

SCENE.

NATURE'S NOBLEMAN.

Thou art one, oh brawny workor,  
Thou art one of Nature's own,  
Though thou hast no ancient patent,  
No long list of heroic flow.  
No baronial hall or manor,  
No high sounding knightly name,  
Thou art noble, if thy lineage  
Comes unblemish'd by fauo.

Thou art noble stalwart minor,  
Thou art noble earth for spoil,  
Thou art noble, sturdy mason,  
Thou art noble, sturdy toiler,  
Ye have not a crumb majestic  
That will ever meet decay,  
Ye have not the grief of manhood  
That will never fade away.

Thou art noble swartly blacksmith,  
Singing for the fire's glow,  
Son of Vulcan, son of labor,  
Nature's stamp is on your brow,  
Thou art noble, man of iron,  
Not a nail or spike ever clings,  
To a prouder rank or station—  
Thou art one of Nature's kings.

Thou art noble, patient printer,  
Than those potentates of earth,  
O'erlooked, royal serjants,  
Fall of evil, void of worth,  
Thou art greater than the tyrant  
Wearing Europe's brightest crown,  
Ye are more in dependent,  
He frail fortune's tinsel clown.

Cap of divinity, robe of purple,  
Countless serjants and breath of state,  
Can not make a man more great,  
Cannot make a man more great,  
He whose hands are rough with labor,  
Labor in the forge and field,  
Bears the truest marks of greatness,  
Beats the patent Nature sealed.

IN MEMORIAM.

On the bosom of a river,  
Where the sun unglomed its quiver  
And the star-light gleamed forever,  
Sailed a vessel light and free.  
Morn'ng dew-drops hung like manna  
On the bright fold of her banner,  
And the zephyrs rose to fan her,  
Softly to the radiant sea.

At her prow, a pilot, beaming  
In the flush of youth, stood dreaming,  
And he was in glorious seeming  
Like an angel from above.  
Through his hair the breezes sported,  
And as on the wave he floated,  
Oft that pilot angel thro'ed,  
Warbled lays of hope and love.

Through those locks so blithely flowing  
Buds of laurel bloom were blowing,  
And his hands full soon were throwing  
Music from a lyre of gold.  
Swiftly down the stream he glided,  
Soft the purple wave divided,  
And a rainbow arch divided  
On his canvas' snowy fold.

Anxious hearts with fond devotion  
Watched him sailing to the ocean,  
Prayed that never wild commotion  
Might the elements might rise,  
And he seemed like some Apollo  
Charming summer winds to follow,  
While the water flag's low carol  
Trembled to his music sighs.

But these purple waves enchanted,  
Rolled beside a city haunted,  
By an awful spell that daunted  
Every oar to the shore.  
The night shades rank, the air encumbered,  
And the pale marble statues numbered  
Where the lotu's eaters slumbered,  
And woke to life no more.

Then there rushed with lightning quickness  
O'er his face a mortal sickness,  
And the dew in fearful thickess  
Gathered o'er his temple fair.  
And there swept a dying murmur  
Through the lovely Southern summer,  
As the beautiful pilot o'er  
Perished by that city there.

Still rolls on that radiant river,  
And the sun unbinds his quiver,  
And the sunlight streams forever  
On its bosom as before.  
But the vessel's rainbow banner  
Greets no more the gav Savanna,  
And that pilot's lute drops manna  
On the purple waves no more.

Tales and Sketches.

THE BEGGAR OF SAN-MARC,  
A VENETIAN STORY.

CHAPTER IV.

While this scene was taking place in the Hotel R—a very different one, and yet nearly contemporaneous with it, was enacting in another quarter of the city. Situated up on a low pallat in one corner of a small stifling apartment was the old beggar of San Marc. His eyes were closed; but, if sleeping, the contraction of his brow still denoted suffering. Kneeling by his side was Isola, tenderly bathing his temples, half-sup-

pressed sobs heaving her gentle bosom, and the tears, in large liquid drops, resting upon her long brown eye-lashes. She was very pale, and her features, lovely as they were, seemed as if sharpened by famine. Her luxuriant golden tresses, gathered in a knot upon the top of her beautifully formed head, were as a crown of a virgin innocence to the fair girl, while her dress, although of the most humble material, was yet arranged with a natural ease and grace, to which no studied form of fashion could have added a charm.

