

VICTOR HUGO

POEMS

Виктор Мари Гюго

Poems

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Victor Hugo

Poems

MEMOIR OF VICTOR MARIE HUGO

Towards the close of the First French Revolution, Joseph Leopold Sigisbert Hugo, son of a joiner at Nancy, and an officer risen from the ranks in the Republican army, married Sophie Trébuchet, daughter of a Nantes fitter-out of privateers, a Vendean royalist and devotee.

Victor Marie Hugo, their second son, was born on the 26th of February, 1802, at Besançon, France. Though a weakling, he was carried, with his boy-brothers, in the train of their father through the south of France, in pursuit of Fra Diavolo, the Italian brigand, and finally into Spain.

Colonel Hugo had become General, and there, besides being governor over three provinces, was Lord High Steward at King Joseph's court, where his eldest son Abel was installed as page. The other two were educated for similar posts among hostile young Spaniards under stern priestly tutors in the Nobles' College at Madrid, a palace become a monastery. Upon the English advance to free Spain of the invaders, the general and Abel remained at bay, whilst the mother and children hastened to Paris.

Again, in a house once a convent, Victor and his brother Eugène were taught by priests until, by the accident of their roof sheltering a comrade of their father's, a change of tutor was afforded them. This was General Lahorie, a man of superior education, main supporter of Malet in his daring plot to take the government into the Republicans' hands during the absence of Napoleon I. in Russia. Lahorie read old French and Latin with Victor till the police scented him out and led him to execution, October, 1812.

School claimed the young Hugos after this tragical episode, where they were oddities among the humdrum tradesmen's sons. Victor, thoughtful and taciturn, rhymed profusely in tragedies, "printing" in his books, "Châteaubriand or nothing!" and engaging his more animated brother to flourish the Cid's sword and roar the tyrant's speeches.

In 1814, both suffered a sympathetic anxiety as their father held out at Thionville against the Allies, finally repulsing them by a sortie. This was pure loyalty to the fallen Bonaparte, for Hugo had lost his all in Spain, his very savings having been sunk in real estate, through King Joseph's insistence on his adherents investing to prove they had "come to stay."

The Bourbons enthroned anew, General Hugo received, less for his neutrality than thanks to his wife's piety and loyalty, confirmation of his title and rank, and, moreover, a fieldmarshalship. Abel was accepted as a page, too, but there was no money awarded the ex-Bonapartist – money being what the Eaglet at Reichstadt most required for an attempt at his father's throne – and the poor officer was left in seclusion to write consolingly about his campaigns and "Defences of Fortified Towns."

Decidedly the pen had superseded the sword, for Victor and Eugène were scribbling away in ephemeral political sheets as apprenticeship to founding a periodical of their own.

Victor's poetry became remarkable in *La Muse Française* and *Le Conservateur Littéraire*, the odes being permeated with Legitimist and anti-revolutionary sentiments delightful to the taste of Madam Hugo, member as she was of the courtly Order of the Royal Lily.

In 1817, the French Academy honorably mentioned Victor's "Odes on the Advantages of Study," with a misgiving that some elder hand was masked under the line ascribing "scant fifteen years" to the author. At the Toulouse Floral Games he won prizes two years successively. His critical judgment was sound as well, for he had divined the powers of Lamartine.

His "Odes," collected in a volume, gave his ever-active mother her opportunity at Court. Louis XVIII. granted the boy-poet a pension of 1,500 francs.

It was the windfall for which the youth had been waiting to enable him to gratify his first love. In his childhood, his father and one M. Foucher, head of a War Office Department, had jokingly betrothed a son of the one to a daughter of the other. Abel had loftier views than alliance with a civil servant's child; Eugène was in love elsewhere; but Victor had fallen enamored with Adèle Foucher. It is true, when poverty beclouded the Hugos, the Fouchers had shrunk into their mantle of dignity, and the girl had been strictly forbidden to correspond with her child-sweetheart.

He, finding letters barred out, wrote a love story ("Hans of Iceland") in two weeks, where were recited his hopes, fears, and constancy, and this book she could read.

It pleased the public no less, and its sale, together with that of the "Odes" and a West Indian romance, "Buck Jargal," together with a royal pension, emboldened the poet to renew his love-suit. To refuse the recipient of court funds was not possible to a public functionary. M. Foucher consented to the betrothal in the summer of 1821.

So enclloistered had Mdlle. Adèle been, her reading "Hans" the exceptional intrusion, that she only learnt on meeting her affianced that he was mourning his mother. In October, 1822, they were wed, the bride nineteen, the bridegroom but one year the elder. The dinner was marred by the sinister disaster of Eugène Hugo going mad. (He died in an asylum five years later.) The author terminated his wedding year with the "Ode to Louis XVIII.," read to a society after the President of the Academy had introduced him as "the most promising of our young lyrists."

In spite of new poems revealing a Napoleonic bias, Victor was invited to see Charles X. consecrated at Rheims, 29th of May, 1825, and was entered on the roll of the Legion of Honor repaying the favors with the verses expected. But though a son was born to him he was not restored to Conservatism; with his mother's death all that had vanished. His tragedy of "Cromwell" broke lances upon Royalists and upholders of the still reigning style of tragedy. The second collection of "Odes" precluding it, showed the spirit of the son of Napoleon's general, rather than of the Bourbonist field-marshal. On the occasion, too, of the Duke of Tarento being announced at the Austrian Ambassador's ball, February, 1827, as plain "Marshal Macdonald," Victor became the mouthpiece of indignant Bonapartists in his "Ode to the Napoleon Column" in the Place Vendôme.

His "Orientales," though written in a Parisian suburb by one who had not travelled, appealed for Grecian liberty, and depicted sultans and pashas as tyrants, many a line being deemed applicable to personages nearer the Seine than Stamboul.

"Cromwell" was not actable, and "Amy Robsart," in collaboration with his brother-in-law, Foucher, miserably failed, notwithstanding a finale "superior to Scott's 'Kenilworth.'" In one twelvemonth, there was this failure to record, the death of his father from apoplexy at his eldest son's marriage, and the birth of a second son to Victor towards the close.

Still imprudent, the young father again irritated the court with satire in "Marion Delorme" and "Hernani," two plays immediately suppressed by the Censure, all the more active as the Revolution of July, 1830, was surely seething up to the edge of the crater.

(At this juncture, the poet Châteaubriand, fading star to our rising sun, yielded up to him formally "his place at the poets' table.")

In the summer of 1831, a civil ceremony was performed over the insurgents killed in the previous year, and Hugo was constituted poet-laureate of the Revolution by having his hymn sung in the Pantheon over the biers.

Under Louis Philippe, "Marion Delorme" could be played, but livelier attention was turned to "Nôtre Dame de Paris," the historical romance in which Hugo vied with Sir Walter. It was to have been followed by others, but the publisher unfortunately secured a contract to monopolize all the new novelist's prose fictions for a term of years, and the author revenged himself by publishing poems and plays alone. Hence "Nôtre Dame" long stood unique: it was translated in all languages, and plays and operas were founded on it. Heine professed to see in the prominence of the hunchback a personal appeal of the author, who was slightly deformed by one shoulder being a trifle higher than the other;

this malicious suggestion reposed also on the fact that the *quasi*-hero of "Le Roi s'Amuse" (1832, a tragedy suppressed after one representation, for its reflections on royalty), was also a contorted piece of humanity. This play was followed by "Lucrezia Borgia," "Marie Tudor," and "Angelo," written in a singular poetic prose. Spite of bald translations, their action was sufficiently dramatic to make them successes, and even still enduring on our stage. They have all been arranged as operas, whilst Hugo himself, to oblige the father of Louise Bertin, a magazine publisher of note, wrote "Esmeralda" for her music in 1835.

Thus, at 1837, when he was promoted to an officership in the Legion of Honor, it was acknowledged his due as a laborious worker in all fields of literature, however contestable the merits and tendencies of his essays.

In 1839, the Academy, having rejected him several times, elected him among the Forty Immortals. In the previous year had been successfully acted "Ruy Blas," for which play he had gone to Spanish sources; with and after the then imperative Rhine tour, came an unendurable "trilogy," the "Burgraves," played one long, long night in 1843. A real tragedy was to mark that year: his daughter Léopoldine being drowned in the Seine with her husband, who would not save himself when he found that her death-grasp on the sinking boat was not to be loosed.

For distraction, Hugo plunged into politics. A peer in 1845, he sat between Marshal Soult and Pontécoulant, the regicide-judge of Louis XVI. His maiden speech bore upon artistic copyright; but he rapidly became a power in much graver matters.

As fate would have it, his speech on the Bonapartes induced King Louis Philippe to allow Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte to return, and, there being no gratitude in politics, the emancipated outlaw rose as a rival candidate for the Presidency, for which Hugo had nominated himself in his newspaper the *Evènement*. The story of the *Coup d'État* is well known; for the Republican's side, read Hugo's own "History of a Crime." Hugo, proscribed, betook himself to Brussels, London, and the Channel Islands, waiting to "return with right when the usurper should be expelled."

Meanwhile, he satirized the Third Napoleon and his congeners with ceaseless shafts, the principal being the famous "Napoleon the Little," based on the analogical reasoning that as the earth has moons, the lion the jackal, man himself his simian double, a minor Napoleon was inevitable as a standard of estimation, the grain by which a pyramid is measured. These flings were collected in "Les Châtiments," a volume preceded by "Les Contemplations" (mostly written in the '40's), and followed by "Les Chansons des Rues et des Bois."

The baffled publisher's close-time having expired, or, at least, his heirs being satisfied, three novels appeared, long heralded: in 1862, "Les Misérables" (Ye Wretched), wherein the author figures as Marius and his father as the Bonapartist officer: in 1866, "Les Travailleurs de la Mer" (Toilers of the Sea), its scene among the Channel Islands; and, in 1868, "L'Homme Qui Rit" (The Man who Grins), unfortunately laid in a fanciful England evolved from recondite reading through foreign spectacles. Whilst writing the final chapters, Hugo's wife died; and, as he had refused the Amnesty, he could only escort her remains to the Belgian frontier, August, 1868. All this while, in his Paris daily newspaper, *Le Rappel* (adorned with cuts of a Revolutionary drummer beating "to arms!"), he and his sons and son-in-law's family were reiterating blows at the throne. When it came down in 1870, and the Republic was proclaimed, Hugo hastened to Paris.

His poems, written during the War and Siege, collected under the title of "L'Année Terrible" (The Terrible Year, 1870-71), betray the long-tried exile, "almost alone in his gloom," after the death of his son Charles and his child. Fleeing to Brussels after the Commune, he nevertheless was so aggressive in sheltering and aiding its fugitives, that he was banished the kingdom, lest there should be a renewal of an assault on his house by the mob, supposed by his adherents to be, not "the honest Belgians," but the refugee Bonapartists and Royalists, who had not cared to fight for France in France endangered. Resting in Luxemburg, he prepared "L'Année Terrible" for the press, and

thence returned to Paris, vainly to plead with President Thiers for the captured Communists' lives, and vainly, too, proposing himself for election to the new House.

In 1872, his novel of "'93" pleased the general public here, mainly by the adventures of three charming little children during the prevalence of an internecine war. These phases of a bounteously paternal mood reappeared in "L'Art d'être Grandpère," published in 1877, when he had become a life-senator.

"Hernani" was in the regular "stock" of the Théâtre Français, "Rigoletto" (Le Roi s'Amuse) always at the Italian opera-house, while the same subject, under the title of "The Fool's Revenge," held, as it still holds, a high position on the Anglo-American stage. Finally, the poetic romance of "Torquemada," for over thirty years promised, came forth in 1882, to prove that the wizard-wand had not lost its cunning.

After dolor, fêtes were come: on one birthday they crown his bust in the chief theatre; on another, all notable Paris parades under his window, where he sits with his grandchildren at his knee, in the shadow of the Triumphal Arch of Napoleon's Star. It is given to few men thus to see their own apotheosis.

Whilst he was dying, in May, 1885, Paris was but the first mourner for all France; and the magnificent funeral pageant which conducted the pauper's coffin, antithetically enshrining the remains considered worthy of the highest possible reverence and honors, from the Champs Elysées to the Pantheon, was the more memorable from all that was foremost in French art and letters having marched in the train, and laid a leaf or flower in the tomb of the protégé of Châteaubriand, the brother-in-arms of Dumas, the inspirer of Mars, Dorval, Le-maître, Rachel, and Bernhardt, and, above all, the Nemesis of the Third Empire.

