

GROWING UP.

Oh, to keep them still around us, baby darlings, fresh and pure,
 "Mother's" smile their pleasure crowning, "mother's" kiss their sorrows cure;
 Oh, to keep the waxen touches, sunny curls, and radiant eyes,
 Pattering feet and eager prattle—all young life's lost Paradise!
 One bright head above the other, tiny hands that clung and clasped,
 Little forms, that close enfolding, all of Love's best gifts were grasped;
 Sporting in the Summer sunshine, glancing round the winter hearth,
 Bidding all the wide world echo with their fearless, careless mirth.

Oh, to keep them; how they gladden all the path from day to day—
 What gay dreams we fashioned of them, as in rosy sleep they lay;
 How each broken word was welcomed, how each struggling thought was hailed,
 As each bark went floating seaward, love-bedecked and fancy-sailed!

Gliding from our jealous watching, gliding from our clinging hold,
 Lo! the brave leaves bloom and burgeon: lo! the shy sweet buds unfold;
 Fast to lip, and cheek, and tresses steals the maiden's bashful joy;
 Fast the frank bold man's assertion tones the accents of the boy.

Neither love nor longing keeps them; soon in other shape than ours
 Those young hands will seize their weapons, build their castles, plant their flowers;
 Soon a fresher hope will brighten the dear eyes we trained to see;
 Soon a closer love than ours in those wakening hearts will be.

So it is, and well it is so; fast the river nears the main,
 Backward yearnings are but idle; dawning never glows again;
 Slow and sure the distance deepens, slow and sure the links are rent;
 Let us pluck our Autumn roses with their sober bloom content.

(For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.)

ERNANI.

A REMINISCENCE OF GRAND OPERA.

I.

It is among the mountains of Arragon. In the distance is seen the Moorish Castle of Don Silva. The hour is sunset. Rebel mountaineers and bandits are eating and drinking. Some amuse themselves with cards, others burnish their arms.

Ernani appears from afar, slowing descending the rocks.

Don Silva is a proud Spanish grandee. Ernani is John of Arragon, son of the Duke of Segovia, who has been proscribed, and, being pursued by the minions of the King of Castile, takes refuge among the crags of the Sierras where he puts himself at the head of a troop of rebels, and bears an assumed name.

The rebels have finished the singing of a was-sail chorus. Ernani greets them in that beautiful outburst:

Come rugiada al' cespite
 D'un appassito fiore....

Balmier than dew to drooping bud,
 Sweeter than sun on flower....

The young outlaw informs his followers that he is in love with Donna Elvira who is, however, about to be snatched from him and united to Don Silva. To-morrow is set apart for the fatal ceremony. Will they suffer this outrage?

"Never. To the rescue!" is the bandits' cry. They pick up their traps, shoulder their arms and move forward in the direction of Don Silva's Castle.

The night has fallen. The fair Elvira is alone in her chamber, high up in the castle of the grandee. She advances to the casement, leans her white arms on the iron bars, and gazes over the mountain ranges as they lie still in the silver moon beams. She dreams. Her thoughts are with Ernani. She sings. That song uttered three hundred years ago among the lone hills of Arragon has been caught on the wing by Verdi, preserved in his glorious score, and is now re-echoed throughout the world by Patti, Nilsson, and Lucca. Who that has not heard and trembled as he heard the passionate appeal:

Ernani! Ernani, involami
 Ab, abborrito amplesso!

"Ernani! snatch me from the abhorred embrace of this man and take me to thine arms where alone is the Eden of my enchantment."

A group of young maidens come forward with rich bridal gifts, offerings to Elvira from Don Silva; but she does not deign to look at them. She is absorbed in her grief and demands to be alone. The maids retire.

But who is this that enters? Don Carlos, King of Castile, better known in history as the Emperor Charles V. He too has become violently enamoured of Elvira. He has watched her windows, and discovered that when all are at rest in the castle of Don Silva, a young cavalier gains admission to her apartments. That cavalier is Ernani. This fatal night the King imitates the signal of the favored lover and is introduced into her chamber. But she recognizes him.

"Heavens! Thou, sire, at this hour?"
 "Tis love that draws me."
 "Tis false—thou dost not love me."
 "What? A King lies not."
 "And wouldst thou lure me?"
 "Come, O come with me. I adore thee."
 "And mine honor?"
 "All my court shall honor thee."
 The struggle continues throughout the famous duet, *da quel di*, "from the day when first

this beauty," and culminates by the King seizing Elvira's hand and striving to drag her away. She leaps from him like a frightened fawn, snatches a poniard from his belt, brandishes it on high, and orders him to flee or she will plunge it into his heart. Don Carlos calls to the rescue.