Crouching at her side was a small tame gazella, its graceful head resting upon its shoulder fore-feet and its large brown eyes, with an expression of almost human affection, fixed upon the pale countenance of its young mistress.

On a little table which stood near the bed were several wax figures, moulded in the most life-like and perfect symmetry; also clusters of fruit and flowers of the most delicate material, true in form and color to the very perfection of nature. At the head of the bed was suspended an ebony crucifix, at the foot a picture of the Virgin; nor were these last the only things which imparted an air of holiness to the meagre apartment; for old age and maiden purity were there, and hall-well it. In the window stood a little vase in which one solitary flower was blooming. It looked sickly and pining, as it were, for a purer atmosphere, although so carefully and tenderly cherished by Isola. Poor Isola! it had been watered by her tears, and her sighs had fanned its opening petals.

This window, the only one, looked down upon the dark, sluggish waters of a lagoon, upon the opposite bank of which was a long row of dilapidated dwellings, from which old beds and tattered garments protruded through the painted windows, and half-naked children were paddling in the slimy waters. In strange contrast to the poverty of the apartment I have described, was the long flight of rich marble steps, supported by heavily-carved pillars leading down to the lagoon from the story above, and parading themselves, as it were, directly by the window.

For some time no sound broke the stillness of this little room. The old man remained quiet; and at length, overcome with weariness, the head of Isola sank upon the couch, and sleep, like a gentle mother, enfolded her. The splash of oars, and the murmur of the water, suddenly aroused the gazella, who had remained motionless watching the slumbers of her mistress, and appearing to understand, as if imbued with human instinct, how beneficial a few moments' repose would prove to her.

Beneath the window a gondola softly glided, and mooring his light craft, the gondolier, springing quickly up the steps, gently opened the door, and entered the apartment. Slight as was the noise he made, it awoke Isola.

"Blessed Virgin! I thank thee!" she exclaimed. "Ah, Giuseppe, I feared you might not come to-day—my poor father!"

"Holy Mother! what has happened, Signorina? what ails the Signor?" cried the gondolier, hastily approaching the bed, and gazing anxiously upon the old man.

"Alas, Giuseppe, I fear my father is very ill! Last night, in crossing the Rio, we were met by a party of rude men, and, as separated by an insult offered to me, my father struck one of them a blow—"

"Diavolo! insult you, Signorina! The ruffians—would they could taste my stiletto!" exclaimed Giuseppe, setting his teeth, and half drawing the weapon from his bosom.

"They attacked my father," continued Isola, "regardless of his old age, as they were reckless of the sacred feeling which dictated the blow; and Heaven knows what would have become of us, had it not been for a stranger who interferred in our behalf, and with noble generosity defended us. Ah, Giuseppe, I shudder now to think what might have been my fate, but for his timely assistance! It was fortunate, perhaps, that the arrival of the police put an end to the affray; but I could not even stop to pour out my thanks to this generous stranger, for my father drew me hastily away from the spot. It was with difficulty we reached our home, my father seemed so weak and exhausted; and then Giuseppe, he sank into the same state in which you now see him. I fear he has received some severe internal injury. What shall I do? without money—without friends—must I see my dear father die for want of care and proper nourishment?" exclaimed Isola, bursting into tears.

"Courage, Signorina; it may not be so bad as all that!" answered the gondolier, striving to conceal his emotion. "Thank the Virgin, Giuseppe has a few ducats still—here they are, Signorina; now tell me what I can do for you?"

"Giuseppe, you have a wife and children," answered Isola; "I cannot take what is theirs—only if you could bring hither a physician, perhaps he could help my poor father. Oh if he should die, Giuseppe—if he should die!"

"Don't weep, dear Signorina," said Giuseppe, wiping a tear from his own eye; "I will instantly go in search of one—I will bring a little wine, too, for the Signor—it may revive him."

"Wise! do you know, Giuseppe," cried Isola, catching his arm, "that for two days we have not tasted food? And that, driven to despair, my poor father, yesterday, for my sake, begged alms in the public walks of Venice!"

"Blessed Virgin! what do I hear! and I, wretch that I am, have both eaten and drunk while my noble lord was starving!" cried Giuseppe, botting his breast.