EARLY POEMS

MOSES ON THE NILE

("Mes soeurs, l'onde est plus fraîche.")

{TO THE FLORAL GAMES, Toulouse, Feb. 10, 1820.}

"Sisters! the wave is freshest in the ray
Of the young morning; the reapers are asleep;
The river bank is lonely: come away!
The early murmurs of old Memphis creep
Faint on my ear; and here unseen we stray, —
Deep in the covert of the grove withdrawn,
Save by the dewy eye-glance of the dawn.

"Within my father's palace, fair to see,
Shine all the Arts, but oh! this river side,
Pranked with gay flowers, is dearer far to me
Than gold and porphyry vases bright and wide;
How glad in heaven the song-bird carols free!
Sweeter these zephyrs float than all the showers
Of costly odors in our royal bowers.

"The sky is pure, the sparkling stream is clear:
Unloose your zones, my maidens! and fling down
To float awhile upon these bushes near
Your blue transparent robes: take off my crown,
And take away my jealous veil; for here
To-day we shall be joyous while we lave
Our limbs amid the murmur of the wave.

"Hasten; but through the fleecy mists of morn,
What do I see? Look ye along the stream!
Nay, timid maidens – we must not return!
Coursing along the current, it would seem
An ancient palm-tree to the deep sea borne,
That from the distant wilderness proceeds,
Downwards, to view our wondrous Pyramids.

"But stay! if I may surely trust mine eye, —
It is the bark of Hermes, or the shell
Of Iris, wafted gently to the sighs
Of the light breeze along the rippling swell;
But no: it is a skiff where sweetly lies
An infant slumbering, and his peaceful rest
Looks as if pillowed on his mother's breast.

"He sleeps – oh, see! his little floating bed
Swims on the mighty river's fickle flow,
A white dove's nest; and there at hazard led
By the faint winds, and wandering to and fro,
The cot comes down; beneath his quiet head
The gulfs are moving, and each threatening wave
Appears to rock the child upon a grave.

"He wakes – ah, maids of Memphis! haste, oh, haste!
He cries! alas! – What mother could confide
Her offspring to the wild and watery waste?
He stretches out his arms, the rippling tide
Murmurs around him, where all rudely placed,
He rests but with a few frail reeds beneath,
Between such helpless innocence and death.

"Oh! take him up! Perchance he is of those
Dark sons of Israel whom my sire proscribes;
Ah! cruel was the mandate that arose
Against most guiltless of the stranger tribes!
Poor child! my heart is yearning for his woes,
I would I were his mother; but I'll give
If not his birth, at least the claim to live."

Thus Iphis spoke; the royal hope and pride
Of a great monarch; while her damsels nigh,
Wandered along the Nile's meandering side;
And these diminished beauties, standing by
The trembling mother; watching with eyes wide
Their graceful mistress, admired her as stood,
More lovely than the genius of the flood!

The waters broken by her delicate feet
Receive the eager wader, as alone
By gentlest pity led, she strives to meet
The wakened babe; and, see, the prize is won!
She holds the weeping burden with a sweet
And virgin glow of pride upon her brow,
That knew no flush save modesty's till now.

Opening with cautious hands the reedy couch,
She brought the rescued infant slowly out
Beyond the humid sands; at her approach
Her curious maidens hurried round about
To kiss the new-born brow with gentlest touch;
Greeting the child with smiles, and bending nigh
Their faces o'er his large, astonished eye!

Haste thou who, from afar, in doubt and fear,
Dost watch, with straining eyes, the fated boy —
The loved of heaven! come like a stranger near,
And clasp young Moses with maternal joy;
Nor fear the speechless transport and the tear
Will e'er betray thy fond and hidden claim,
For Iphis knows not yet a mother's name!

With a glad heart, and a triumphal face,
The princess to the haughty Pharaoh led
The humble infant of a hated race,
Bathed with the bitter tears a parent shed;
While loudly pealing round the holy place
Of Heaven's white Throne, the voice of angel choirs
Intoned the theme of their undying lyres!

"No longer mourn thy pilgrimage below —
O Jacob! let thy tears no longer swell
The torrent of the Egyptian river: Lo!
Soon on the Jordan's banks thy tents shall dwell;
And Goshen shall behold thy people go
Despite the power of Egypt's law and brand,
From their sad thrall to Canaan's promised land.

"The King of Plagues, the Chosen of Sinai,
Is he that, o'er the rushing waters driven,
A vigorous hand hath rescued for the sky;
Ye whose proud hearts disown the ways of heaven!
Attend, be humble! for its power is nigh
Israel! a cradle shall redeem thy worth —
A Cradle yet shall save the widespread earth!"

Dublin University Magazine, 1839

ENVY AND AVARICE

("L'Avarice et l'Envie.")

{LE CONSERVATEUR LITTÉRAIRE, 1820.}

Envy and Avarice, one summer day,
Sauntering abroad
In quest of the abode
Of some poor wretch or fool who lived that way —
You – or myself, perhaps – I cannot say —
Along the road, scarce heeding where it tended,
Their way in sullen, sulky silence wended;

For, though twin sisters, these two charming creatures,
Rivals in hideousness of form and features,
Wasted no love between them as they went.

Pale Avarice,
With gloating eyes,
And back and shoulders almost double bent,
Was hugging close that fatal box
For which she's ever on the watch
Some glance to catch
Suspiciously directed to its locks;
And Envy, too, no doubt with silent winking
At her green, greedy orbs, no single minute
Withdrawn from it, was hard a-thinking
Of all the shining dollars in it.

The only words that Avarice could utter,
Her constant doom, in a low, frightened mutter,
"There's not enough, enough, yet in my store!"
While Envy, as she scanned the glittering sight,
Groaned as she gnashed her yellow teeth with spite,
"She's more than me, more, still forever more!"

Thus, each in her own fashion, as they wandered,
Upon the coffer's precious contents pondered,
When suddenly, to their surprise,
The God Desire stood before their eyes.
Desire, that courteous deity who grants
All wishes, prayers, and wants;
Said he to the two sisters: "Beauteous ladies,
As I'm a gentleman, my task and trade is
To be the slave of your behest —
Choose therefore at your own sweet will and pleasure,
Honors or treasure!
Or in one word, whatever you'd like best.

But, let us understand each other – she
Who speaks the first, her prayer shall certainly
Receive – the other, the same boon *redoubled!*"

Imagine how our amiable pair,
At this proposal, all so frank and fair,
Were mutually troubled!
Misers and enviers, of our human race,
Say, what would you have done in such a case?
Each of the sisters murmured, sad and low
"What boots it, oh, Desire, to me to have
Crowns, treasures, all the goods that heart can crave,
Or power divine bestow,
Since still another must have always more?"

So each, lest she should speak before
The other, hesitating slow and long
Till the god lost all patience, held her tongue.
He was enraged, in such a way,
To be kept waiting there all day,
With two such beauties in the public road;
Scarce able to be civil even,
He wished them both – well, not in heaven.

Envy at last the silence broke,
And smiling, with malignant sneer,
Upon her sister dear,
Who stood in expectation by,
Ever implacable and cruel, spoke
"I would be blinded of *one* eye!"

American Keepsake

ODES. – 1818-28. KING LOUIS XVII

("En ce temps-là du ciel les portes.")
{Bk. I. v., December, 1822.}

The golden gates were opened wide that day,
All through the unveiled heaven there seemed to play
 Out of the Holiest of Holy, light;
And the elect beheld, crowd immortal,
 A young soul, led up by young angels bright,
Stand in the starry portal.

A fair child fleeing from the world's fierce hate,
In his blue eye the shade of sorrow sate,
 His golden hair hung all dishevelled down,
On wasted cheeks that told a mournful story,
 And angels twined him with the innocent's crown,
The martyr's palm of glory.

The virgin souls that to the Lamb are near,
Called through the clouds with voices heavenly clear,
 God hath prepared a glory for thy brow,
Rest in his arms, and all ye hosts that sing
His praises ever on untired string,
 Chant, for a mortal comes among ye now;
Do homage – "'Tis a king."

And the pale shadow saith to God in heaven:
 "I am an orphan and no king at all;
I was a weary prisoner yestereven,
 My father's murderers fed my soul with gall.
Not me, O Lord, the regal name beseems.
 Last night I fell asleep in dungeon drear,
But then I saw my mother in my dreams,
 Say, shall I find her here?"

The angels said: "Thy Saviour bids thee come,
Out of an impure world He calls thee home,
 From the mad earth, where horrid murder waves
 Over the broken cross her impure wings,
And regicides go down among the graves,
 Scenting the blood of kings."

He cries: "Then have I finished my long life?
Are all its evils over, all its strife,
And will no cruel jailer evermore

Wake me to pain, this blissful vision o'er?
Is it no dream that nothing else remains
Of all my torments but this answered cry,
And have I had, O God, amid my chains,
The happiness to die?

"For none can tell what cause I had to pine,
What pangs, what miseries, each day were mine;
And when I wept there was no mother near
To soothe my cries, and smile away my tear.
Poor victim of a punishment unending,
Torn like a sapling from its mother earth,
So young, I could not tell what crime impending
Had stained me from my birth.

"Yet far off in dim memory it seems,
With all its horror mingled happy dreams,
Strange cries of glory rocked my sleeping head,
And a glad people watched beside my bed.
One day into mysterious darkness thrown,
I saw the promise of my future close;
I was a little child, left all alone,
Alas! and I had foes.

"They cast me living in a dreary tomb,
Never mine eyes saw sunlight pierce the gloom,
Only ye, brother angels, used to sweep
Down from your heaven, and visit me in sleep.
'Neath blood-red hands my young life withered there.
Dear Lord, the bad are miserable all,
Be not Thou deaf, like them, unto my prayer,
It is for them I call."

The angels sang: "See heaven's high arch unfold,
Come, we will crown thee with the stars above,
Will give thee cherub-wings of blue and gold,
And thou shalt learn our ministry of love,
Shalt rock the cradle where some mother's tears
Are dropping o'er her restless little one,
Or, with thy luminous breath, in distant spheres,
Shalt kindle some cold sun."

Ceased the full choir, all heaven was hushed to hear,
Bowed the fair face, still wet with many a tear,
In depths of space, the rolling worlds were stayed,
Whilst the Eternal in the infinite said:

"O king, I kept thee far from human state,
Who hadst a dungeon only for thy throne,

O son, rejoice, and bless thy bitter fate,
The slavery of kings thou hast not known,
What if thy wasted arms are bleeding yet,
And wounded with the fetter's cruel trace,
No earthly diadem has ever set
A stain upon thy face.

"Child, life and hope were with thee at thy birth,
But life soon bowed thy tender form to earth,
And hope forsook thee in thy hour of need.
Come, for thy Saviour had His pains divine;
Come, for His brow was crowned with thorns like thine,
His sceptre was a reed."

Dublin University Magazine.

THE FEAST OF FREEDOM

("Lorsqu'à l'antique Olympe immolant l'evangile.")

{Bk. II. v., 1823.}

{There was in Rome one antique usage as follows: On the eve of the execution day, the sufferers were given a public banquet – at the prison gate – known as the "Free Festival." – CHATEAUBRIAND'S "Martyrs."}

TO YE KINGS

When the Christians were doomed to the lions of old
By the priest and the praetor, combined to uphold
 An idolatrous cause,
Forth they came while the vast Colosseum throughout
Gathered thousands looked on, and they fell 'mid the shout
 Of "the People's" applause.

On the eve of that day of their evenings the last!
At the gates of their dungeon a gorgeous repast,
 Rich, unstinted, unpriced,
That the doomed might (forsooth) gather strength ere they bled,
With an ignorant pity the jailers would spread
 For the martyrs of Christ.

Oh, 'twas strange for a pupil of Paul to recline
On voluptuous couch, while Falernian wine
 Fill'd his cup to the brim!
Dulcet music of Greece, Asiatic repose,
Spicy fragrance of Araby, Italian rose,
 All united for him!

