



Holbein's portrait of Dean Colet, in the library at Windsor Castle, has been copied, by permission of the Queen, for St. Paul's School.

Mr. Henry Irving, the actor, says that, so far from the opening of free libraries on Sunday leading to the opening of the theatre, English actors would be the very first to resent any such proposal.

ITALIAN EXHIBITION OF CERAMIC ART.—An exhibition of works of ceramic art from all parts of Italy, especially from Tuscany, Lombardy, and Venetia, was recently held at Rome. The chief makers of glass and mosaic objects were well represented. The Marches sent their choicest majolica ware, and the city of Perugia exhibited a splendid collection of enamelled terracotta. Several private persons contributed their chief treasures; among them were the Barberini and the well-known connoisseur, Mgr. Tagiasco, and many of the princely families.

THREE OF QUEEN VICTORIA'S RINGS.—It is said that the three rings which Queen Victoria prizes the most highly are: First of all, her wedding ring, which she has never taken off; then a small enamel ring, with a tiny diamond in the centre, which the Prince Consort gave her at the age of 16, and an emerald serpent, which he gave her as an engagement ring. For many years after the Prince Consort's death Her Majesty slept with these rings on her fingers, only taking them off to wash her hands, as the water would, of course, spoil the enamel. —*New York Telegram.*

Verdi, the composer and philanthropist, has erected and equipped a hospital at Villanova, and has also deposited funds sufficient for its maintenance. It is a large but unpretentious building, commanding a fine view of the River Po and the Apennines in the distance. There are wings for the separate treatment of the sexes, a ward for contagious diseases, and a hydropathic department, while all the arrangements are elaborate and modern. With characteristic modesty, the giver refused to let the institution be named after himself; and it is to be known simply as the Hospital of Villanova.

Near the large bridge on the road between Tripolitza and Myloi, in Arcadia, a peasant, in digging, has found various antiquities. Among them is a bronze statuette, without feet, but otherwise well preserved, representing Artemis stretching a bow and with a quiver slung on her back. It is of a good period. In the excavations of the Acropolis some pieces have been found of the ancient aetōma or pediment of the Parthenon in Paros stone, preserving good traces of the polychromy. Some fragments of vases have also been found representing a Gigantomachia. Some of these bear the inscription of the artist Nicosthenes.

Beethoven, although it must be conceded that he had every right to be vain, conceited and what not, never took the trouble to hide his feelings, and when his ire was aroused—and that is with men of genius more easily done than to allay it—he expressed himself very clearly indeed. Thus you may see at Heiligenstadt, near Vienna, where they are now forming a sort of Beethoven Museum like the Mozarteum at Salzburg, a sketch of a chateau in Nether Austria where, a few years before his death, Beethoven used to compose. It belonged to Beethoven's brother, a chemist, who had made some money and was rather fond of displaying his wealth. This brother called upon Beethoven and left a card, upon which he had engraved his name: "Jean von Beethoven, landed proprietor." This innocent vanity so enraged Beethoven that he returned the call upon his brother when he knew he would not be at home and left his card: "Louis von Beethoven, brain proprietor." —*Temple Bar.*

Gilbert Duprez, the great French tenor, was in his voice as well as in his appearance a very model of power; short, thick-set, as tenors so often are, he was created for the part of Samson, but as to his beauty, the following little story will enlighten the reader: Duprez once walked away from the Grand Opéra with the baritone, Baroilhet, who was not an Apollo either. Whom should they happen to meet but Perrot, the dancer, a man of very great ability, but short and thin, and ugly to such an extent that a manager, whom I do not wish to name, said to him he could never engage him unless for the Jardin des Plantes (zoological garden), as he engaged no monkeys. Perrot told them the story, and when Duprez laughed at him, Perrot said: "Why, surely you need not laugh; if I am ugly I am certainly not so ugly as either of you." "You monkey," said Duprez, "this difference shall soon be settled," and seeing a gentleman pass whom he had never known, but who appeared to be a well-bred man, "Monsieur," said he, "will you be so good as to make the umpire in a little difference of opinion between us?" "With pleasure," said the stranger, "if I can." "Well," said Duprez, "just look at us and say whom you consider to be the plainest of the three?" The gentleman looked quietly and pensively for some time from one to the other, and then he said: "Gentlemen, I give it up; I cannot possibly decide!" and he went off roaring with laughter. —*Temple Bar.*

GRACE CONNELL.

