

BABETTE.

Alone; and the golden waters
Are rippling to the west,
And the chime from St. Roche's belfry
Dies on the ocean's breast,
And the dimpled waves are rocking
The fishers' barks to rest.

"Babette! Babette!" the mother calls,
Far up above the strand,
"Bring in your father's nets, my child,
And lend your little hand
To turn the wheel; nor linger there
So long upon the sand."

The sun is sinking to the sea
In crimson robes and gold;
A chilly breath the ocean stirs
And roughs her ringlets gold;
It feels to her like a farewell kiss
From lips now dead and cold.

The yellow light is on the wall,
The sea-wall old and gray,
With weed and lichen mantled all
In sober-hued array.
The children on the pier above
Are laughing in their play.

The quaint, old, red-roofed clustered town
Looks downward on the wave;
That sea from which her wistful eye
Some answer seems to crave;
That sea which took her love away
And gave him back a grave.

Oh, eyes that once so lightly laughed!
Oh, sad, sweet lips apart!
Once crushed with passionate kisses when
He held her on his heart,
That day she stood this wall beneath
To see her lover start;

To say again the last "goodspeed,"
And wave her "kerchief" white,
And smile in hope—ah, God, who raised
Those breakers wild and white,
And bade the tempest to arise
And rage that livelong night,

And smote the little quivering bark,
And tore the planks in twain,
Deal gently with the broken heart
Of her who all in vain
Poured out her soul in fervent prayer
Her love to see again.

Nay, not in vain. The morning dawned,
The sunshine glittered fair,
And bathed in light a battered corpse.
A gleam of golden hair—
God only heard the cry of her
Who found him lying there.

(For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.)

LA FAVORITA.

A REMINISCENCE OF GRAND OPERA.

I.

It is the great convent of Santiago de Compostella, in the northwest of Spain. A band of hooded monks, with drooping eyelids and clasped hands, pass along the gallery leading from the monastery to the chapel. They enter the temple and join in a hymn of praise. Following in their wake is Baltasar, the mitred abbot, and Fernando a youthful novice. Baltasar presses Fernando to kneel and take part in the sacred rites. The novice hesitates and then refuses. The abbot amazed inquires into the reason of this strange conduct. The youth replies with enthusiasm:

"As I knelt before the relics of Saint James and directed my prayer to the angels above, suddenly one of them burst upon my vision!"

Baltasar is astounded and orders the novice to explain. The latter then broke out into that delicious solo: *una vergine! un angel di Dio!* "A virgin, an angel of God was rapt in prayer at the shrine beside me. A hope, a terror, a desire seized on my soul and filled me with joy. O, my father, but she was fair! The peace of my heart had fled. I raised my soul to heaven, but those eyes chained me to the earth."

The abbot at once understood the passion of the youth and tried to cure it by both persuasion and menace. But he spoke in vain. The heart of Fernando was hopelessly won and he demanded to be released from the cloister. Baltasar, with mingled feelings of anger and pity, opens the door of the monastery and lets him go forth into the world. From a distance Fernando turns a last look at the abode of peace, and stretches out his arms towards Baltasar. But the stern monk averts his head, wipes away a tear, and disappears in the shadows of the corridor.

The youth wends his way to the beautiful isle of San Leon, a fairy spot, where the object of his adoration dwells among her maidens of honor. He enters a boat, his eyes are bandaged, and he is ferried over to the land of enchantment. There he finds himself alone with Leonora. A moment of tenderness ensues, wherein the pledges of mutual love are spoken, but to the despair of Fernando, the lady will reveal neither her name, nor her station. Nay more, she enjoins it as a condition of their love that he must fly from her, and she shows him a parchment. He entreates, implores, protests, but the interview is suddenly cut short by the arrival of Inez, the attendant, who exclaims:

"The King!"

At the words Leonora thrusts the parchment into the hands of Fernando and flees from the scene.

The youth remains rooted in his tracks, astounded and desperate. The name of the King has revealed to him the rank of Leonora. He breaks out into lamentation at the fate which has set her so far above his reach, but on glancing at the scroll which she had left him, he utters a cry of joy. "Great Heaven! I am a captain! The career of arms is opened out before me, and I shall conquer a fame that will make me worthy of her!"

II.

The gardens of Alcazar. What opera-goer but remembers the glorious aspostrophe to them which Donizetti has put into the mouth of his baritone. Alphonso, King of Castile, with his Minister, Don Gaspar, stands in a gallery overlooking this delicious retreat planted by the Moorish Monarchs. They commune together of the great victory of Tarifa, where the pride of Morocco and Granada was brought down to the dust. Don Gaspar, with a courtier's obeisance, exclaims:

"To thee, Sire, the glory!"