Every luxury known through the earth's wide expanse,
In profusion procured was put forth to enhance
 The repast that they gave;
And no Sybarite, nursed in the lap of delight,
Such a banquet ere tasted as welcomed that night
 The elect of the grave.

And the lion, meantime, shook his ponderous chain,
Loud and fierce howled the tiger, impatient to stain
 The bloodthirsty arena;
Whilst the women of Rome, who applauded those deeds
And who hailed the forthcoming enjoyment, must needs
 Shame the restless hyena.

They who figured as guests on that ultimate eve,
In their turn on the morrow were destined to give
 To the lions their food;
For, behold, in the guise of a slave at that board,
Where his victims enjoyed all that life can afford,
 Death administering stood.

Such, O monarchs of earth! was your banquet of power,
But the tocsin has burst on your festival hour —
 'Tis your knell that it rings!

To the popular tiger a prey is decreed,
And the maw of Republican hunger will feed
On a banquet of Kings!

"FATHER PROUT" (FRANK MAHONY)

GENIUS

(DEDICATED TO CHATEAUBRIAND.)

{Bk. IV. vi., July, 1822.}

Woe unto him! the child of this sad earth,
Who, in a troubled world, unjust and blind,
Bears Genius – treasure of celestial birth,
Within his solitary soul enshrined.
Woe unto him! for Envy's pangs impure,
Like the undying vultures', will be driven
Into his noble heart, that must endure
Pangs for each triumph; and, still unforgiven,
Suffer Prometheus' doom, who ravished fire from Heaven.

Still though his destiny on earth may be
Grief and injustice; who would not endure
With joyful calm, each proffered agony;
Could he the prize of Genius thus ensure?
What mortal feeling kindled in his soul
That clear celestial flame, so pure and high,
O'er which nor time nor death can have control,
Would in inglorious pleasures basely fly
From sufferings whose reward is Immortality?
No! though the clamors of the envious crowd
Pursue the son of Genius, he will rise

From the dull clod, borne by an effort proud
Beyond the reach of vulgar enmities.
'Tis thus the eagle, with his pinions spread,
Reposing o'er the tempest, from that height
Sees the clouds reel and roll above our head,
While he, rejoicing in his tranquil flight,
More upward soars sublime in heaven's eternal light.

MRS. TORRE HULME

THE GIRL OF OTAHEITE

("O! dis-moi, tu veux fuir?")
{Bk. IV, vii., Jan. 31, 1821.}

Forget? Can I forget the scented breath
Of breezes, sighing of thee, in mine ear;
The strange awaking from a dream of death,
The sudden thrill to find thee coming near?
Our huts were desolate, and far away
I heard thee calling me throughout the day,
No one had seen thee pass,
Trembling I came. Alas!
Can I forget?

Once I was beautiful; my maiden charms
Died with the grief that from my bosom fell.
Ah! weary traveller! rest in my loving arms!
Let there be no regrets and no farewell!
Here of thy mother sweet, where waters flow,
Here of thy fatherland we whispered low;
Here, music, praise, and prayer
Filled the glad summer air.
Can I forget?

Forget? My dear old home must I forget?
And wander forth and hear my people weep,
Far from the woods where, when the sun has set,
Fearless but weary to thy arms I creep;
Far from lush flow'rets and the palm-tree's moan
I could not live. Here let me rest alone!
Go! I must follow nigh,
With thee I'm doomed to die,
Never forget!

CLEMENT SCOTT

NERO'S INCENDIARY SONG

("Amis! ennui nous tue.")
{Bk. IV. xv., March, 1825.}

Aweary unto death, my friends, a mood by wise abhorred,
Come to the novel feast I spread, thrice-consul, Nero, lord,
The Caesar, master of the world, and eke of harmony,
Who plays the harp of many strings, a chief of minstrelsy.

My joyful call should instantly bring all who love me most, —
For ne'er were seen such arch delights from Greek or Roman host;
Nor at the free, control-less jousts, where, spite of cynic vaunts,
Austere but lenient Seneca no "Ercles" bumper daunts;

Nor where upon the Tiber floats Aglae in galley gay,
'Neath Asian tent of brilliant stripes, in gorgeous array;
Nor when to lutes and tambourines the wealthy prefect flings
A score of slaves, their fetters wreathed, to feed grim, greedy things.

I vow to show ye Rome aflame, the whole town in a mass;
Upon this tower we'll take our stand to watch the 'wildered pass;
How paltry fights of men and beasts! here be my combatants, —
The Seven Hills my circus form, and fiends shall lead the dance.

This is more meet for him who rules to drive away his stress —
He, being god, should lightnings hurl and make a wilderness —
But, haste! for night is darkling – soon, the festival it brings;
Already see the hydra show its tongues and sombre wings,

And mark upon a shrinking prey the rush of kindling breaths;
They tap and sap the threatened walls, and bear uncounted deaths;
And 'neath caresses scorching hot the palaces decay —
Oh, that I, too, could thus caress, and burn, and blight, and slay!

Hark to the hubbub! scent the fumes! Are those real men or ghosts?
The stillness spreads of Death abroad – down come the temple posts,
Their molten bronze is coursing fast and joins with silver waves
To leap with hiss of thousand snakes where Tiber writhes and raves.

All's lost! in jasper, marble, gold, the statues totter – crash!
Spite of the names divine engraved, they are but dust and ash.
The victor-scourge sweeps swollen on, whilst north winds sound
the horn
To goad the flies of fire yet beyond the flight forlorn.

Proud capital! farewell for e'er! these flames nought can subdue —
The Aqueduct of Sylla gleams, a bridge o'er hellish brew.
'Tis Nero's whim! how good to see Rome brought the lowest down;
Yet, Queen of all the earth, give thanks for such a splendrous crown!

When I was young, the Sybils pledged eternal rule to thee;
That Time himself would lay his bones before thy unbent knee.
Ha! ha! how brief indeed the space ere this "immortal star"
Shall be consumed in its own glow, and vanished – oh, how far!

How lovely conflagrations look when night is utter dark!
The youth who fired Ephesus' fane falls low beneath my mark.
The pangs of people – when I sport, what matters? – See them whirl
About, as salamanders frisk and in the brazier curl.

Take from my brow this poor rose-crown – the flames have made
it pine;
If blood rains on your festive gowns, wash off with Cretan wine!
I like not overmuch that red – good taste says "gild a crime?"
"To stifle shrieks by drinking-songs" is – thanks! a hint sublime!

I punish Rome, I am avenged; did she not offer prayers
Erst unto Jove, late unto Christ? – to e'en a Jew, she dares!
Now, in thy terror, own my right to rule above them all;
Alone I rest – except this pile, I leave no single hall.

Yet I destroy to build anew, and Rome shall fairer shine —
But out, my guards, and slay the dolts who thought me not divine.
The stiffnecks, haste! annihilate! make ruin all complete —
And, slaves, bring in fresh roses – what odor is more sweet?

H.L. WILLIAMS

REGRET

(*"Oui, le bonheur bien vite a passé."*)
{Bk. V. ii., February, 1821.}

Yes, Happiness hath left me soon behind!
Alas! we all pursue its steps! and when
We've sunk to rest within its arms entwined,
Like the Phoenician virgin, wake, and find
Ourselves alone again.

Then, through the distant future's boundless space,
We seek the lost companion of our days:
"Return, return!" we cry, and lo, apace
Pleasure appears! but not to fill the place
Of that we mourn always.

I, should unhallowed Pleasure woo me now,
Will to the wanton sorc'ress say, "Begone!
Respect the cypress on my mournful brow,
Lost Happiness hath left regret – but *thou*
Leavest remorse, alone."

Yet, haply lest I check the mounting fire,
O friends, that in your revelry appears!
With you I'll breathe the air which ye respire,
And, smiling, hide my melancholy lyre
When it is wet with tears.

Each in his secret heart perchance doth own
Some fond regret 'neath passing smiles concealed; —
Sufferers alike together and alone
Are we; with many a grief to others known,
How many unrevealed!

Alas! for natural tears and simple pains,
For tender recollections, cherished long,
For guileless griefs, which no compunction stains,
We blush; as if we wore these earthly chains
Only for sport and song!

Yes, my blest hours have fled without a trace:
In vain I strove their parting to delay;
Brightly they beamed, then left a cheerless space,
Like an o'erclouded smile, that in the face
Lightens, and fades away.

Fraser's Magazine

THE MORNING OF LIFE

("Le voile du matin.")

{Bk. V. viii., April, 1822.}

The mist of the morning is torn by the peaks,
Old towers gleam white in the ray,
And already the glory so joyously seeks
The lark that's saluting the day.

Then smile away, man, at the heavens so fair,
Though, were you swept hence in the night,
From your dark, lonely tomb the owlets would stare
At the sun rising newly as bright.

But out of earth's trammels your soul would have flown
Where glitters Eternity's stream,
And you shall have waked 'midst pure glories unknown,
As sunshine disperses a dream.

BELOVED NAME

(*"Le parfum d'un lis."*)
{Bk. V. xiii.}

The lily's perfume pure, fame's crown of light,
The latest murmur of departing day,
Fond friendship's plaint, that melts at piteous sight,
The mystic farewell of each hour at flight,
The kiss which beauty grants with coy delay, —

The sevenfold scarf that parting storms bestow
As trophy to the proud, triumphant sun;
The thrilling accent of a voice we know,
The love-enthralled maiden's secret vow,
An infant's dream, ere life's first sands be run, —

The chant of distant choirs, the morning's sigh,
Which erst inspired the fabled Memnon's frame, —
The melodies that, hummed, so trembling die, —
The sweetest gems that 'mid thought's treasures lie,
Have naught of sweetness that can match HER NAME!

Low be its utterance, like a prayer divine,
Yet in each warbled song be heard the sound;
Be it the light in darksome fanes to shine,
The sacred word which at some hidden shrine,
The selfsame voice forever makes resound!

O friends! ere yet, in living strains of flame,
My muse, bewildered in her circlings wide,
With names the vaunting lips of pride proclaim,
Shall dare to blend the *one*, the purer name,
Which love a treasure in my breast doth hide, —

Must the wild lay my faithful harp can sing,
Be like the hymns which mortals, kneeling, hear;
To solemn harmonies attuned the string,
As, music show'ring from his viewless wing,
On heavenly airs some angel hovered near.

CAROLINE BOWLES (MRS. SOUTHEY)

THE PORTRAIT OF A CHILD

("Oui, ce front, ce sourire.")
{Bk. V. xxii., November, 1825.}

That brow, that smile, that cheek so fair,
Beseem my child, who weeps and plays:
A heavenly spirit guards her ways,
From whom she stole that mixture rare.
Through all her features shining mild,
The poet sees an angel there,
The father sees a child.

And by their flame so pure and bright,
We see how lately those sweet eyes
Have wandered down from Paradise,
And still are lingering in its light.

All earthly things are but a shade
Through which she looks at things above,
And sees the holy Mother-maid,
Athwart her mother's glance of love.

She seems celestial songs to hear,
And virgin souls are whispering near.
Till by her radiant smile deceived,
I say, "Young angel, lately given,
When was thy martyrdom achieved?
And what name lost thou bear in heaven?"

Dublin University Magazine.

BALLADES. – 1823-28. THE GRANDMOTHER

("Dors-tu? mère de notre mère.")
{III., 1823.}

"To die – to sleep." – SHAKESPEARE.
Still asleep! We have been since the noon thus alone.
 Oh, the hours we have ceased to number!
Wake, grandmother! – speechless say why thou art grown.
Then, thy lips are so cold! – the Madonna of stone
 Is like thee in thy holy slumber.
We have watched thee in sleep, we have watched thee at prayer,
 But what can now betide thee?
Like thy hours of repose all thy orisons were,
And thy lips would still murmur a blessing whene'er
 Thy children stood beside thee.

Now thine eye is unclosed, and thy forehead is bent
 O'er the hearth, where ashes smoulder;
And behold, the watch-lamp will be speedily spent.
Art thou vexed? have we done aught amiss? Oh, relent!
 But – parent, thy hands grow colder!
Say, with ours wilt thou let us rekindle in thine
 The glow that has departed?
Wilt thou sing us some song of the days of lang syne?
Wilt thou tell us some tale, from those volumes divine,
 Of the brave and noble-hearted?