AN IRISH IDYLL.

A simple story of a woman's love:
'Twas told by one whose voice is silent now.

Grace Connell—not unfittingly she bore
The name of Grace—was scarcely five years old
When death bereaved her of a mother's care.
A dismal time! At length, her father, vexed
With countless nothings that recalled his wife,
And all her sweetness, said: "My little Grace,
We will away, and leave this desolate house,
And spend our lives among the fisher-folk,
Where I was born, and learnt to sail a boat.
I will go first and find some dwelling-place,
And take thee hence." He went, and soon returned.
Then, aided by a kinsman of his wife,
Whose kindness claimed it as a privilege
To drive the wanderers to their future home,
He packed—it did not take them long to pack—
His humble stock of household furniture,
And, with wet eyelids, travelled leagues away.
The simple fisherfolk, who knew so well
How heavily loss of mother and of wife
Falls on survivors, warmly welcomed him—
Back to his native place, and did their best
To make the truant feel once more at home.

A nest-like cottage, that had been for sale
On his first visit, he had bought, and there
They settled down. It stood aloof from storms,
Backed by precipitous cliffs, and faced the green
Atlantic waves that wash the southern coast
Of that fair island, for which God hath done
So much and man so little. Grace was glad,
And loved to ramble on the shore in quest
Of shells and shining pebbles, or from rocks,
Draped with long wreaths of dripping weeds, to watch
Wave following wave, first swelling up and poised,
Then toppling over, with a booming fall,
In sheets of foam, that quivered on the sand.
Still she grew lonesome, and the boundless sea
Made her more lonesome, till her father missed
The smiles that once lent sunshine to her eyes.
"She wants a woman in the house," he said,
"While I am gone. To fishers like myself
The houseless ocean seems, perforce, a home,
But she, poor child, sits brooding here, alone,
With no companions but the tumbling waves."
And thus, in time, he wooed a second wife.
She, with soft, winning ways, soon brought the smiles
Back to the eyes of Grace, and, when she gave
Birth to a daughter, Grace, to shew the love
She bore the woman of her father's choice,
Was never tired of nursing baby Nell.

And now two years, two happy years, had flown,
Winged with God's blessings, when a cruel chill,
Caught while half-drowned by floods of drenching rain,
And lashed by hissing spray, she paced at night
The windy, weed-strewn, breaker-beaten shore,
And watched the trawlers plunging through the foam,
Brought the young mother to the bed of death.
Holding her husband's hand within her own
She passed away, with prayers upon her lips
For both the children, prized with equal love.
Forthwith a younger mother took her place,
A sister and a mother—two in one—
While Nellie played, scarce conscious of the loss.
And so they grew together, like two buds,
Heralds of dainty blossom—day by day
Unfolding all the fragrance of their youth,
But with contrasting natures. Grace was grave
Graver by far than maidens of her age,
But Nellie seemed a waif from Fairyland,
A tricksy sprite, a butterfly or bird,
So swift her movements and so sweet her song.
A fisher's wife, whose girlhood had been passed
In cities, taught the pretty maids to read,
Lent them good books, and to the subtle art
Of making lace their lissome fingers trained.
And thus the years, like summer birds, flew by.
Their kindly neighbour, when she sold her lace
At market, sold theirs also; and this gain,
Joined to their father's earnings, brought them in
A modest competence that met their needs.
So, in a changeless round of household work—
Mending of nets and patching up of sails—
With books, and lace, and pleasant strolls at eve
On the warm sands, or bathtings in the surf,
Their maiden lives were innocently passed,
Till Grace had reached the age of twenty-one,
Six years forerunning Nellie. Folks around
Vowed she must marry some tall fisher lad:
"Sure, 'twas a shame," they said, "to balk the lad,
Who waited only for a smile to woo."
But Grace said, blushing, "That could never be
Till Nell had grown a woman and was wed."
In after days she called her words to mind.