"This morning," continued Isola, "I stole out with these little wax figures, which I sat up all night to finish, hoping to sell them, that I might procure a little food for my dear father when he should awake; for in the fray last night, even the little sum which charity bestowed upon us was lost; but no one would buy—I could not beg, Giuseppe—alas! My poor little gazella, she must not starve; take her—perhaps some one will buy her who can take better care of her than her unfortunate mistress; but they cannot have thee more, my poor Ninette!" and Isola threw her arms around the neck of the little animal, which rested its head fondly against her cheek, and with its soft tongue licked the small hand of its mistress.

"Soll Ninette! now the saints for bid!" exclaimed Giuseppe. "No, Signorina, I will take the little creature home to the children, and feel her well—bless your dear heart. I would sooner sell my own little Lino! No, no, I will keep her for you until the Signor is better."

"Will he be better? tell me, tell me, Giuseppe; do you think he will live?" cried Isola, catching eagerly the hope which these few last words of the gondolier inspired.

"Signorina, God is good—my honoured master may live, but—"

"Giuseppe, if my father dies, pray God to take his child also."

"Ah, who knows what a skilful physician may do for him? Courage, Signorina; I will fetch one in less than twenty minutes, and some food too, for you my dear young lady—sinner that I am, that have already broken my fast, and drunken my flagon of stout Palermitano!"

"And the gazella, poor Ninette—will you take her with you, Giuseppe?" said Isola.

"I will return for her, Signorina." So saying, the honest gondolier hastened from the apartment, and the next moment the rapid splash of oars assured Isola that the assistance she so much desired for her father would soon be procured.

CHAPTER V.

In the meantime our American party having visited the Ducal Palace, it was proposed by Winthrop, as there was yet time before dinner, to row across the Lido, whose shady groves and rich greenward offered so tempting a contrast to the stately marble domes and pavements of Venice; and Mary, hoping by that means to keep Irving with them, gladly acceded to the proposition.

It was a lovely day for such an excursion, and our friends glided luxuriously across the Giudecca, reclining on the soft velvet cushions of a gondola, whose tasteful drapery swept the silver surface of the waves, and listening to the music of the gondoliers as they sang verses from their own Tasso, to which charming melody the light rippling of the water formed a pleasing accompaniment. Beautiful as was the scene, it had but little charm for Irving.

Away from those bright waters and the brighter Italian sky, his thoughts wandered to the gloomy aisles of San Marc, and the song of the gondoliers was lost in the memory of the sweet and touching tones of the beggar's daughter. Silent, therefore, he sat, as the gondola kept its easy motion, more than ever regretting that he had not pursued his search, or that he had yielded up the morning to his sister.

They had nearly reached the middle of the canal, when a gondola was seen swiftly approaching, and, as it neared the one in which our party were seated, the gondoliers poised their oars a moment, and exchanged a gay salute:—

"Ha! Giuseppe, by the mass, thou hast an odd passenger there—where are you going with so choice a freight?" cried one.

"Choice, indeed, Matteo!" replied Giuseppe; "for this pretty little gazella belongs to the loveliest Signorina in Venice!"

"Well, buono viaggio!" (pleasant journey), cried the first speaker, as he once more sank the oar. But Mary, attracted by the beauty of the little animal, entreated the gondoliers to stay their movements, and motioned Giuseppe to approach nearer.

"What a perfect little creature—what tender eyes! Do you remember, Charles, the little fawn we had at home when we were children? Ah, I wish this pretty gazella was mine!" she exclaimed.

"Perhaps we can buy it, Mary—will you sell the gazella, friend?" said Winthrop, addressing Giuseppe.

"Sell Ninette, Signorina!—ah, no, not for fifty zechins—though Heaven knows the money is needed enough, for even now the poor old Signor may be dying, and my beloved Signorina is nearly starving!"

"How—what tale of distress is this—of whom are you speaking?" inquired Irving.

"Of a noble Venetian gentleman, Signor," replied the gondolier, respectfully. "You are foreigners; but I can tell you, there are many such in Venice now begging their bread, whose ancestors swayed the Republic!"

"Vera, vera (true, true), Giuseppe!" exclaimed another gondolier.