Of the dragon who, crouching in forest green glen,
 Lies in wait for the unwary —
Of the maid who was freed by her knight from the den
Of the ogre, whose club was uplifted, but then
 Turned aside by the wand of a fairy?
Wilt thou teach us spell-words that protect from all harm,
 And thoughts of evil banish?
What goblins the sign of the cross may disarm?
What saint it is good to invoke? and what charm
 Can make the demon vanish?

Or unfold to our gaze thy most wonderful book,
 So feared by hell and Satan;
At its hermits and martyrs in gold let us look,
At the virgins, and bishops with pastoral crook,
 And the hymns and the prayers in Latin.
Oft with legends of angels, who watch o'er the young,
 Thy voice was wont to gladden;

Have thy lips yet no language – no wisdom thy tongue?
Oh, see! the light wavers, and sinking, bath flung
On the wall forms that sadden.

Wake! awake! evil spirits perhaps may presume
To haunt thy holy dwelling;
Pale ghosts are, perhaps, stealing into the room —
Oh, would that the lamp were relit! with the gloom
These fearful thoughts dispelling.
Thou hast told us our parents lie sleeping beneath
The grass, in a churchyard lonely:
Now, thine eyes have no motion, thy mouth has no breath,
And thy limbs are all rigid! Oh, say, *Is this death*,
Or thy prayer or thy slumber only?

ENVOY.

Sad vigil they kept by that grandmother's chair,
Kind angels hovered o'er them —
And the dead-bell was tolled in the hamlet – and there,
On the following eve, knelt that innocent pair,
With the missal-book before them.

"FATHER PROUT" (FRANK S. MAHONY).

THE GIANT IN GLEE

("Ho, guerriers! je suis né dans le pays des Gaules.")
{V., March 11, 1825.}

Ho, warriors! I was reared in the land of the Gauls;
O'er the Rhine my ancestors came bounding like balls
Of the snow at the Pole, where, a babe, I was bathed
Ere in bear and in walrus-skin I was enswathed.

Then my father was strong, whom the years lowly bow, —
A bison could wallow in the grooves of his brow.
He is weak, very old – he can scarcely uprear
A young pine-tree for staff since his legs cease to bear;

But here's to replace him! – I can toy with his axe;
As I sit on the hill my feet swing in the flax,
And my knee caps the boulders and troubles the trees.
How they shiver, yea, quake if I happen to sneeze!

I was still but a springald when, cleaving the Alps,
I brushed snowy periwigs off granitic scalps,
And my head, o'er the pinnacles, stopped the fleet clouds,
Where I captured the eagles and caged them by crowds.

There were tempests! I blew them back into their source!
And put out their lightnings! More than once in a course,
Through the ocean I went wading after the whale,
And stirred up the bottom as did never a gale.

Fond of rambling, I hunted the shark 'long the beach,
And no osprey in ether soared out of my reach;
And the bear that I pinched 'twixt my finger and thumb,
Like the lynx and the wolf, perished harmless and dumb.

But these pleasures of childhood have lost all their zest;
It is warfare and carnage that now I love best:
The sounds that I wish to awaken and hear
Are the cheers raised by courage, the shrieks due to fear;

When the riot of flames, ruin, smoke, steel and blood,
Announces an army rolls along as a flood,
Which I follow, to harry the clamorous ranks,
Sharp-goaded the laggards and pressing the flanks,
Till, a thresher 'mid ripest of corn, up I stand
With an oak for a flail in my unflagging hand.

Rise the groans! rise the screams! on my feet fall vain tears
As the roar of my laughter redoubles their fears.
I am naked. At armor of steel I should joke —
True, I'm helmed – a brass pot you could draw with ten yoke.

I look for no ladder to invade the king's hall —
I stride o'er the ramparts, and down the walls fall,
Till choked are the ditches with the stones, dead and quick,
Whilst the flagstaff I use 'midst my teeth as a pick.

Oh, when cometh my turn to succumb like my prey,
May brave men my body snatch away from th' array
Of the crows – may they heap on the rocks till they loom
Like a mountain, befitting a colossus' tomb!

Foreign Quarterly Review (adapted)

THE CYMBALEER'S BRIDE

("Monseigneur le Duc de Bretagne.")
{VI., October, 1825.}

My lord the Duke of Brittany
Has summoned his barons bold —
Their names make a fearful litany!
Among them you will not meet any
But men of giant mould.

Proud earls, who dwell in donjon keep,
And steel-clad knight and peer,
Whose forts are girt with a moat cut deep —
But none excel in soldiership
My own loved cymbaleer.

Clashing his cymbals, forth he went,
With a bold and gallant bearing;
Sure for a captain he was meant,
To judge his pride with courage blent,
And the cloth of gold he's wearing.

But in my soul since then I feel
A fear in secret creeping;
And to my patron saint I kneel,
That she may recommend his weal
To his guardian-angel's keeping.

I've begged our abbot Bernardine
His prayers not to relax;
And to procure him aid divine
I've burnt upon Saint Gilda's shrine
Three pounds of virgin wax.

Our Lady of Loretto knows
The pilgrimage I've vowed:
"To wear the scallop I propose,
If health and safety from the foes
My lover be allowed."

No letter (fond affection's gage!)
From him could I require,
The pain of absence to assuage —
A vassal-maid can have no page,
A liegeman has no squire.

This day will witness, with the duke's,
My cymbaleer's return:
Gladness and pride beam in my looks,
Delay my heart impatient brooks,
All meaner thoughts I spurn.

Back from the battlefield elate
His banner brings each peer;
Come, let us see, at the ancient gate,
The martial triumph pass in state —
With the princes my cymbaleer.

We'll have from the rampart walls a glance
Of the air his steed assumes;
His proud neck swells, his glad hoofs prance,
And on his head unceasing dance,
In a gorgeous tuft, red plumes!

Be quick, my sisters! dress in haste!
Come, see him bear the bell,
With laurels decked, with true love graced,
While in his bold hands, fitly placed,
The bounding cymbals swell!

Mark well the mantle that he'll wear,
Embroidered by his bride!
Admire his burnished helmet's glare,
O'ershadowed by the dark horsehair
That waves in jet folds wide!

The gypsy (spiteful wench!) foretold,
With a voice like a viper hissing.
(Though I had crossed her palm with gold),
That from the ranks a spirit bold
Would be to-day found missing.

But I have prayed so much, I trust
Her words may prove untrue;
Though in a tomb the hag accurst
Muttered: "Prepare thee for the worst!"
Whilst the lamp burnt ghastly blue.

My joy her spells shall not prevent.
Hark! I can hear the drums!
And ladies fair from silken tent
Peep forth, and every eye is bent
On the cavalcade that comes!

Pikemen, dividing on both flanks,

Open the pageantry;
Loud, as they tread, their armor clanks,
And silk-robed barons lead the ranks —
The pink of gallantry!

In scarfs of gold the priests admire;
The heralds on white steeds;
Armorial pride decks their attire,
Worn in remembrance of some sire
Famed for heroic deeds.

Feared by the Paynim's dark divan,
The Templars next advance;
Then the tall halberds of Lausanne,
Foremost to stand in battle van
Against the foes of France.

Now hail the duke, with radiant brow,
Girt with his cavaliers;
Round his triumphant banner bow
Those of his foe. Look, sisters, now!
Here come the cymbaleers!

She spoke – with searching eye surveyed
Their ranks – then, pale, aghast,
Sunk in the crowd! Death came in aid —
'Twas mercy to that loving maid —
The cymbaleers had passed!

"FATHER PROUT" (FRANK S. MAHONY)

BATTLE OF THE NORSEMEN AND THE GAELS

("Accourez tous, oiseaux de proie!")

{VII., September, 1825.}

Ho! hither flock, ye fowls of prey!
Ye wolves of war, make no delay!
For foemen 'neath our blades shall fall
Ere night may veil with purple pall.
The evening psalms are nearly o'er,
And priests who follow in our train
Have promised us the final gain,
And filled with faith our valiant corps.

Let orphans weep, and widows brood!
To-morrow we shall wash the blood
Off saw-gapped sword and lances bent,
So, close the ranks and fire the tent!
And chill yon coward cavalcade
With brazen bugles blaring loud,
E'en though our chargers' neighing proud
Already has the host dismayed.

Spur, horsemen, spur! the charge resounds!
On Gaelic spear the Northman bounds!
Through helmet plumes the arrows flit,
And plated breasts the pikeheads split.
The double-axe fells human oaks,
And like the thistles in the field
See bristling up (where none must yield!)
The points hewn off by sweeping strokes!

We, heroes all, our wounds disdain;
Dismounted now, our horses slain,
Yet we advance – more courage show,
Though stricken, seek to overthrow
The victor-knights who tread in mud
The writhing slaves who bite the heel,
While on caparisons of steel
The maces thunder – cudgels thud!

Should daggers fail hide-coats to shred,
Seize each your man and hug him dead!
Who falls unslain will only make
A mouthful to the wolves who slake
Their month-whet thirst. No captives, none!
We die or win! but should we die,

The lopped-off hand will wave on high
The broken brand to hail the sun!

MADELAINE

("Ecoute-moi, Madeline.")
{IX., September, 1825.}

List to me, O Madelaine!
Now the snows have left the plain,
Which they warmly cloaked.
Come into the forest groves,
Where the notes that Echo loves
Are from horns evoked.

Come! where Springtide, Madelaine,
Brings a sultry breath from Spain,
Giving buds their hue;
And, last night, to glad your eye,
Laid the floral marquetry,
Red and gold and blue.

Would I were, O Madelaine,
As the lamb whose wool you train
Through your tender hands.
Would I were the bird that whirls
Round, and comes to peck your curls,
Happy in such bands.

Were I e'en, O Madelaine,
Hermit whom the herd disdain
In his pious cell,
When your purest lips unfold
Sins which might to all be told,
As to him you tell.

Would I were, O Madelaine,
Moth that murmurs 'gainst your pane,
Peering at your rest,
As, so like its woolly wing,
Ceasing scarce its fluttering,
Heaves and sinks your breast.

If you seek it, Madelaine,
You may wish, and not in vain,
For a serving host,
And your splendid hall of state
Shall be envied by the great,
O'er the Jew-King's boast.

If you name it, Madelaine,
Round your head no more you'll train
Simple marguerites,
No! the coronet of peers,
Whom the queen herself oft fears,
And the monarch greets.

If you wish, O Madelaine!
Where you gaze you long shall reign —
For I'm ruler here!
I'm the lord who asks your hand
If you do not bid me stand
Loving shepherd here!

THE FAY AND THE PERI

("Où vas-tu donc, jeune âme.")

{XV.}

THE PERI

Beautiful spirit, come with me
Over the blue enchanted sea:
Morn and evening thou canst play
In my garden, where the breeze
Warbles through the fruity trees;
No shadow falls upon the day:
There thy mother's arms await
Her cherished infant at the gate.
Of Peris I the loveliest far —
My sisters, near the morning star,
In ever youthful bloom abide;
But pale their lustre by my side —
A silken turban wreathes my head,
Rubies on my arms are spread,
While sailing slowly through the sky,
By the uplooker's dazzled eye
Are seen my wings of purple hue,
Glittering with Elysian dew.
Whiter than a far-off sail
My form of beauty glows,
Fair as on a summer night
Dawns the sleep star's gentle light;
And fragrant as the early rose
That scents the green Arabian vale,
Soothing the pilgrim as he goes.

THE FAY.

Beautiful infant (said the Fay),
In the region of the sun
I dwell, where in a rich array
The clouds encircle the king of day,
His radiant journey done.
My wings, pure golden, of radiant sheen
(Painted as amorous poet's strain),
Glimmer at night, when meadows green
Sparkle with the perfumed rain
While the sun's gone to come again.
And clear my hand, as stream that flows;
And sweet my breath as air of May;
And o'er my ivory shoulders stray
Locks of sunshine; – tunes still play
From my odorous lips of rose.

Follow, follow! I have caves

Of pearl beneath the azure waves,
And tents all woven pleasantly
In verdant glades of Faëry.
Come, belovèd child, with me,
And I will bear thee to the bowers
Where clouds are painted o'er like flowers,
And pour into thy charmed ear
Songs a mortal may not hear;
Harmonies so sweet and ripe
As no inspired shepherd's pipe
E'er breathed into Arcadian glen,
Far from the busy haunts of men.