Meanwhile, no cloud obscured their sunny sky,
And all was peace and harmony and love.
But the night cometh when no man can work.
One eve their father, with persistent heart—
The fish, he said, of late had been bewitched—
Sailed forth to reap the harvest of the sea.
As night came on, the turbulent winds awoke,

And roused confederate billows from their sleep,
Like ruthless felons that abhor the light,
Bound on some errand of appalling crime.
Then, through the hurricane, at midnight's hour,
While thunder, with reverberating peals,
Crashed, the two sisters, draped in heavy cloaks,
Roamed the wet shingle, where the breakers roared,
And, through the veil of darkness, dimly scanned
The awful ocean's tempest-wrinkled face.
The lightning's glare, intolerably bright,
Flashed, like a fiery serpent, from the clouds
With lurid gleams on black, tumultuous waves
Crested with foam, and on the white-winged gulls,
That, fluttering inland, eddied round, and shrieked
With mocking cries, like demons of the storm.

Fair rose the day, as on Creation's dawn:
The sea still trembled, like a turbulent thing,
And all the sands were fringed with curdled foam,
And strewn with tackling, spars, and rents of sail,
Spurned by the deep's annihilating wrath.
At noon, two mates of Connell were at work
Calking a cable, when the helpless limbs
Of a drowned fisherman were tossed ashore—
The toil-worn sire of Nellie and of Grace.
Grim was the human wreck—no sight, they said,
For orphans' eyes—as on some stranded deals
They bore the dead man to a vacant hut.
There, when in strips of canvass they had swathed
The corpse, to hide its ghastliness, they framed
A rough-hewn shell from planks of sturdy pine,
That once had lined the carcass of a ship,
And through the hamlet spread the sorry news.
So when the curtain of the night had dropped,
And womanfolk and children were asleep,
The fishers, gathering from each cottage, met
Hard by the hut. Thence six broad-shouldered men
Bore forth the coffin, shrouded in a sail,
And raised it tenderly, and led the way,
While a long line of mourners, two by two,
Followed in slow procession, by the glare
Of torches, to the village burial ground.
Bareheaded, silent, while the hungry sea,
That slew their comrade, in the distance moaned,
Sorrowing they stood. The patriarch of the crowd
Poured forth an unpremeditated prayer
In tremulous tones, and many tears were shed
Both for the dead and living. Then a grave
Received the coffin, and the sandy earth
Was shovelled o'er it, trampled down, and smoothed,
And the mute object of their care was left
Safe in God's acre, where alone is peace.

Two mothers and a father thus were lost
From earth for ever, in a few short years,
To one brave girl: but, undespairing still,
She fought life's battle for the sake of Nell,
The giddy trifler, whom she fondly loved.
The neighbours watch her efforts to be gay
With wondering pity, and each vied with each,
By gracious acts and kindly offices,
To shed some warmth upon her cold, bleak life.
More than all others there was one who yearned
To change each tear of Grace's to a smile.
Young Ned Adair, a sailor's only son,
Who in the neighbouring seaport served his time
To a skilled carpenter, would oft at eve
(His plane and saw and chisel laid aside),
Stray to the cots that clustered by the sea,
Drawn thither by the yet unconscious Grace.
At last he spoke: "Sweet Grace, you must have seen,
You, who are so quick-sighted,—that I love
The very ground you tread on—that I long
To chase each shadow from your life, and pass
My days in happy labour for your sake.
The years of my apprenticeship are over,
Though still I work for Master, and my pay
Will more than furnish all our simple needs.
Trust me—my love is truthful—be my wife.
My father and my mother will be glad—
They know you well—and all the fisherfolk,
Here in my native place, well pleased will see
The grave Grace Connell wife of Ned Adair."
She heard, but spoke not: she had learned to look
On Edward's coming as a kind of charm
That laid the ghost of sorrow for a time—
Nay, more, unknowingly she loved the lad—
But when she thought of Nellie, the bequest
Of a dead mother, Grace, whose loyal soul
Had seemed throughout her lover's speech to hear
The still small voice of duty interdict
All thoughts of marriage, faltered timidly
Some inarticulate words, in which "dear Nell"
Alone could be distinguished. Then the lad
Replied: "My darling! think not I would part
Sister from sister: Nell shall still be yours,
And, till she weds, shall call our home her own."

The lover's pleading won the girl's consent:
His father and his mother were well pleased,
And the kind gossips looked ere long to hail
The grave Grace Connell wife of Ned Adair.
Alas, for woman's love! How oft it seems
To waste its wealth on some ungrateful heart,
Like precious seed that falls on stony ground!
Grace, by some subtle instinct that detects
Each lurking symptom of capricious change,