Alphonso responds:
"No, not to me, but to Fernando! He won the battle. I await him at Seville, where, before my whole court, I will cover him with honors."

A moment later, Don Gaspar retires and the King, after an interval of solitude, meets Leonora, to whom he at once makes his usual protestations of love. But she repels him. In words of flame she upbraids him for his treachery and deceit. It is in vain that he strives to soothe her. The love that is once abused is lost forever, and the consciousness of sin brought home to the spirit not yet wholly corrupt, often acts as a salutary deterrent.

The interview is interrupted by the advance of lords and ladies of the court who respectfully salute the King. The King takes Leonora by the hand and seats her on the throne. The noble-men group. A gay festival is about to commence when Don Gaspar enters in much agitation. He draws up to the side of the King and whispers something in his ear. Alphonso shows signs of great irritation and exclaims:

"It is false!"

For all answer, the courtier presents a letter to the King, who glances at it, then turning hastily to Leonora, demands in tones of thunder:

"Who thus dares address thee and speak of love?"

The favorite recognizes the writing and replies with effusion:

"A man whom I adore."

"Treason! Give me his name."

"I would rather die than betray him."

At this critical juncture enter Baltasar, accompanied by a monk who has a parchment in his hand with the Papal Seal attached. The arrival of the twin creates a great agitation among the assistants. The King summons the abbot to account for his intrusion. The churchman, nothing daunted, informs his sovereign that he is the bearer of a Bull from the Pope wherein anathema is pronounced, if the King refuses to dismiss his favorite from the court, and reinstate the Queen of Castile in all her lawful rights. Alphonso refuses at first, but when all his courtiers stand aghast at his presumption, he feels his isolation and helplessness and implores from Baltasar a surcease till the morrow. The favor is granted and the painful scene concludes with the escape of Leonora in confusion from beneath the tempest of the priestly frown.

III.

Fernando has returned from the wars. He is ushered into the royal presence to receive his well merited rewards. The King names him Count of Zamora and Marquis Montreale, and invests him with all the insignia of these haughty titles, collar of gold and chain of precious stones. Nor is this all. Having learned at length, and to his great chagrin, of the loves of Leonora and Fernando, and being forced by the Papal interdiction to part from the favorite, he consents to the union of these two hearts.

Leonora de Guzman, who, as so often happened in those dark days of royal absolutism and licentiousness, was more sinned against than sinning, having been enticed to the palace by false promises and kept there by cajolery, still retains a sentiment of honor, and while she loves Fernando with a pure affection, will not countenance a marriage with him, until he shall be fully advised of her whole history. This noble feeling she expresses in that ravishing song which ranks among the mightiest of Donizetti's gems of composition:

O mio Fernando, della terra il trono
A possederli avria donato il cor;
Ma puro l'amor mio come il perdono
Dannato ah! lassa è a disperato orrore!

She despatches her faithful servant Inez to make all the necessary revelations to Fernando. But Don Gaspar, the Minister of the King, who had contrived this marriage in order to free his sovereign from the menaces of Rome, intercepted the messenger and put her into the custody of the guards, with orders to allow no communication whatever with her. This ruse succeeded. Leonora, thinking that Fernando knew all, and in despite of this knowledge, still desired to make her his wife, went forth to the bridal altar, when he came forward and asked her hand. The ceremony was performed and the youthful couple was very happy. But on returning from the court, Fernando was met by the assembled nobles, who immediately shrank from him and threw out half words of insinuation affecting his honor. He was at first surprised, then indignant. He demanded an explanation. But not one durst give it. It was only when Baltasar spurned him from his embrace and pronounced the words: *la bella del Re*, "the favorite of the King," that the terrible truth flashed upon him. Then his fury knew no bounds. Going up to the King and Leonora as they came forward to him from the cathedral, he renounced his titles, tore his collar from his neck, broke his sword over his knee, heaped imprecations upon Alphonso, and cursed the beautiful Leonora. Then the nobles opening a passage for them, and bowing to them as they pass, Fernando retires with Baltasar, to the shades of the convent of Santiago.

IV.

The cloister of the convent. On the right, a portion of the convent. In front a large cross, fixed in a stone block. Here and there, tombs and wooden crosses. The rising sun lights only those portions of the convent which are in view. The foreground is darkened by the shadows thrown from the walls of the church.

Baltasar and his monks are there. Some of the latter lie prostrate at the foot of the cross. Others in the distance, are digging their graves and joining at intervals in a solemn chant.