THE PERI.

My home is afar in the bright Orient,
Where the sun, like a king, in his orange tent,
Reigneth for ever in gorgeous pride —
And wafting thee, princess of rich countree,
To the soft flute's lush melody,
My golden vessel will gently glide,
Kindling the water 'long the side.

Vast cities are mine of power and delight,
Lahore laid in lilies, Golconda, Cashmere;
And Ispahan, dear to the pilgrim's sight,
And Bagdad, whose towers to heaven uprear;
Alep, that pours on the startled ear,
From its restless masts the gathering roar,
As of ocean hamm'ring at night on the shore.

Mysore is a queen on her stately throne,
Thy white domes, Medina, gleam on the eye, —
Thy radiant kiosques with their arrowy spires,
Shooting afar their golden fires
Into the flashing sky, —
Like a forest of spears that startle the gaze
Of the enemy with the vivid blaze.

Come there, beautiful child, with me,
Come to the arcades of Araby,
To the land of the date and the purple vine,
Where pleasure her rosy wreaths doth twine,
And gladness shall be alway thine;
Singing at sunset next thy bed,
Strewing flowers under thy head.
Beneath a verdant roof of leaves,
Arching a flow'ry carpet o'er,
Thou mayst list to lutes on summer eves

Their lays of rustic freshness pour,
While upon the grassy floor
Light footsteps, in the hour of calm,
Ruffle the shadow of the palm.

THE FAY.

Come to the radiant homes of the blest,
Where meadows like fountain in light are drest,
And the grottoes of verdure never decay,
And the glow of the August dies not away.
Come where the autumn winds never can sweep,
And the streams of the woodland steep thee in sleep,
Like a fond sister charming the eyes of a brother,
Or a little lass lulled on the breast of her mother.
Beautiful! beautiful! hasten to me!
Colored with crimson thy wings shall be;
Flowers that fade not thy forehead shall twine,
Over thee sunlight that sets not shall shine.

The infant listened to the strain,
Now here, now there, its thoughts were driven —
But the Fay and the Peri waited in vain,
The soul soared above such a sensual gain —
The child rose to Heaven.

Asiatic Journal

LES ORIENTALES. – 1829. THE SCOURGE OF HEAVEN

("Là, voyez-vous passer, la nuée.")
{I., November, 1828.}

I

Hast seen it pass, that cloud of darkest rim?
Now red and glorious, and now gray and dim,
Now sad as summer, barren in its heat?
One seems to see at once rush through the night
The smoke and turmoil from a burning site
Of some great town in fiery grasp complete.

Whence comes it? From the sea, the hills, the sky?
Is it the flaming chariot from on high
Which demons to some planet seem to bring?
Oh, horror! from its wondrous centre, lo!
A furious stream of lightning seems to flow
Like a long snake uncoiling its fell ring.

II

The sea! naught but the sea! waves on all sides!
Vainly the sea-bird would outstrip these tides!
Naught but an endless ebb and flow!
Wave upon wave advancing, then controlled
Beneath the depths a stream the eyes behold
Rolling in the involved abyss below!

Whilst here and there great fishes in the spray
Their silvery fins beneath the sun display,
Or their blue tails lash up from out the surge,
Like to a flock the sea its fleece doth fling;
The horizon's edge bound by a brazen ring;
Waters and sky in mutual azure merge.

"Am I to dry these seas?" exclaimed the cloud.
"No!" It went onward 'neath the breath of God.

III

Green hills, which round a limpid bay
 Reflected, bask in the clear wave!
The javelin and its buffalo prey,
 The laughter and the joyous stave!
The tent, the manger! these describe
A hunting and a fishing tribe
Free as the air – their arrows fly
Swifter than lightning through the sky!
By them is breathed the purest air,
 Where'er their wanderings may chance!
Children and maidens young and fair,
 And warriors circling in the dance!
Upon the beach, around the fire,
Now quenched by wind, now burning higher,
Like spirits which our dreams inspire
 To hover o'er our trance.

Virgins, with skins of ebony,
 Beauteous as evening skies,
Laughed as their forms they dimly see
 In metal mirrors rise;
Others, as joyously as they,
Were drawing for their food by day,
With jet-black hands, white camels' whey,
 Camels with docile eyes.

Both men and women, bare,
 Plunged in the briny bay.
Who knows them? Whence they were?
 Where passed they yesterday?
Shrill sounds were hovering o'er,
Mixed with the ocean's roar,
Of cymbals from the shore,
 And whinnying courser's neigh.

"Is't there?" one moment asked the cloudy mass;
"Is't there?" An unknown utterance answered: "Pass!"

IV

Whitened with grain see Egypt's lengthened plains,
Far as the eyesight farthest space contains,
 Like a rich carpet spread their varied hues.

The cold sea north, southwards the burying sand
Dispute o'er Egypt – while the smiling land
Still mockingly their empire does refuse.

Three marble triangles seem to pierce the sky,
And hide their basements from the curious eye.
Mountains – with waves of ashes covered o'er!
In graduated blocks of six feet square
From golden base to top, from earth to air
Their ever heightening monstrous steps they bore.

No scorching blast could daunt the sleepless ken
Of roseate Sphinx, and god of marble green,
Which stood as guardians o'er the sacred ground.
For a great port steered vessels huge and fleet,
A giant city bathed her marble feet
In the bright waters round.

One heard the dread simoom in distance roar,
Whilst the crushed shell upon the pebbly shore
Crackled beneath the crocodile's huge coil.
Westwards, like tiger's skin, each separate isle
Spotted the surface of the yellow Nile;
Gray obelisks shot upwards from the soil.

The star-king set. The sea, it seemed to hold
In the calm mirror this live globe of gold,
This world, the soul and torchbearer of our own.
In the red sky, and in the purple streak,
Like friendly kings who would each other seek,
Two meeting suns were shown.

"Shall I not stop?" exclaimed the impatient cloud.
"Seek!" trembling Tabor heard the voice of God.

V

Sand, sand, and still more sand!
The desert! Fearful land!
Teeming with monsters dread
And plagues on every hand!
Here in an endless flow,
Sandhills of golden glow,
Where'er the tempests blow,
Like a great flood are spread.
Sometimes the sacred spot
Hears human sounds profane, when

As from Ophir or from Memphre
Stretches the caravan.
From far the eyes, its trail
Along the burning shale
Bending its wavering tail,
Like a mottled serpent scan.
These deserts are of God!
His are the bounds alone,
Here, where no feet have trod,
To Him its centre known!
And from this smoking sea
Veiled in obscurity,
The foam one seems to see
In fiery ashes thrown.

"Shall desert change to lake?" cried out the cloud.
"Still further!" from heaven's depths sounded that Voice aloud.

VI

Like tumbled waves, which a huge rock surround;
Like heaps of ruined towers which strew the ground,
See Babel now deserted and dismayed!
Huge witness to the folly of mankind;
Four distant mountains when the moonlight shined
Seem covered with its shade.

O'er miles and miles the shattered ruins spread
Beneath its base, from captive tempests bred,
The air seemed filled with harmony strange and dire;
While swarmed around the entire human race
A future Babel, on the world's whole space
Fixed its eternal spire.

Up to the zenith rose its lengthening stair,
While each great granite mountain lent a share
To form a stepping base;
Height upon height repeated seemed to rise,
For pyramid on pyramid the strained eyes
Saw take their ceaseless place.

Through yawning walls huge elephants stalked by;
Under dark pillars rose a forestry,
Pillars by madness multiplied;
As round some giant hive, all day and night,
Huge vultures, and red eagles' wheeling flight
Was through each porch descried.

"Must I complete it?" said the angered cloud.
"On still!" "Lord, whither?" groaned it, deep not loud.

VII

Two cities, strange, unknown in history's page,
Up to the clouds seemed scaling, stage by stage,
Noiseless their streets; their sleeping inmates lie,
Their gods, their chariots, in obscurity!
Like sisters sleeping 'neath the same moonlight,
O'er their twin towers crept the shades of night,
Whilst scarce distinguished in the black profound,
Stairs, aqueducts, great pillars, gleamed around,
And ruined capitals: then was seen a group
Of granite elephants 'neath a dome to stoop,
Shapeless, giant forms to view arise,
Monsters around, the spawn of hideous ties!
Then hanging gardens, with flowers and galleries:
O'er vast fountains bending grew ebon-trees;
Temples, where seated on their rich tiled thrones,
Bull-headed idols shone in jasper stones;
Vast halls, spanned by one block, where watch and stare
Each upon each, with straight and moveless glare,
Colossal heads in circles; the eye sees
Great gods of bronze, their hands upon their knees.
Sight seemed confounded, and to have lost its powers,
'Midst bridges, aqueducts, arches, and round towers,
Whilst unknown shapes fill up the devious views
Formed by these palaces and avenues.
Like capes, the lengthening shadows seem to rise
Of these dark buildings, pointed to the skies,
Immense entanglement in shroud of gloom!
The stars which gleamed in the empyrean dome,
Under the thousand arches in heaven's space
Shone as through meshes of the blackest lace.
Cities of hell, with foul desires demented,
And monstrous pleasures, hour by hour invented!
Each roof and home some monstrous mystery bore!
Which through the world spread like a twofold sore!
Yet all things slept, and scarce some pale late light
Flitted along the streets through the still night,
Lamps of debauch, forgotten and alone,
The feast's lost fires left there to flicker on;
The walls' large angles clove the light-lengthening shades
'Neath the white moon, or on some pool's face played.
Perchance one heard, faint in the plain beneath,

The kiss suppressed, the mingling of the breath;
And the two sister cities, tired of heat,
In love's embrace lay down in murmurs sweet!
Whilst sighing winds the scent of sycamore
From Sodom to Gomorrah softly bore!
Then over all spread out the blackened cloud,
"'Tis here!" the Voice on high exclaimed aloud.

VIII

From a cavern wide
In the rent cloud's side,
In sulphurous showers
The red flame pours.
The palaces fall
In the lurid light,
Which casts a red pall
O'er their facades white!

Oh, Sodom! Gomorrah!
What a dome of horror
Rests now on your walls!
On you the cloud falls,
Nation perverse!
On your fated heads,
From its fell jaws, a curse
Its lightning fierce spreads!

The people awaken
Which godlessly slept;
Their palaces shaken,
Their offences unwept!
Their rolling cars all
Meet and crash in the street;
And the crowds, for a pall,
Find flames round their feet!

Numberless dead,
Round these high towers spread,
Still sleep in the shade
By their rugged heights made;
Colossi of rocks
In ill-steadied blocks!
So hang on a wall
Black ants, like a pall!

To escape is in vain

From this horrible rain!
Alas! all things die;
In the lightning's red flash
The bridges all crash;
'Neath the tiles the flame creeps;
From the fire-struck steeps
Falls on the pavements below,
All lurid in glow,
Rolling down from on high!

Beneath every spark,
The red, tyrannous fire
Mounts up in the dark
Ever redder and higher;
More swiftly than steed
Uncontrolled, see it pass!
Horrid idols all twist,
By the crumbling flame kissed
In their infamous dread,
Shrivelled members of brass!

It grows angry, flows on,
Silver towers fall down
Unforeseen, like a dream
In its green and red stream,
Which lights up the walls
Ere one crashes and falls,
Like the changeable scale
Of a lizard's bright mail.
Agate, porphyry, cracks
And is melted to wax!
Bend low to their doom
These stones of the tomb!
E'en the great marble giant
Called Nabo, sways pliant
Like a tree; whilst the flare
Seemed each column to scorch
As it blazed like a torch
Round and round in the air.

The magi, in vain,
From the heights to the plain
Their gods' images carry
In white tunic: they quake —
No idol can make
The blue sulphur tarry;
The temple e'en where they meet,
Swept under their feet
In the folds of its sheet!

Turns a palace to coal!
Whence the straitened cries roll
From its terrified flock;
 With incendiary grips
It loosens a block,
 Which smokes and then slips
From its place by the shock;
 To the surface first sheers,
 Then melts, disappears,
Like the glacier, the rock!
The high priest, full of years,
On the burnt site appears,
 Whence the others have fled.
Lo! his tiara's caught fire
As the furnace burns higher,
 And pale, full of dread,
See, the hand he would raise
To tear his crown from the blaze
 Is flaming instead!