"Ah, my beautiful lady," continued Giuseppe, turning to Mary; "could you but see the poor Signorina, you would pity her! She knows her old father cannot much longer survive his sorrows—for the physician has

just told her—and then she will be cast friendless and alone upon the world! Ah, she is an angel, Signorina! She could not see her little favorite starve, and so she bade me sell it!"

"And yet you refuse to part with it!" said Winthrop.

"Yes, Signor; I will keep her at home as a plaything for my little ones. Better days may come to my young lady; and would not Giuseppe feel like a knave to know that he could not lead back Ninette to her young mistress?"

Irving, who had listened with deep interest to the words of the gondolier, now suddenly explained—"Where is she? Conduct me to her. If too late to save the father, something may be done to comfort the poor daughter!"

"Ah, grazie, grazie (thanks, thanks), Signorina! may the Holy Virgin bless you for the deed!" cried Giuseppe.

"Let us all go!" said Mary, her eyes filling with tears; "poor girl, my heart aches for her! Oh, row quickly, friends, let us not lose a moment."

With swift, glancing oars, the gondoliers now followed in the wake of Giuseppe, who, joyfully turning his gondola, left the Giudecca, and sped on toward the dark lacuna, among whose decayed palaces dwelt in their misery the old man and his child.

As they reached the foot of the stairs, loud sobs and shrieks met their ears.

"Holy Mother! the poor Signorina—what has happened!" cried Giuseppe, as with a bound he cleared the steps, and pushed open the door, followed closely by Irving, who, in his eagerness, had left his companions far behind.

It was all over. In the old embrace of death the old man rested kindly. His sorrows were ended; and the heavenly smile which lingered upon his noble features told of the joys which greeted the soul's advent to another and a brighter world.

Poor Isola! Alone, and heart-broken, had she met the trying hour—alone had she wiped the death-dew from her father's brow—alone had she received his last sigh; and then, no longer able to restrain the utterances of that grief, which, in fear of disturbing her beloved parent she had so bravely controlled, with a shriek of despair she threw herself upon the lifeless body, and wringing her arms about it, gave way to her wretchedness.

CHAPTER VI.

Six months from the date of the last scene I have described, a happy circle were seated in a balcony overlooking the waters of the glorious Hudson, hearing in the silvery brightness of a June moon; and up and down its graceful sweep, until lost within the dark shadows of the Highlands, white sails, like snowy clouds, flew before the gentle wind—the same gentle wind which, bearing upon its wings the sweet fragrance of conit blossoms, whispered to the heart of one of the party—the fair Isola—of the far distant home of her childhood under the bright skies of Italy.

Her speaking features betrayed the momentary sadness which these tender reminiscences caused her; and Irving, with the watchful eyes of love, reading the clear page, softly whispered: "Why so sad to night, dearest Isola? The eve of our marriage must not find a shadow upon that beloved brow; to me the very heavens seem to smile, as I think that to-morrow, dear one, will make you mine!"

"Forgive me," she replied, raising her eyes tenderly to his; "there is something in this scene which touches my soul like notes of music we have listened to in other days—I was thinking of my father, Charles. Ah! from those realms of bliss above does he smile upon the happiness of his child! O Charles, when I contrast the sad scenes which marked the last year of my poor father's life, with these which now surround me, so replete with happiness, I seem to be the sport of some blissful dream!"

"And a dream, dear Isola, from which let it be my care no rude storm shall arouse you?" replied Irving. "In the joys of the present, let the bitter past be buried—joys which to me would have never been, but for those sorrows which first awoke my sympathy and my love! Yes, Isola, I loved you from the first moment that I saw you in your sadness, kneeling at the feet of your father, upon the pavement of San Marc, and shall ever bless the hour, when, led on by an interest which I then could not explain, I found you in that moment of your desolation and woe, when death had left you an orphan!"

"And I, too, Charles, must bless that perceiving yet generous spirit of yours, which has given me so dear a sister!" said Mary Winthrop, embracing Isola.

"I acknowledge, Irving, that I thought you a romantic, headstrong youth," continued Winthrop; "but when I see before me the lovely prize which rewarded your zealous pursuit, I also must be thankful that this very perverseness of yours rendered my ridicule and my advice alike powerless, and has given to our home and hearts one whom it will ever be our pride and happiness to love and cherish."