A secret panel door opens and Ernani steps forward. A scene of terrible recrimination ensues between the two lovers. They would come to blows, but, Elvira still retaining the dagger in her hand, interposes between them.

The noise brings Don Silva to the scene. Surprised and indignant at the sight of two men in the chamber of his bride, on the very eve of their nuptials, he breaks out into a violent rage and demands reparation. But the King reveals himself, pretending that he came in disguise to consult him about his approaching election to the empire, and a conspiracy which was being organized against his imperial promotion and his life. This device unravels the knot of the situation and both the King and Ernani retire unmolested.

II.

A magnificent drawing room in Don Silva's castle. Doors leading to various apartments. Portraits of the Silva family handsomely framed, and surmounted by ducal coronets and coats of arms, hang from the walls. Nearest portraits a complete suit of equestrian armor is set, corresponding to the period when the person represented lived. There is also a rich table and a ducal chair of carved oak.

Don Silva enters gorgeously attired in the regalia of a Spanish grandee and seats himself in his ducal chair. There is brought before him a pilgrim who demands shelter and a refuge. It is Ernani, who is hotly pursued by the King's troops. Don Silva grants his request, places him under his protection and gives him sanctuary.

Elvira had lost sight of her outlaw lover. She had been told that he was dead. Putting faith in this intelligence and besieged by importunities, she had finally consented to accept the hand of Don Silva.

She enters the ducal presence, clad in bridal robes, and followed by a train of attendants. The fatal ceremony is about to be performed. Ernani cannot contain himself. He throws off his disguise and exclaims:

"Ernani still lives!"

A scene of confusion ensues. Ernani asks to be delivered up to the King, but Silva refuses, swears he will stand by his promise of protection, bids his soldiers man the towers and rushes out determined to defend his castle. Elvira and Ernani are left alone one moment, when they fall into each other's embrace. Silva returns and surprises them. He is about to explode, when the arrival of the King is announced at the portcullis. He gives orders to admit His Majesty, bids Elvira retire and hides Ernani in a secret cabinet.

Don Carlos summons Don Silva to surrender Ernani. The grandee proudly refuses.

"Thy head or his, hidalgo!"

"Take mine."

The soldiers strip Silva of his sword and are ordered to scour the castle in search of the refugee. Wroth at their failure, the King is about to wreak the vengeance of death on Don Silva, when Elvira intervenes, and yielding to her entreaties, Don Carlos spares his victim. But he carries off Elvira as a hostage for the Don.

After the twain are gone, Silva takes down two swords from the armory near the portraits and then releasing Ernani from his hiding place, orders him to cross blades with himself. Ernani refuses to raise an arm against his protector, but proposes instead that both should combine against their common enemy, the King. Handing him his hunting horn, he declares himself ready to die whenever the signal should be given from the lips of Don Silva.

III.

A subterranean vault enclosing the tomb of Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chapelle. On the left stands the monument with a bronze door, on which is read in large letters, the word CHARLEMAGNE. Other and smaller tombs are seen. Two lamps, hanging from the roof, shed a faint light upon the graves.

Enter the King, attended by Riccardo, a retainer, both wrapped in dark cloaks. Riccardo goes first, carrying a torch.

"Is this the place?" queries the King.

"Yes," responds the attendant.

"And the hour?"

"Aye, when the league of Conspirators will assemble to thwart thy elevation to the throne."

After a pause, Riccardo retires, and the King, after venting his determination in the grand solo: "*Oh! de' verdi anni miei*," produces a key, opens the door of the Tomb and enters therein.

Several doors in the vaulted depths open, and the Conspirators, members of the League against the King, enter, enveloped in dark mantles and bearing torches. They mount on one of the smaller tombs and confer. Then their torches are thrown down on the ground and extinguished. It is decided to murder the King, and the choice of the murderer is to be decided by ballot. Each Conspirator draws a tablet from his breast, writes his name thereon and throws it into an open tomb. When all the names are thus deposited, Don Silva slowly advances towards the tomb and draws a tablet therefrom. Every eye is fixed upon him through the gloom.

"Who is chosen?" is asked in smothered whispers.
 "Ernani!"

The youth accepts with exultation and all the companions embrace.