The ceremony of Fernando's initiation in the Order is being celebrated. Baltasar holds a colloquy with his pupil and after a time the latter is left alone. Profiting by the circumstance, he carols the imperishable lay, *Spirto gentil*:

Spirit of light,
So fondly courted,
Once heavenly bright,
But now departed,
All joy is fled
Thou didst awaken,
Love's hope is dead,
I am forsaken.
For thee I spurned
Each bond most holy,
From heaven 'e'en turned
To trust thee solely;
Baser than fair,
So false hast spoken,
My heart is broken
With fell despair.

Meantime, Leonora has discovered how her honest intentions were thwarted by the intrigues of Don Gaspar. Having broken forever with the King, and feeling the burden of Fernando's curses on her devoted head, she wishes to die. But first the broken heart must obtain Fernando's forgiveness. Disguising herself in the dress of a novice, she knocks at the convent gates and is admitted. She enters the chapel as the monks file in procession with their cowls drawn over their heads. Exhausted and in despair, she sinks down at the foot of a cross in the court yard. Thither also repairs Fernando, after the rites of reception have been performed. Still living with all his thoughts in the world which he has just forsaken, he recognizes Leonora. His first impulse is to flee, but she detains him, explains everything and obtains his forgiveness. All his love returns. He would scale the walls with her, but it is too late. She expires in his arms, with the supreme cry, *riuniti saremo; addio!* "We shall be united once more. Farewell."

Fernando throws himself down near his loved one and is there found by the monks on their return from church. J. L.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

A correspondent says:—Swinburne is, probably, best known in America by his poorest work—his "Poems and Ballads," published here under the title of "Laus Veneris." These poems were written many years ago, and are filled with all the wildness and passion of his boyhood. A large majority of people, of course, not students of his poetry, have an idea that Swinburne is a name synonymous with dissipation and unbridled passion. Those who have carefully watched his career know that this is untrue. It is noticeable that the foremost British journals, such as *The Saturday Review*, *The Spectator*, *The Fortnightly*, etc., always treat Swinburne with the dignity and respect only awarded an author of high character, as well as of high genius and culture. Algernon Charles Swinburne is still a young man. He was born in London April 5, 1837, and entered Oxford in 1857. He left the University, however, before graduation. The father of the poet, Admiral Swinburne, is the son of Sir John Swinburne, a person whose life is well worth reading. Swinburne's mother is the daughter of the late Earl of Ashburnham, whose family, though one of them was the closest follower of Charles I. to his death, afterward held sensibly aloof from the cause of the later Stuarts, and increased in wealth and titles. Swinburne was five years at school, four of which were passed at Eton. He never cared for any pursuit, sport, or study as a youngster, except poetry, riding, and swimming; and though as a boy his verses may have been bad enough, he was far from bad at the two latter. Being bred by the sea, he was a good oarsman, and is vain to this day of having scaled a well-known cliff on the south coast, ever before and ever since reputed to be inaccessible. All of which repudiates the charge of physical debility and puny proportions laid at his door. Several years ago the Reform League solicited him to sit in Parliament, offering to insure his seat and pay all expenses, as representative of more advanced democratic or republican opinions than were represented there. He never in his life felt any ambition for any work or fame but a poet's (except, indeed, while yet a boy for a soldier's; but his father stamped that out). He appealed to the man he most loved and revered on earth—Mazzini being then luckily in London—if he thought it his duty to forego his own likings on the chance of being of use to the cause. Mazzini told him he need not. He never was more relieved in his life than when he felt that he could dismiss the application with a wholly clear conscience. As his anti-theism has been so much babbled about, perhaps I may here say what he really does think on religious matters. Having been as child and boy brought up a quasi-Catholic, of course he went in for that as passionately as for other things (i. e., well nigh to unaffected and unstrained ecstasies of adoration when receiving the Sacrament); then when this was stark dead and buried, it left nothing but a turbid nihilism, for a theist he never was.

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

FECHTER has retired to his home in Pennsylvania.

KATE FIELD will come home with a new play.

MISS CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN is seriously ill, indeed there is little hope that she will ever recover.

TITIENS is said to combine the mellifluousness of the nightingale with the sonority of the fog-horn.

IT is rumored that Miss Kellogg will produce "La Dame Blanche" during the coming season. This opera has been performed in Paris alone 1,346 times.

Mlle. ZULMA BOUFFAR is going to New York but not until she has played, for probably 100 nights, the character she is about to represent at the Paris Gaite.

SIGNOR BILETTA, a composer known in London, is about to produce his "Rosa de Firenze," which was first heard in Paris, at the Principe Umberto in Florence.

M. GOUNOD has put himself at the head of a movement for the erection of a monument to the late George Bizet, the composer of *Carmen* and of several other operas.

