told thee; is it not, Black Norris?”

“Peace, jade!” exclaimed the wrecker—

“Jewels!” he ejaculated, cussing, a small case which he had opened. The maniac laughed again. “Will thou stop thy cursed mouth,” vociferated the wrecker.