Men, women, in crowds
Hurry on – the fire shrouds
 And blinds all their eyes
As, besieging each gate
Of these cities of fate
To the conscience-struck crowd,
In each fiery cloud,
 Hell appears in the skies!

IX

Men say that *then*, to see his foe's sad fall
As some old prisoner clings to his prison wall,
Babel, accomplice of their guilt, was seen
O'er the far hills to gaze with vision keen!
And as was worked this dispensation strange,
A wondrous noise filled the world's startled range;
Reached the dull hearing that deep, direful sound
Of their sad tribe who live below the ground.

X

'Gainst this pitiless flame who condemned could prevail?
Who these walls, burnt and calcined, could venture to scale?
 Yet their vile hands they sought to uplift,

Yet they cared still to ask from what God, by what law?
In their last sad embrace, 'midst their honor and awe,
Of this mighty volcano the drift.
'Neath great slabs of marble they hid them in vain,
'Gainst this everliving fire, God's own flaming rain!
'Tis the rash whom God seeks out the first;
They call on their gods, who were deaf to their cries,
For the punishing flame caused their cold granite eyes
In tears of hot lava to burst!
Thus away in the whirlwind did everything pass,
The man and the city, the soil and its grass!
God burnt this sad, sterile champaign;
Naught living was left of this people destroyed,
And the unknown wind which blew over the void,
Each mountain changed into a plain.

XI

The palm-tree that grows on the rock to this day,
Feels its leaf growing yellow, its slight stem decay,
In the blasting and ponderous air;
These towns are no more! but to mirror their past,
O'er their embers a cold lake spread far and spread fast,
With smoke like a furnace, lies there!

J.N. FAZAKERLEY

PIRATES' SONG

("Nous emmenions en esclavage.")
{VIII., March, 1828.}

We're bearing fivescore Christian dogs
To serve the cruel drivers:
Some are fair beauties gently born,
And some rough coral-divers.
We hardy skimmers of the sea
Are lucky in each sally,
And, eighty strong, we send along
The dreaded Pirate Galley.

A nunnery was spied ashore,
We lowered away the cutter,
And, landing, seized the youngest nun
Ere she a cry could utter;
Beside the creek, deaf to our oars,
She slumbered in green alley,
As, eighty strong, we sent along
The dreaded Pirate Galley.

"Be silent, darling, you must come —
The wind is off shore blowing;
You only change your prison dull
For one that's splendid, glowing!
His Highness doats on milky cheeks,
So do not make us dally" —
We, eighty strong, who send along
The dreaded Pirate Galley.

She sought to flee back to her cell,
And called us each a devil!
We dare do aught becomes Old Scratch,
But like a treatment civil,
So, spite of buffet, prayers, and calls —
Too late her friends to rally —
We, eighty strong, bore her along
Unto the Pirate Galley.

The fairer for her tears profuse,
As dews refresh the flower,
She is well worth three purses full,
And will adorn the bower —
For vain her vow to pine and die
Thus torn from her dear valley:

She reigns, and we still row along
The dreaded Pirate Galley.

THE TURKISH CAPTIVE

("Si je n'étais captive.")

{IX., July, 1828.}

Oh! were I not a captive,
I should love this fair countree;
Those fields with maize abounding,
This ever-plaintive sea:
I'd love those stars unnumbered,
If, passing in the shade,
Beneath our walls I saw not
The spahi's sparkling blade.

I am no Tartar maiden
That a blackamoor of price
Should tune my lute and hold to me
My glass of sherbet-ice.
Far from these haunts of vices,
In my dear countree, we
With sweethearts in the even
May chat and wander free.

But still I love this climate,
Where never wintry breeze
Invades, with chilly murmur,
These open lattices;
Where rain is warm in summer,
And the insect glossy green,
Most like a living emerald,
Shines 'mid the leafy screen.

With her chapelles fair Smyrna —
A gay princess is she!
Still, at her summons, round her
Unfading spring ye see.
And, as in beauteous vases,
Bright groups of flowers repose,
So, in her gulfs are lying
Her archipelagoes.

I love these tall red turrets;
These standards brave unrolled;
And, like an infant's playthings,
These houses decked with gold.
I love forsooth these reveries,
Though sandstorms make me pant,

Voluptuously swaying
Upon an elephant.

Here in this fairy palace,
Full of such melodies,
Methinks I hear deep murmurs
That in the deserts rise;
Soft mingling with the music
The Genii's voices pour,
Amid the air, unceasing,
Around us evermore.

I love the burning odors
This glowing region gives;
And, round each gilded lattice,
The trembling, wreathing leaves;
And, 'neath the bending palm-tree,
The gayly gushing spring;
And on the snow-white minaret,
The stork with snowier wing.

I love on mossy couch to sing
A Spanish roundelay,
And see my sweet companions
Around commingling gay, —
A roving band, light-hearted,
In frolicsome array, —
Who 'neath the screening parasols
Dance down the merry day.

But more than all enchanting
At night, it is to me,
To sit, where winds are sighing,
Lone, musing by the sea;
And, on its surface gazing,
To mark the moon so fair,
Her silver fan outspreading,
In trembling radiance there.

W.D., Tait's Edin. Magazine

MOONLIGHT ON THE BOSPHORUS

("La lune était sereine.")
{X., September, 1828.}

Bright shone the merry moonbeams dancing o'er the wave;
At the cool casement, to the evening breeze flung wide,
Leans the Sultana, and delights to watch the tide,
With surge of silvery sheen, yon sleeping islets lave.

From her hand, as it falls, vibrates the light guitar.
She listens – hark! that sound that echoes dull and low.
Is it the beat upon the Archipelago
Of some long galley's oar, from Scio bound afar?

Is it the cormorants, whose black wings, one by one,
Cut the blue wave that o'er them breaks in liquid pearls?
Is it some hovering sprite with whistling scream that hurls
Down to the deep from yon old tower a loosened stone?

Who thus disturbs the tide near the seraglio?
'Tis no dark cormorants that on the ripple float,
'Tis no dull plume of stone – no oars of Turkish boat,
With measured beat along the water creeping slow.

'Tis heavy sacks, borne each by voiceless dusky slaves;
And could you dare to sound the depths of yon dark tide,
Something like human form would stir within its side.
Bright shone the merry moonbeams dancing o'er the wave.

JOHN L. O'SULLIVAN.

THE VEIL

("Qu'avez-vous, mes frères?")
{XI., September, 18288.}

"Have you prayed tonight, Desdemona?"

THE SISTER

What has happened, my brothers? Your spirit to-day
Some secret sorrow damps
There's a cloud on your brow. What has happened? Oh, say,
For your eyeballs glare out with a sinister ray
Like the light of funeral lamps.
And the blades of your poniards are half unsheathed
In your belt – and ye frown on me!
There's a woe untold, there's a pang unbreathed
In your bosom, my brothers three!

ELDEST BROTHER.

Gulnara, make answer! Hast thou, since the dawn,
To the eye of a stranger thy veil withdrawn?

THE SISTER.

As I came, oh, my brother! at noon – from the bath —
As I came – it was noon, my lords —
And your sister had then, as she constantly hath,
Drawn her veil close around her, aware that the path
Is beset by these foreign hordes.
But the weight of the noonday's sultry hour
Near the mosque was so oppressive
That – forgetting a moment the eye of the Giaour —
I yielded to th' heat excessive.

SECOND BROTHER.

Gulnara, make answer! Whom, then, hast thou seen,
In a turban of white and a caftan of green?

THE SISTER.

Nay, *he* might have been there; but I muffled me so,
He could scarcely have seen my figure. —
But why to your sister thus dark do you grow?
What words to yourselves do you mutter thus low,
Of "blood" and "an intriguer"?
Oh! ye cannot of murder bring down the red guilt
On your souls, my brothers, surely!
Though I fear – from the hands that are chafing the hilt,
And the hints you give obscurely.

THIRD BROTHER.

Gulnara, this evening when sank the red sun,
Didst thou mark how like blood in descending it shone?

THE SISTER.

Mercy! Allah! have pity! oh, spare!
See! I cling to your knees repenting!
Kind brothers, forgive me! for mercy, forbear!
Be appeased at the cry of a sister's despair,
For our mother's sake relenting.
O God! must I die? They are deaf to my cries!
Their sister's life-blood shedding;
They have stabbed me each one – I faint – o'er my eyes
A *veil of Death* is spreading!

THE BROTHERS.

Gulnara, farewell! take *that* veil; 'tis the gift
Of thy brothers – a veil thou wilt never lift!

"FATHER PROUT" (FRANK S. MAHONY).

THE FAVORITE SULTANA

("N'ai-je pas pour toi, belle juive.")
{XII., Oct. 27, 1828.}

To please you, Jewess, jewel!
I have thinned my harem out!
Must every flirting of your fan
Presage a dying shout?

Grace for the damsels tender
Who have fear to hear your laugh,
For seldom gladness gilds your lips
But blood you mean to quaff.

In jealousy so zealous,
Never was there woman worse;
You'd have no roses but those grown
Above some buried corse.

Am I not pinioned firmly?
Why be angered if the door
Repulses fifty suing maids
Who vainly there implore?

Let them live on – to envy
My own empress of the world,
To whom all Stamboul like a dog
Lies at the slippers curled.

To you my heroes lower
Those scarred ensigns none have cowed;
To you their turbans are depressed
That elsewhere march so proud.

To you Bassora offers
Her respect, and Trebizonde
Her carpets richly wrought, and spice
And gems, of which you're fond.

To you the Cyprus temples
Dare not bar or close the doors;
For you the mighty Danube sends
The choicest of its stores.

Fear you the Grecian maidens,
Pallid lilies of the isles?

Or the scorching-eyed sand-rover
From Baalbec's massy piles?

Compared with yours, oh, daughter
Of King Solomon the grand,
What are round ebon bosoms,
High brows from Hellas' strand?

You're neither blanched nor blackened,
For your tint of olive's clear;
Yours are lips of ripest cherry,
You are straight as Arab spear.

Hence, launch no longer lightning
On these paltry slaves of ours.
Why should your flow of tears be matched
By their mean life-blood showers?

Think only of our banquets
Brought and served by charming girls,
For beauties sultans must adorn
As dagger-hilts the pearls.

THE PASHA AND THE DERVISH

("Un jour Ali passait.")
{XIII, Nov. 8, 1828.}

Ali came riding by – the highest head
Bent to the dust, o'ercharged with dread,
 Whilst "God be praised!" all cried;
But through the throng one dervish pressed,
Aged and bent, who dared arrest
 The pasha in his pride.

"Ali Tepelini, light of all light,
Who hold'st the Divan's upper seat by right,
 Whose fame Fame's trump hath burst —
Thou art the master of unnumbered hosts,
Shade of the Sultan – yet he only boasts
 In thee a dog accurst!

"An unseen tomb-torch flickers on thy path,
Whilst, as from vial full, thy spare-naught wrath
 Splashes this trembling race:
These are thy grass as thou their trenchant scythes
Cleaving their neck as 'twere a willow withe —
 Their blood none can efface.

"But ends thy tether! for Janina makes
A grave for thee where every turret quakes,
 And thou shalt drop below
To where the spirits, to a tree enchained,
Will clutch thee, there to be 'mid them retained
 For all to-come in woe!

"Or if, by happy chance, thy soul might flee
Thy victims, after, thou shouldst surely see
 And hear thy crimes relate;
Streaked with the guileless gore drained from their veins,
Greater in number than the reigns on reigns
 Thou hopedst for thy state.

"This so will be! and neither fleet nor fort
Can stay or aid thee as the deathly port
 Receives thy harried frame!
Though, like the cunning Hebrew knave of old,
To cheat the angel black, thou didst enfold
 In altered guise thy name."

Ali deemed anchorite or saint a pawn —
The crater of his blunderbuss did yawn,
Sword, dagger hung at ease:
But he had let the holy man revile,
Though clouds o'erswept his brow; then, with a smile,
He tossed him his pelisse.

