

The Door-Yard Gate.

On making hinges it backward swings,
Spurred from ruin by time and fate,
The most familiar of old-time things,
The rickety, loose-hung door-yard gate.

Over its portal, for years and years,
A long procession went in and out,
Some with hearts that were touched by
tears,
Some with laughter and merry shout.

Friends came to visit, and neighbours to call;
On various errands, for talk or fun,—
A motley multitude, if they all
Could now be gathered beneath the sun.

The ardent lover, whose heart beat high,
Seeking for life some fitting mate,
Leaned over its framework with smile or
sigh,
And toyed with love and its soft debate.

The very wood upon which he leant
Must have felt the pulse of a human thrill;
And another form the bushes bereathed,—
I almost see its beauty still.

Then followed a bride, with face as fair
As any blossom the soft winds kiss;
But some tinge of sadness takes its share
In each wedding-feast—and it tinctured
this.

There were good-by kisses as she went out,
Bound for a world she did not know;
The old gate opened, we will not doubt,
To its most rapturous overflow.

But it opened, too, to the step of Death,
To the cold white face, and the funeral-
pall

That sickle whose greed for human breath
Comes sooner or later to each and all.

The bowed pack-peddler, the tramp for food,
Have ventured here a thousand times,—
The one was a guest of the neighbourhood,
The other trafficked for pennies and dimes.

Small feet have over its pathway crossed
That would swing upon it with merriest
glee,
Which now in the larger world are lost—
No happier guests did the old gate see.

Who would not give for that heart of youth,
The sportive frolic, the childhood plays,—
All fortune offers of fame or truth,
Of wealth, of power, of place, or praise?

Feware the footsteps that now pass through—
Over its portal there's silence to-day;
The world is older, all things are new,
And its time of favour fades far away.

But I see it still, arranged to swing,
And the backward push it seems to wait.
Oh, if Memory's halos crown one old thing,
'Tis this rickety, loose-hung door-yard
gate.

Memorials of St. Paul.

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It was on a beautiful spring day that I drove out to the reputed scene of the martyrdom of St. Paul. The road lies, for part of the way, along the bank of the Tiber. To the right lies the ancient *Marmorata*, or quay where marble was landed, where may still be seen the inclined plane on which the marble blocks were moved. We soon reach the gate of St. Paul, built by Belisarius, on the site of that through which the apostle must have passed. Just within the gate is the famous tomb of Costius,—an acute-pointed pyramid, one hundred and twenty-five feet high, on a base one hundred feet square. Though almost all things else have changed, this marble tomb presents the same sharp outline that must have met the eyes of St. Paul as he issued from beneath the grim arch of the neighbouring gate. At the foot of the pyramid spreads the little Protestant cemetery, where sleep the remains of many pilgrims from a foreign land, for whose return their loved ones wait in vain. Overshadowed by a melancholy cypress, I found the grave of the orring genius

Shelley. On his tombstone are the simple words "Oor Cordium;" only his heart is buried there, his body having been burned where it was washed ashore in the Bay of Spezzia. His own pen thus describes this beautiful spot—

"The grey walls moulder round, on which
dull Time

Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary braid;
And one keen pyramid, with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
Like flame transformed to marble; and be-
neath

A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in heaven's smile their camp of
death."

Near by is the grave of the gentler spirit, Keats, with its touching inscription,—
"Here lies one whose name was
writ in water."

About three miles from the gate of St. Paul, on a level spot begirt with low, rounded hills, is the ancient abbey of the Three Fountains. Once a rich and famous monastery with a humorous fraternity of monks, the deadly malaria has compelled its almost utter abandonment. Only a few pale Trappists now occupy the cells and observe the austere ritual of their order. A tall, grave brother, robed in a coarse serge gown, told in a low, sad voice the story of the fading frescoes and crumbling mosaics. He called my attention to the rapid growth of the eucalyptus trees, from which a more healthful condition of the soil and atmosphere was anticipated.

Within the little enclosure are three churches grouped together. The largest one dates from the time of Honorius I., A.D. 625. It has a grave and solemn character, and is adorned with coarse frescoes of the apostles. The chief interest centres in the church of the Three Fountains. It takes its name from the legend, that when the apostle's head was smitten off by the sword of the executioner, it made three bounds upon the ground, and that at each place where the severed head touched the earth, a miraculous fountain burst forth. In confirmation of this legend, there are shown within the church, three wells, surrounded with beautiful white marble enclosures. With a long-handled ladle, the monk dipped into one of the wells, and, with a courteous bow, offered me a draught of the sacred water. It was pure and limpid, but I am afraid that my lack of faith prevented my deriving from it the spiritual benefit which it is supposed to convey. In proof of the truth of the tradition, it is asserted that the first of these fountains is warm, the second tepid, the third cold; but I did not care to try the patience of my courteous guide by an exhibition of heretic doubt.

Over each of the fountains is a marble altar decorated with a bas-relief of the head of the apostle. The first is full of life, with a rapt expression of victorious martyrdom. In the second, the shadows of death already cover the noble features. In the third, the face is stricken with the icy rigours of the tomb. Despite the puerile tradition, one cannot but feel the spell of hallowed association rest upon his soul at the thought that in all probability he is near the spot where the hero soul looked its last on earth, and through the swift pang of martyrdom went home in triumph to the skies.