Suddenly the boom of cannon is heard outside. The Conspirators are awe-struck, for they know what it means. The Electors have elected the King to the Empire, and are approaching the cathedral to offer thanksgiving. Another report is heard, and the door of the monument opens. A third report is heard and lo! the King stands on the threshold of the tomb.

"Tis Charlemagne!" shrieked the terrified Conspirators.

"Tis Charles the Fifth, ye traitors!" exclaimed the King, striking the door of bronze three times with the hilt of his dagger.

The principal entrance to the vault opens, and, amid the sound of trumpets, six Electors enter, dressed in cloth of gold; followed by pages carrying, upon velvet cushions, the sceptre, crown, and other imperial insignia. A splendid suite of German and Spanish courtiers immediately surrounds the Emperor; among them Elvira.

Charles is gracious. In the hour of his triumph he inclines to mercy. The Conspirators are all pardoned, Ernani is restored to his ancestral titles and possessions and the hand of Elvira is placed in his!

IV.

A terrace in the palace of Don John of Arragon, in Saragossa. Illuminated gardens in the back ground. It is a wedding party. Sounds of revelry are heard on every side. Masqueraders flutter about from garden to saloon. One mask, arrayed in a black domino, with eyes gazing fiercely around, as if anxiously seeking some body, is particularly noticed, but gradually the dances conclude, the music fades in the distance, the torches are extinguished and all sinks into silence. Ernani and Elvira, in bridal costume, pass from the ball room, on their way across the garden to their own apartments. They are happy, oh! how happy, after so many fiery trials and such long endurance of fidelity. But now they are united and forever—

Hark, was not that the blast of a horn? From the garden it came sweet, silvery and familiar. There it is again!

Ernani springs from the side of his bride. He utters a malediction. He is delicious. He starts to fly. He returns and bids Elvira to hasten away. She hesitates. He insists. She obeys. Then the black mask appears at the garden gate. It is torn aside and Don Silva stands revealed. He reminds Ernani of his word that he would be prepared to die whenever his horn was sounded by the lips of the Don. Ernani remembers the promise and will fulfil it, and, at this supreme moment, he breaks out into that delicious dirge, *Solingo, errante è misero* which has made so many weep, that have heard it from the lips of Mario and Nicolini.

Silva presents a dagger and a cup of poison. "Choose."

Ernani chooses the dagger, and stabs himself. Elvira rushes back, but too late to prevent the fatal deed. She falls upon his body and the last words which they both mutter may serve for their epitaph:

Per noi d'amore il talamo
 Di morte fu l'altar....

For us the bridal bed of love
 Was the shrine of death....

J. L.

(For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.)

IN TEN MINUTES.

A TALK AGAINST TIME.

I.

I read the other day in every body's favorite, *Punch*, a very good story. It was appended to one of those charming illustrations of which the famous periodical seems to have the monopoly. A bearded and spectacled gentleman was sitting awkwardly upon a fashionable chair, and a charming lady was sitting near him. The lady with characteristic feminine regard for learning says: "Mr. Pundit, we have just ten minutes to dinner-time, now wouldn't you be good enough to give me a short sketch of the History of the World—from the Creation you know."

The story suggests my position. I have about ten minutes allowed me in which to say something agreeable on some subject of interest, on which if I once started I would in all probability want to talk for an hour at least.

A good deal might be done indeed in ten minutes after the fashion of Mr. Jingle, in *Pickwick*,—"Epic poem, Sir—ten thousand lines—revolution of July—composed it on the spot—Mars by day, Apollo by night—bang the field piece, twang the Lyre."

"You were present at that glorious scene, Sir" said Mr. Snodgrass. "Present! Think I was!—fired a musket—fired with an idea—rushed into a wine shop—wrote it down—back again—whiz! bang!—Another idea!—wine shop again—pen and ink—back again—cut and slash—noble time, Sir!"

But that is a sort of composition not appreciated by ordinary people like us, and, even in a ten minutes talk, some regard for the Queen's English must be exhibited. And in these days, ten minutes is a good deal of time, and a good deal is required to be done it. Every hour must sweat its sixty minutes to the death; and we

Live on, God love us, as if the seedman rapt
 Upon the teeming harvest, should not dip
 His hand into the bag.