THE LOST BATTLE

("Allah! qui me rendra-")

{XVI., May, 1828.}

Oh, Allah! who will give me back my terrible array?
My emirs and my cavalry that shook the earth to-day;
My tent, my wide-extending camp, all dazzling to the sight,
Whose watchfires, kindled numberless beneath the brow of night,
Seemed oft unto the sentinel that watched the midnight hours,
As heaven along the sombre hill had rained its stars in showers?
Where are my beys so gorgeous, in their light pelisses gay,
And where my fierce Timariot bands, so fearless in the fray;
My dauntless khans, my spahis brave, swift thunderbolts of war;
My sunburnt Bedouins, trooping from the Pyramids afar,
Who laughed to see the laboring hind stand terrified at gaze,
And urged their desert horses on amid the ripening maize?
These horses with their fiery eyes, their slight untiring feet,
That flew along the fields of corn like grasshoppers so fleet —
What! to behold again no more, loud charging o'er the plain,
Their squadrons, in the hostile shot diminished all in vain,
Burst grandly on the heavy squares, like clouds that bear the storms,
Enveloping in lightning fires the dark resisting swarms!
Oh! they are dead! their housings bright are trailed amid their gore;
Dark blood is on their manes and sides, all deeply clotted o'er;
All vainly now the spur would strike these cold and rounded flanks,
To wake them to their wonted speed amid the rapid ranks:
Here the bold riders red and stark upon the sands lie down,
Who in their friendly shadows slept throughout the halt at noon.
Oh, Allah! who will give me back my terrible array?
See where it straggles 'long the fields for leagues on leagues away,
Like riches from a spendthrift's hand flung prodigal to earth.
Lo! steed and rider; — Tartar chiefs or of Arabian birth,
Their turbans and their cruel course, their banners and their cries,
Seem now as if a troubled dream had passed before mine eyes —
My valiant warriors and their steeds, thus doomed to fall and bleed!
Their voices rouse no echo now, their footsteps have no speed;
They sleep, and have forgot at last the sabre and the bit —
Yon vale, with all the corpses heaped, seems one wide charnel-pit.
Long shall the evil omen rest upon this plain of dread —
To-night, the taint of solemn blood; to-morrow, of the dead.
Alas! 'tis but a shadow now, that noble armament!
How terribly they strove, and struck from morn to eve unspent,
Amid the fatal fiery ring, enamoured of the fight!
Now o'er the dim horizon sinks the peaceful pall of night:
The brave have nobly done their work, and calmly sleep at last.
The crows begin, and o'er the dead are gathering dark and fast;

Already through their feathers black they pass their eager beaks.
Forth from the forest's distant depth, from bald and barren peaks,
They congregate in hungry flocks and rend their gory prey.
Woe to that flaunting army's pride, so vaunting yesterday!
That formidable host, alas! is coldly nerveless now
To drive the vulture from his gorge, or scare the carrion crow.
Were now that host again mine own, with banner broad unfurled,
With it I would advance and win the empire of the world.
Monarchs to it should yield their realms and veil their haughty brows;
My sister it should ever be, my lady and my spouse.
Oh! what will unrestoring Death, that jealous tyrant lord,
Do with the brave departed souls that cannot swing a sword?
Why turned the balls aside from me? Why struck no hostile hand
My head within its turban green upon the ruddy sand?
I stood all potent yesterday; my bravest captains three,
All stirless in their tigered selle, magnificent to see,
Hailed as before my gilded tent rose flowing to the gales,
Shorn from the tameless desert steeds, three dark and tossing tails.
But yesterday a hundred drums were heard when I went by;
Full forty agas turned their looks respectful on mine eye,
And trembled with contracted brows within their hall of state.
Instead of heavy catapults, of slow unwieldy weight,
I had bright cannons rolling on oak wheels in threatening tiers,
And calm and steady by their sides marched English cannoniers.
But yesterday, and I had towns, and castles strong and high,
And Greeks in thousands, for the base and merciless to buy.
But yesterday, and arsenals and harems were my own;
While now, defeated and proscribed, deserted and alone,
I flee away, a fugitive, and of my former power,
Allah! I have not now at least one battlemented tower.
And must he fly – the grand vizier! the pasha of three tails!
O'er the horizon's bounding hills, where distant vision fails,
All stealthily, with eyes on earth, and shrinking from the sight,
As a nocturnal robber holds his dark and breathless flight,
And thinks he sees the gibbet spread its arms in solemn wrath,
In every tree that dimly throws its shadow on his path!
Thus, after his defeat, pale Reschid speaks.
Among the dead we mourned a thousand Greeks.
Lone from the field the Pasha fled afar,
And, musing, wiped his reeking scimitar;
His two dead steeds upon the sands were flung,
And on their sides their empty stirrups hung.

W.D., Bentley's Miscellany, 1839.

THE GREEK BOY

("Les Turcs ont passés là.")
{XVIII., June 10, 1828.}

All is a ruin where rage knew no bounds:
Chio is levelled, and loathed by the hounds,
For shivered yest'reen was her lance;
Sulphurous vapors envenom the place
Where her true beauties of Beauty's true race
Were lately linked close in the dance.

Dark is the desert, with one single soul;
Cerulean eyes! whence the burning tears roll
In anguish of uttermost shame,
Under the shadow of one shrub of May,
Splashed still with ruddy drops, bent in decay
Where fiercely the hand of Lust came.

"Soft and sweet urchin, still red with the lash
Of rein and of scabbard of wild Kuzzilbash,
What lack you for changing your sob —
If not unto laughter beseeming a child —
To utterance milder, though they have defiled
The graves which they shrank not to rob?

"Would'st thou a trinket, a flower, or scarf,
Would'st thou have silver? I'm ready with half
These sequins a-shine in the sun!
Still more have I money – if you'll but speak!"
He spoke: and furious the cry of the Greek,
"Oh, give me your dagger and gun!"

ZARA, THE BATHER

(*"Sara, belle d'indolence."*)

{XIX., August, 1828.}

In a swinging hammock lying,
Lightly flying,
Zara, lovely indolent,
O'er a fountain's crystal wave
There to lave
Her young beauty – see her bent.

As she leans, so sweet and soft,
Flitting oft,
O'er the mirror to and fro,
Seems that airy floating bat,
Like a feather
From some sea-gull's wing of snow.

Every time the frail boat laden
With the maiden
Skims the water in its flight,
Starting from its trembling sheen,
Swift are seen
A white foot and neck so white.

As that lithe foot's timid tips
Quick she dips,
Passing, in the rippling pool,
(Blush, oh! snowiest ivory!)
Frolic, she
Laughs to feel the pleasant cool.

Here displayed, but half concealed —
Half revealed,
Each bright charm shall you behold,
In her innocence emerging,
As a-verging
On the wave her hands grow cold.

For no star howe'er divine
Has the shine
Of a maid's pure loveliness,
Frightened if a leaf but quivers
As she shivers,
Veiled with naught but dripping trees.

By the happy breezes fanned
See her stand, —
Blushing like a living rose,
On her bosom swelling high
If a fly
Dare to seek a sweet repose.

In those eyes which maiden pride
Fain would hide,
Mark how passion's lightnings sleep!
And their glance is brighter far
Than the star
Brightest in heaven's bluest deep.

O'er her limbs the glittering current
In soft torrent
Rains adown the gentle girl,
As if, drop by drop, should fall,
One and all
From her necklace every pearl.

Lengthening still the reckless pleasure
At her leisure,
Care-free Zara ever slow
As the hammock floats and swings
Smiles and sings,
To herself, so sweet and low.

"Oh, were I a capitana,
Or sultana,
Amber should be always mixt
In my bath of jewelled stone,
Near my throne,
Griffins twain of gold betwixt.

"Then my hammock should be silk,
White as milk;
And, more soft than down of dove,
Velvet cushions where I sit
Should emit
Perfumes that inspire love.

"Then should I, no danger near,
Free from fear,
Revel in my garden's stream;
Nor amid the shadows deep
Dread the peep,
Of two dark eyes' kindling gleam.

"He who thus would play the spy,
On the die
For such sight his head must throw;
In his blood the sabre naked
Would be slakèd,
Of my slaves of ebon brow.

"Then my rich robes trailing show
As I go,
None to chide should be so bold;
And upon my sandals fine
How should shine
Rubies worked in cloth-of-gold!"

Fancying herself a queen,
All unseen,
Thus vibrating in delight;
In her indolent coquetting
Quite forgetting
How the hours wing their flight.

As she lists the showery tinkling
Of the sprinkling
By her wanton curvets made;
Never pauses she to think
Of the brink
Where her wrapper white is laid.

To the harvest-fields the while,
In long file,
Speed her sisters' lively band,
Like a flock of birds in flight
Streaming light,
Dancing onward hand in hand.

And they're singing, every one,
As they run
This the burden of their lay:
"Fie upon such idleness!
Not to dress
Earlier on harvest-day!"

JOHN L. O'SULLIVAN.

EXPECTATION

("Moune, écureuil.")

{xx.}

Squirrel, mount yon oak so high,
To its twig that next the sky
 Bends and trembles as a flower!
Strain, O stork, thy pinion well, —
From thy nest 'neath old church-bell,
Mount to yon tall citadel,
 And its tallest donjon tower!
To your mountain, eagle old,
Mount, whose brow so white and cold,
 Kisses the last ray of even!
And, O thou that lov'st to mark
Morn's first sunbeam pierce the dark,
Mount, O mount, thou joyous lark —
 Joyous lark, O mount to heaven!
And now say, from topmost bough,
Towering shaft, and peak of snow,
 And heaven's arch – O, can you see
One white plume that like a star,
Streams along the plain afar,
And a steed that from the war
 Bears my lover back to me?

JOHN L. O'SULLIVAN.

THE LOVER'S WISH

("Si j'étais la feuille.")
{XXII., September, 1828.}

Oh! were I the leaf that the wind of the West,
His course through the forest uncaring;
To sleep on the gale or the wave's placid breast
In a pendulous cradle is bearing.

All fresh with the morn's balmy kiss would I haste,
As the dewdrops upon me were glancing;
When Aurora sets out on the roseate waste,
And round her the breezes are dancing.

On the pinions of air I would fly, I would rush
Thro' the glens and the valleys to quiver;
Past the mountain ravine, past the grove's dreamy hush,
And the murmuring fall of the river.

By the darkening hollow and bramble-bush lane,
To catch the sweet breath of the roses;
Past the land would I speed, where the sand-driven plain
'Neath the heat of the noonday reposes.

Past the rocks that uprear their tall forms to the sky,
Whence the storm-fiend his anger is pouring;
Past lakes that lie dead, tho' the tempest roll nigh,
And the turbulent whirlwind be roaring.

On, on would I fly, till a charm stopped my way,
A charm that would lead to the bower;
Where the daughter of Araby sings to the day,
At the dawn and the vesper hour.

Then hovering down on her brow would I light,
'Midst her golden tresses entwining;
That gleam like the corn when the fields are bright,
And the sunbeams upon it shining.

A single frail gem on her beautiful head,
I should sit in the golden glory;
And prouder I'd be than the diadem spread
Round the brow of kings famous in story.

V., Eton Observer.

THE SACKING OF THE CITY

("La flamme par ton ordre, O roi!")
{XXIII., November, 1825.}

Thy will, O King, is done! Lighting but to consume,
The roar of the fierce flames drowned even the shouts and shrieks;
Reddening each roof, like some day-dawn of bloody doom,
Seemed they in joyous flight to dance about their wrecks.

Slaughter his thousand giant arms hath tossed on high,
Fell fathers, husbands, wives, beneath his streaming steel;
Prostrate, the palaces, huge tombs of fire, lie,
While gathering overhead the vultures scream and wheel!

Died the pale mothers, and the virgins, from their arms,
O Caliph, fiercely torn, bewailed their young years' blight;
With stabs and kisses fouled, all their yet quivering charms,
At our fleet coursers' heels were dragged in mocking flight.

Lo! where the city lies mantled in pall of death;
Lo! where thy mighty hand hath passed, all things must bend!
Priests prayed, the sword estopped blaspheming breath,
Vainly their cheating book for shield did they extend.

Some infants yet survived, and the unsated steel
Still drinks the life-blood of each whelp of Christian-kind,
To kiss thy sandall'd foot, O King, thy people kneel,
And golden circlets to thy victor-ankle bind.

JOHN L. O'SULLIVAN.