Doubtless—for even the stern Roman law made not war upon the dead—doubtless weeping friends were permitted to bear away the martyr's body for burial in those lowly crypts where "through many ages of oppression the persecuted Church found refuge for the

living, and sepulchres for the dead." Tradition affirms that the body was first buried in the crypt of Lucina, now a part of the catacomb of St. Calixtus. The legend goes on to say that the Oriental Christians attempted to carry away the honoured remains as belonging of right to them as the apostle's fellow-countrymen. A violent storm, however, it is said, prevented the accomplishment of this purpose, and the Roman Christians re-interred the body in a tomb which may still be seen in a very ancient and curious chamber connected with the church of St. Sebastian, on the Appian Way. After visiting the Three Fountains I drove across the desolate Campagna to examine this tomb. Passing behind the high altar, and descending a flight of stone steps, one enters a vaulted subterranean chamber, around which are a number of ancient tombs. In the centre of this chamber is an opening in the marble floor widening in a vaulted and frescoed tomb about six feet square and as many deep. And here it is tradition declares the stolen body was placed.* In confirmation of the tradition, Damascus, bishop of Rome, 358 to 384 A.D., placed here an inscription which reads in part as follows:

*"Hic habitasse prius sanctos cognoscere debes.
Nomina quisque Petri pariter Paulique
requiris."*

"Here you must know the saints once
dwelt. If you ask their names, they
were Peter and Paul." And the in-
scription goes on to recount the pious
theft. But one's faith in the story is
shaken by the association of St. Peter
with St. Paul. The very minuteness
of detail in the legends of St. Peter is
their own refutation. In vain are we
shown the chair in which tradition
asserts that he sat, the font at which
he baptized, the cell in which he was
confined, the fountain which sprang up
in its floor, the pillar to which he was
bound, the chains that he wore, the im-
pression made by his head in the wall
and by his knees in the stony pavement,
the scene of his crucifixion, the very
hole in which the foot of the cross was
placed, and the tomb in which his body
is said to lie; they all fail to carry con-
viction to any mind in which the critical
faculty has not been destroyed by the
superstitions of Rome. Nor is the evi-
dence much stronger in favour of the
tradition that the remains of the great
Apostle to the Gentiles now rests be-
neath the high altar of the stately
Church of St. Paul Without the Walls.

Victor Hugo.

VICTOR HUGO, the great French poet, dramatist and orator, died in Paris on the 22nd of May, 1885, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. Thus closed a long life, full of activity and vicissitude, replete with literary triumphs, and noble and true in moral conduct.

Before Victor Hugo reached his twentieth year he had become celebrated as a poet. Even at the age of ten he had written poems which foreshadowed the success which was to crown him, in after years, as the greatest French bard since Voltaire. At fourteen he wrote a tragedy, in which the germs of genius betrayed themselves. At fifteen he contended for the prize of the French Academy.

He was scarcely of age when Chateaubriand, at that time perhaps the most

* Engravings of this chamber and tomb are given in Withrow's "Catacombs of Rome," pp. 187, 188.

ominent of French writers, called him "the sublime child." And from that time to the day of his death, Victor Hugo was a conspicuous figure, both in literature and in politics, before the world.

Victor Hugo's father was a general in Napoleon's army, and fought with the "little corporal's" troops in the valleys of Spain. His mother was a Breton of noble blood, and a woman of strong character and Royalist sympathies.

The young poet began life as an ardent champion of the House of Bourbon. Before he was thirty, however, he had changed his political beliefs, and in 1830 he took part in the revolution which deposed Charles X. and placed the "Citizen King," Louis Philippe, on the French throne. He was created a Senator by that monarch, and for a while supported the Orleans dynasty.

But when the third revolution—that of 1848—broke out, Victor Hugo became a Republican, and a Republican of the most advanced and uncompromising type he always afterward remained.

No Frenchman more strenuously or more eloquently opposed Louis Napoleon as President than did Victor Hugo. So violent was his hostility, that when Louis Napoleon destroyed the Republic, and became Emperor, Victor Hugo was exiled, and a price was set upon his head.

The poet remained in exile, living most of the time on the island of Guernsey, in the British Channel, for eighteen years. During this period, he wrote "Les Misérables," the best-known of his romances, and some of the most famous of his poems.

Victor Hugo returned to Paris after the fall of Napoleon at Sedan in 1870, and when the third Republic was established. Some time afterwards, he was elected a life Senator, and this office he held at the time of his death. His literary career was a series of splendid triumphs. He wrote a number of thrilling dramas, mostly historical, of which the best known are "Cromwell," "Lucretia Borgia," "Hernani," "Marion de Lorme," and "Ruy Blas." He also wrote many long poems, the most noted being, "The Legend of the Ages," and "The Punishments." He also wrote a scathing satire on Napoleon III., entitled "Napoleon the Little."

Victor Hugo was impracticable and visionary as a politician, but had a burning love of liberty. Both in his works and in his public and private acts he ardently championed the cause of the oppressed, the humble, and the poor. His heart was as great and magnanimous as his genius was brilliant.

He loved men, and nature, and little children; and dreamed of a time when the world should be free, and united in a brotherhood of affection and liberty. He was a warm friend of America, and gave us many fervid words of God-speed in the days of our national trouble.

At the time of his death in ripe and prosperous old age, Victor Hugo was far the most illustrious Frenchman. In spite of his extravagances of opinion and utterance, his memory will be revered by Frenchmen of every party and sect; and all mankind will bow in reverent sorrow at this great old man's tomb.—*Youth's Companion*.

EVERY scholar should be a student.