THE END.

GUULDEN'S LAST DRINK.

I have travelled this road every day of my life since it was laid, in charge of the San Francisco, the prettiest and best engine on the line. I was a Southwestern road, running as we will say from A to Z. At A, my mother lived, and at Z, I had the prettiest little wife in the world, and a baby, the very image of his pa. I had always had a dollar put by for a rainy day, and the boys spoke of me as an odd kind of man. To be shut up with an engine, watching with all your eyes, and heart and soul, don't make a conscientious man talkative, and I never squandered my leisure, spinning yarns and listening to railway jokes in the round-house. My wife's name was Josephine, and I called her "Joe."

I never belonged to any of the railway clubs or other organizations, and never should if it hadn't been for Granby. Granby was a nephew of our division superintendent, and it's a failing of us men of the road that we liked to be noticed by the fellows at headquarters, if only permitted to touch the hem of their garments. Granby was a showy fellow and often rode with me from A to Z. He had a good opinion of me, and as far as I knew, we were friends. Once he said to me:

"You ought to belong to the Railway Scientific Club, Guelden."

"Never heard of it," said I.

"We meet once a fortnight," he replied "and have a jolly good time. We are practical, thinking men of your sort, and I'll propose you if you like."

I was fond of such things, and I had ideas that I fancied might be worth something. But an engineer don't have many nights or days to himself, and the club would have one evening a fortnight from Joe. I said:

"I will ask her. If she likes it, yes." "Ask whom?" he said.

"Joe," said I.

"If every man had asked his wife, every man's wife would have said: 'Can't spare you, my dear, and we should have no club, at all,' said Granby.

But I made no answer. At home I told Joe. She said:

"I shall miss you, Ned; but you do love such things, and if Granby belongs to it, they must be superior men."

So I said "yes," and Granby proposed me. That day fortnight I went with him to the rooms. The real business of the evening was the supper.

I had always been a temperate man. I did not know what effect wine would have on me, but coming to drink more than I had ever before had at the club table, I found it put steam on. After company glasses, I wanted to talk, and after so many I did.

I seemed like somebody else, the words were so ready. My ideas came out and were listened to. I made snappy hits and even came to puns. I heard somebody say: "Granby, by George, that's a man worth having. I thought him dull at first." Yet I knew it was better to be quiet Ned Guelden, with his ten words an hour, than the wine-made wit I was.

I was sure of it when three hours after I stumbled up stairs to find Joe waiting for me, with her baby on her breast.

"You've been deceiving me," said Joe. "I suspected it, but wasn't sure. A scientific club could not smell like a bar-room."

"When means that I do," said I.

"And look like one," said Joe, as she locked her elf and baby in the spare room.

One night I was dressed in my Sunday suit, ready to go to the club when Joe stood before me.

"Ned," said she, "I never had a fault to find with you before. You've been very kind and good and loving always, but I should be sorry we ever met if you go on this way. Don't ask what I mean—you know."

"It's only club night," I said.

"It will grow," said she.

Then she put her hands around my neck.

"Ned," said she, "do you think a thing so much like a belted and strapped down demon as steam is fit to put into the hands of a drunken man? And some day, mark my words, not only Thursday night, but all the days of the week, you will be the same. I have often heard you wonder what the feelings of an engineer who has about the same as murdered a train full of people must be, and you'll know if you don't stop where you are. A steady hand and a clear head have been your blessing all these years. Don't throw them away, Ned, if you don't care for my love, don't ruin yourself."

My little Joe! She spoke from her heart, and I bent over and kissed her.

"Don't be afraid, child; I'll never pain you again."

And I meant it; but at twelve o'clock that night I felt that I had forgotten my promise and my resolution.

I couldn't go home to Joe. I made up my mind to sleep on the club sofa, and leave the place for good the next day. Already I felt my brain reel as it had never done before. In an hour I was in a kind of stupor. It was morning. A waiter stood ready to brush my coat. I saw a grin on his face. My head seemed ready to burst; my hand trembled. I looked at my watch; I had only just five minutes to reach the depot!

Joe's words came to my mind: Was I fit to take charge of an engine? I was not fit to answer. I ought to have asked some sober man. As it was I only caught my hat and rushed away. I was just in time.