NOORMAHAL THE FAIR.{1}

("Entre deux rocs d'un noir d'ébène.")
{XXVII., November, 1828.}

Between two ebon rocks
Behold yon sombre den,
Where brambles bristle like the locks
Of wool between the horns of scapegoat banned by men!

Remote in ruddy fog
Still hear the tiger growl
At the lion and striped dog
That prowl with rusty throats to taunt and roar and howl;

Whilst other monsters fast
The hissing basilisk;
The hippopotamus so vast,
And the boa with waking appetite made brisk!

The orfrey showing tongue,
The fly in stinging mood,
The elephant that crushes strong
And elastic bamboos an the scorpion's brood;

And the men of the trees
With their families fierce,
Till there is not one scorching breeze
But brings here its venom – its horror to pierce —

Yet, rather there be lone,
'Mid all those horrors there,
Than hear the sickly honeyed tone
And see the swimming eyes of Noormahal the Fair!

{Footnote 1: Noormahal (Arabic) the light of the house; some of the Orientals deem fair hair and complexion a beauty.}

THE DJINNS

("Murs, ville et port.")
{XXVIII., Aug. 28, 1828.}

Town, tower,
Shore, deep,
Where lower
Cliff's steep;
Waves gray,
Where play
Winds gay,
All sleep.

Hark! a sound,
Far and slight,
Breathes around
On the night
High and higher,
Nigh and nigher,
Like a fire,
Roaring, bright.

Now, on 'tis sweeping
With rattling beat,
Like dwarf imp leaping
In gallop fleet
He flies, he prances,
In frolic fancies,
On wave-crest dances
With pattering feet.

Hark, the rising swell,
With each new burst!
Like the tolling bell
Of a convent curst;
Like the billowy roar
On a storm-lashed shore, —
Now hushed, but once more
Maddening to its worst.

O God! the deadly sound
Of the Djinn's fearful cry!
Quick, 'neath the spiral round
Of the deep staircase fly!
See, see our lamplight fade!
And of the balustrade

Mounts, mounts the circling shade
Up to the ceiling high!

'Tis the Djinns' wild streaming swarm
Whistling in their tempest flight;
Snap the tall yews 'neath the storm,
Like a pine flame crackling bright.
Swift though heavy, lo! their crowd
Through the heavens rushing loud
Like a livid thunder-cloud
With its bolt of fiery might!

Ho! they are on us, close without!
Shut tight the shelter where we lie!
With hideous din the monster rout,
Dragon and vampire, fill the sky!
The loosened rafter overhead
Trembles and bends like quivering reed;
Shakes the old door with shuddering dread,
As from its rusty hinge 'twould fly!

Wild cries of hell! voices that howl and shriek!
The horrid troop before the tempest tossed —
O Heaven! – descends my lowly roof to seek:
Bends the strong wall beneath the furious host.
Totters the house as though, like dry leaf shorn
From autumn bough and on the mad blast borne,
Up from its deep foundations it were torn
To join the stormy whirl. Ah! all is lost!

O Prophet! if thy hand but now
Save from these hellish things,
A pilgrim at thy shrine I'll bow,
Laden with pious offerings.
Bid their hot breath its fiery rain
Stream on the faithful's door in vain;
Vainly upon my blackened pane
Grate the fierce claws of their dark wings!

They have passed! – and their wild legion
Cease to thunder at my door;
Fleeting through night's rayless region,
Hither they return no more.
Clanking chains and sounds of woe
Fill the forests as they go;
And the tall oaks cower low,
Bent their flaming light before.

On! on! the storm of wings

Bears far the fiery fear,
Till scarce the breeze now brings
Dim murmurings to the ear;
Like locusts' humming hail,
Or thrash of tiny flail
Plied by the fitful gale
On some old roof-tree sere.

Fainter now are borne
Feeble mutterings still;
As when Arab horn
Swells its magic peal,
Shoreward o'er the deep
Fairy voices sweep,
And the infant's sleep
Golden visions fill.

Each deadly Djinn,
Dark child of fright,
Of death and sin,
Speeds in wild flight.
Hark, the dull moan,
Like the deep tone
Of Ocean's groan,
Afar, by night!

More and more
Fades it slow,
As on shore
Ripples flow, —
As the plaint
Far and faint
Of a saint
Murmured low.

Hark! hist!
Around,
I list!
The bounds
Of space
All trace
Efface
Of sound.

JOHN L. O'SULLIVAN.

THE OBDURATE BEAUTY

("A Juana la Grenadine!")
{XXIX., October, 1843.}

To Juana ever gay,
Sultan Achmet spoke one day
"Lo, the realms that kneel to own
Homage to my sword and crown
All I'd freely cast away,
Maiden dear, for thee alone."

"Be a Christian, noble king!
For it were a grievous thing:
Love to seek and find too well
In the arms of infidel.
Spain with cry of shame would ring,
If from honor faithful fell."

"By these pearls whose spotless chain,
Oh, my gentle sovereign,
Clasps thy neck of ivory,
Aught thou askest I will be,
If that necklace pure of stain
Thou wilt give for rosary."

JOHN L. O'SULLIVAN.

DON RODRIGO

A MOORISH BALLAD

("Don Roderique est à la chasse.")
{XXX., May, 1828.}

Unto the chase Rodrigo's gone,
With neither lance nor buckler;
A baleful light his eyes outshone —
To pity he's no truckler.

He follows not the royal stag,
But, full of fiery hating,
Beside the way one sees him lag,
Impatient at the waiting.

He longs his nephew's blood to spill,
Who 'scaped (the young Mudarra)
That trap he made and laid to kill
The seven sons of Lara.

Along the road – at last, no balk —
A youth looms on a jennet;
He rises like a sparrow-hawk
About to seize a linnet.

"What ho!" "Who calls?" "Art Christian knight,
Or basely born and boorish,
Or yet that thing I still more slight —
The spawn of some dog Moorish?"

"I seek the by-born spawn of one
I e'er renounce as brother —
Who chose to make his latest son
Caress a Moor as mother.

"I've sought that cub in every hole,
'Midland, and coast, and islet,
For he's the thief who came and stole
Our sheathless jewelled stilet."

"If you well know the poniard worn
Without edge-dulling cover —
Look on it now – here, plain, upborne!
And further be no rover.

"Tis I – as sure as you're abhorred
Rodrigo – cruel slayer,
'Tis I am Vengeance, and your lord,
Who bids you crouch in prayer!

"I shall not grant the least delay —
Use what you have, defending,
I'll send you on that darksome way
Your victims late were wending.

"And if I wore this, with its crest —
Our seal with gems entwreathing —
In open air – 'twas in your breast
To seek its fated sheathing!"

CORNFLOWERS

("Tandis que l'étoile inodore.")

{XXXII.}

While bright but scentless azure stars
 Be-gem the golden corn,
And spangle with their skyey tint
 The furrows not yet shorn;
While still the pure white tufts of May
 Ape each a snowy ball, —
Away, ye merry maids, and haste
 To gather ere they fall!

Nowhere the sun of Spain outshines
 Upon a fairer town
Than Peñafiel, or endows
 More richly farming clown;
Nowhere a broader square reflects
 Such brilliant mansions, tall, —
Away, ye merry maids, etc.

Nowhere a statelier abbey rears
 Dome huger o'er a shrine,
Though seek ye from old Rome itself
 To even Seville fine.
Here countless pilgrims come to pray
 And promenade the Mall, —
Away, ye merry maids, etc.

Where glide the girls more joyfully
 Than ours who dance at dusk,
With roses white upon their brows,
 With waists that scorn the busk?
Mantillas elsewhere hide dull eyes —
 Compared with these, how small!
Away, ye merry maids, etc.

A blossom in a city lane,
 Alizia was our pride,
And oft the blundering bee, deceived,
 Came buzzing to her side —
But, oh! for one that felt the sting,
 And found, 'neath honey, gall —
Away, ye merry maids, etc.

Young, haughty, from still hotter lands,

A stranger hither came —
Was he a Moor or African,
Or Murcian known to fame?
None knew – least, she – or false or true,
The name by which to call.
Away, ye merry maids, etc.

Alizia asked not his degree,
She saw him but as Love,
And through Xarama's vale they strayed,
And tarried in the grove, —
Oh! curses on that fatal eve,
And on that leafy hall!
Away, ye merry maids, etc.

The darkened city breathed no more;
The moon was mantled long,
Till towers thrust the cloudy cloak
Upon the steeples' throng;
The crossway Christ, in ivy draped,
Shrank, grieving, 'neath the pall, —
Away, ye merry maids, etc.

But while, alone, they kept the shade,
The other dark-eyed dears
Were murmuring on the stifling air
Their jealous threats and fears;
Alizia was so blamed, that time,
Unheeded rang the call:
Away, ye merry maids, etc.

Although, above, the hawk describes
The circle round the lark,
It sleeps, unconscious, and our lass
Had eyes but for her spark —
A spark? – a sun! 'Twas Juan, King!
Who wears our coronal, —
Away, ye merry maids, etc.

A love so far above one's state
Ends sadly. Came a black
And guarded palanquin to bear
The girl that ne'er comes back;
By royal writ, some nunnery
Still shields her from us all
Away, ye merry maids, and haste
To gather ere they fall!

H. L. WILLIAMS

MAZEPPA

("Ainsi, lorsqu'un mortel!")
{XXXIV., May, 1828.}

As when a mortal – Genius' prize, alack!
Is, living, bound upon thy fatal back,
Thou reinless racing steed!
In vain he writhes, mere cloud upon a star,
Thou bearest him as went Mazeppa, far
Out of the flow'ry mead, —
So – though thou speed'st implacable, (like him,
Spent, pallid, torn, bruised, weary, sore and dim,
As if each stride the nearer bring
Him to the grave) – when comes *the time*,
After the fall, he rises – KING!

H.L. WILLIAMS

THE DANUBE IN WRATH

("Quoi! ne pouvez-vous vivre ensemble?")
{XXXV., June, 1828.}

The River Deity upbraids his Daughters, the contributory Streams:

Ye daughters mine! will naught abate
Your fierce interminable hate?
Still am I doomed to rue the fate
That such unfriendly neighbors made?
The while ye might, in peaceful cheer,
Mirror upon your waters clear,
Semlin! thy Gothic steeples dear,
And thy bright minarets, Belgrade!

Fraser's Magazine

OLD OCEAN

("J'étais seul près des flots.")
{XXXVII., September 5, 1828.}

I stood by the waves, while the stars soared in sight,
Not a cloud specked the sky, not a sail shimmered bright;
Scenes beyond this dim world were revealed to mine eye;
And the woods, and the hills, and all nature around,
Seem'd to question with moody, mysterious sound,
The waves, and the pure stars on high.
And the clear constellations, that infinite throng,
While thousand rich harmonies swelled in their song,
Replying, bowed meekly their diamond-blaze —
And the blue waves, which nothing may bind or arrest,
Chorus'd forth, as they stooped the white foam of their crest
"Creator! we bless thee and praise!"

R.C. ELLWOOD

MY NAPOLEON

("Toujours lui! lui partout!")
{XL., December, 1828.}

Above all others, everywhere I see
His image cold or burning!
My brain it thrills, and oftentime sets free
The thoughts within me yearning.
My quivering lips pour forth the words
That cluster in his name of glory —
The star gigantic with its rays of swords
Whose gleams irradiate all modern story.

I see his finger pointing where the shell
Should fall to slay most rabble,
And save foul regicides; or strike the knell
Of weaklings 'mid the tribunes' babble.
A Consul then, o'er young but proud,
With midnight poring thinned, and sallow,
But dreams of Empire pierce the transient cloud,
And round pale face and lank locks form the halo.

And soon the Caesar, with an eye a-flame
Whole nations' contact urging
To gain his soldiers gold and fame
Oh, Sun on high emerging,
Whose dazzling lustre fired the hells
Embosomed in grim bronze, which, free, arose
To change five hundred thousand base-born Tells,
Into his host of half-a-million heroes!

What! next a captive? Yea, and caged apart.
No weight of arms enfolded
Can crush the turmoil in that seething heart
Which Nature – not her journeymen – self-moulded.
Let sordid jailers vex their prize;
But only bends that brow to lightning,
As gazing from the seaward rock, his sighs

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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