I met an American once in Canada at a hotel, and he nearly drove a friend of mine frantic with suppressed laughter by gravely insisting that ten

minutes was quite enough for dinner. He was a commercial traveller and was so accustomed to the railway conductor's warning cry of "five minutes for refreshments" that he considered ten minutes quite a liberal allowance for dinner in this age. I suppose he is dead now, poor fellow. He bolted his dinner that day in a fashion that astounded me and made me unhappy, thinking how horrid his dreams were going to be that night. And if he is dead I fancy it must have been in some heroic effort to wrestle with a railway dinner in five minutes when the train was late.

It is a current anecdote that a certain great lawyer wrote a learned and bulky volume on jurisprudence during his ten minutes waiting for his wife to dress for dinner every day. Ten minutes' fighting nearly destroyed the best cavalry in France in some of the most splendid cavalry charges mentioned in history—at Sedan. Ten minutes' talking will enable two clever ladies to dissect the best character in the community. In a ten minutes' speech a politician may tell crammers enough to make his salvation a matter on which even an Isolated Risk Company would decline to take the chances.

Look at the newspapers too! In ten minutes they will give you the quotidian history of the globe, provided you bring enough brains to the ten minutes' effort of reading. The paper suits itself to the reader. If you are a cultivated man it is a treasure of suggestive facts. If you are a donkey—it is a thistle, that's all. In business, too, ten minutes is a long time. Ten minutes' talk with a leading lawyer in New York or London will teach you the value of time and money. Are not all commercial men in this age on the jump to make fortunes in ten minutes, so to speak. Don't they "push things" horribly to get rich hastily? They exhaust their strength, they soften their brains, they risk their fortunes, they abandon their domestic enjoyments, they stretch their consciences to get rich—in ten minutes. Some, a great many, succeed; become worth £100,000 and pass their days adding to that sum, talking broken English and picking their teeth with a fork. That is called in the jargon of the day "making a mark" in the world. Save the mark! And a great many more do not succeed, as the list of bankrupts tells, and the spectacle they present is far too painful to contemplate and far too suggestive too discuss.

Ten minutes is almost sufficient to change the destiny of a nation. It did not take that time to slay Caesar—Casca's envious dagger made short work. Ten minutes is enough to accomplish a change of dynasty in Spain, and to inaugurate a revolution in the Argentine Republic. To save ten minutes in the transit of freight New York will give a million dollars. To reach New Orleans ten minutes ahead of a rival, a Mississippi Captain will put a nigger on the safety valve and risk the lives of hundreds of human beings. If anyone will read that wonderful description of such an event in the "Gilded Age," he will get the best description of the excitement and the horrors of such a scene that I, at least, have ever read. Ten minutes will enable a young man to fall in love and even to fall out again—if he is—clever. Ten minutes will make a man "utterly married," like poor Carrigahalt in *Eöthen*.

There is an insane class of enthusiasts, like the philosophers and experimenters of Laputa, who in these days want to make Pundits of the children of the people in the public schools—in about ten minutes. They want to turn Tom Macaulays out of the public schools. "*I wish I was as certain of anything as Tom Macaulay is of everything*" said some noble lord, and these enthusiasts want to make our future work people "certain of everything," though nine tenths of them are themselves certain of nothing, not even of their own scholastic theories. They want to teach them science and art and literature and the classics; and a newspaper has suggested that dancing and hair dressing and whist and stenography and boxing and snow shoeing might be added, so that giving ten minutes or so to each we might outshine Laputa.

II.

Look at our literary men too—all rushing into print like madmen, bent on making fame and fortune—in ten minutes. The editors of the New York and London dailies have an ugly trick of dropping down dead in some hotel, like Raymond, or dying crazed like poor Horace Greely, just because life has been lived on the supposition that ten minutes was an age and that an age devoted to sleep or exercise or enjoyment was more than they could afford. Edmund Yates began his literary life with splendid prospects, a host of admirers and friends like Dickens and Thackeray. But he got the Ten Minutes fever, and rushed his Pegasus till the noble animal became unrecognizable from being dragged through the mud of those beery, horsy, vulgar and vicious novels.

Look at Anthony Trollope. The man writes a novel in ten minutes almost! His industry is enormous, appalling. No reader in these days could keep up with him—though he keeps his pace evenly and well. He is writing for time only, not for fame. Even the "Small House at Allington," that most charming story, is almost out of memory, hidden under the crowd of his later books. Hepworth Dixon has the Ten Minutes fever on him badly too, and he is getting unbearable. I have diligently followed that man through "New America" and through the "Spiritual Wives" enormity; I have travelled with him through the winter forests and down the frozen rivers of Free Russia; and out under the Syrian skies into the Holy Land; and up into the bracing air of the hills of the Switzers;