SIR MICHAEL COSTA, says that the finest voices in the world for singing are to be found in England, but that an efficient educational system has not yet been established.

MR. GRAU, the New York manager, is in Paris completing his engagement for the French theatre. New York. He has secured Mme. Judic for a series of performances in America.

MISS EVA ROSS-CHURCH, the daughter of Mrs. Ross-Church, better known as Miss Florence Maryatt, will shortly make her debut with the Chippendale-Vezin company at Brighton.

TENNYSON has, it is rumored, consented to extend the part of Archbishop Cranmer, at the earnest request of Henry Irving. Even the burning of the Protestant prelate is to be introduced upon the Lyceum stage.

M. HEROLD, son of the celebrated composer of the "Pré aux Clercs," has succeeded, as a member of the Municipal Council of Paris, in securing an addition of 10,000 for music to the 250,000 francs voted for the fine arts.

THE French Government has conferred on M. Membré, the composer of the opera "L'Esclave," the Cross of Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur. His new work, "Jeanne d'Arc," will not be produced at the Grand Opera before 1876.

THE house of Mademoiselle de Beaupré, the first woman who had the courage to go upon the stage, was recently destroyed. The first appearance of Mlle. was in the year 1675, feminine rôles having until that time been filled by men and boys.

A delicate compliment was paid Verdi during his recent visit to Vienna. His bust was sent for from Milan, and placed among the busts of other celebrated composers in the saloon of the Imperial Opera House, where it had previously been wanting.

WAGNER claims, and, of course, correctly, that for a man or woman to sing a long and tender love-song when in the agonies of death, is absurd; therefore, he asserts the nearer music is brought to the singer's actual feelings, the more perfect the composer's art.

WITH the sanction of the Dean of Westminster it is proposed to restore the quaint Latin inscription that formerly marked, in the north aisle of the church, the grave of Henry Purcell, the greatest of English composers, and the most famous of the organists of Westminster Abbey.

THE remains of the two composers, Donizetti and Simon Mayr, were removed to the Temple of Santa Maria, in Bergamo, during the first fortnight of this month. There was a Mass, taken from the works of the two musicians, two grand concerts, and performances of the two operas, "La Favorita" and "Don Sebastian" besides extracts from Donizetti's MS. opera, the "Duca d'Alba."

THERE have been some differences between Herr Wagner and his solo singers at Bayreuth, who complain bitterly of his severity at rehearsals. The famed tenor, Herr Niemann, the greatest dramatic artist of Germany, whose Rienzi, Tannhauser and Lohengrin, were things to see, has thrown up his parts in the "Nibelungen" and has left Bayreuth for Berlin. The composer will not be able to find an adequate successor to Niemann.

M. LEON ESCUDIER, the publisher in Paris of Verdi's operas, and editor of the *Art Musical*, has leased for a long period the Salle Ventadour, which he will open next April, with Signor Muzio, of New York, as musical director and conductor. Of course, the intention is to produce the "Aida" of Verdi, which, since its production at Cairo, has gone the round of opera houses in Italy, and has met with great success lately in Vienna. The cast in Paris will comprise Mmes. Stolz and Waldmann, Signori Masini, Pandolfini, and Medini.

VARIETIES.

It is proposed to widen London Bridge to the extent of eleven feet on each side. The cost of the work is estimated at £35,000.

It is probable the Prince of Wales will embark on his Indian voyage at Venice, calling at Navarino or some other part in the Morea to meet the King of Greece and will join the Serapis at Suez.

THE produce of Peter's pence still amounts to about six millions of francs. This is double the sum received annually by the Pope from the budget of the temporal Government at the period of its greatest prosperity.

THE French at Dieppe have got as near to the tapis vert as possible. They call the affair the *courses de salon*. On a prepared circular board eight mechanical horses and jockeys are started, and the one which arrives at the signal, or nearest it, wins the stakes.

A subscription has been taken to erect a statue of Mr. Plimsoll, M.P., in some prominent place near the docks at the East-End. The managing committee consists chiefly of workmen employed by large shipping and manufacturing firms at the East-End.

A practical School of Astronomy, the first in France, and probably the only one in Europe, has just been opened under the direction of Captain Mouchez, at the Observatory of Montsouris, close to Paris. The instruction is gratuitous, but the pupils are required to show sufficient theoretical knowledge to follow the practical studies with profit.

THE Paris Prefect of Police has just taken an excellent measure for the safety of the public. It is now formally forbidden to horse-dealers or any individuals to drive in Paris four-horse teams or tandems, unless the coachman is provided with a certificate indicating that he has the necessary ability. These certificates will be delivered by inspectors delegated to that effect. The like necessity would stop some of the four-in-hand driving in London.