

Poet's Corner.

Written for the Portland Eclectic.

ANSWER TO "JUNIFER'S" REBUS.

BY MORNA.

Your first a holy mission hath—
Thrice-blessed is its strain,
To those who tread a darkened path
Of penury and pain.
The Lark that sings at heaven's gate,
Soars from the dewy sod,—
Thus lowly souls, and desolate,
By Faith, may soar to God.

Your second urging to the goal
The weary steed oppressed,
Is like Ambition to the soul,
Depriving it of rest.
The Spur that goads to reckless flight,
Its hapless victims prove;—
Holier incentives are the Right,
Duty, and Truth, and Love.

When Summer glides along the vale,
And dewy woodland bowers,
Counting in music to the gale
Her rosary of flowers;
The Larkspur opens with gentle grace
Its azure petals fair—
And well the poets' eye may trace
Lessons of beauty there.

THE SCULPTOR OF MODENA.

Within a stone's throw of the great Cathedral of Modena, there was an artist's studio. It was on the second floor of a large building, and its two windows were flanked by wide balconies. Within the studio, which was divided into two apartments, appeared all the appurtenances of the sculptor. In the outer apartment, which contained the implements for modelling, and numerous plaster busts, and figures in clay, and which was also used for a sort of waiting room, sat an elderly lady engaged in looking over a portfolio of drawings. She was dressed in a very rich garb, and the air of one much used to the upper ranks of life; but for all that she was only a serving woman. She had a look of shrewdness about her, and ever and anon she would turn her eyes toward the screen that covered the arched doorway to the inner apartment, as if she would listen to what was going on there. Once or twice a half mocking smile broke over her features, and when that smile passed away, she would shake her head and pat her foot, like one who has thoughts too complicated for utterance.

Within the studio there was a different group. Near the centre of the room stood a marble statue of the Virgin. The rough work was all done—the drapery thrown into its required folds—the head and hands formed—the bosom worked down to its due proportions, and face partly finished. By its side stood Zanello, the sculptor. He was a young man—perhaps thirty years of age—and he possessed a wild, dreamy beauty that was startling at the first sight. He was of medium height, and rather slender of frame, but he lacked not in muscle, nor in anything that marks the true physical man. His features were of the most faultless symmetry, but very pale. His eyes were large and black, containing a world of power and electric light, and his brow was broad and high. His hair was black, and hung in long flowing curls over his shoulders.

Near by the sculptor, upon a low ottoman, sat a girl—a girl who had seen some twenty summers. She was a beautiful creature, for it was her very beauty that had called her there. Her beauty was of a quiet, modest cast, with none of that voluptuousness which appears to the outer senses, but made up of spirit that looks only to the soul for appreciation. At the present moment her eyes were drooping, and the long silken lashes were traced upon the white cheeks. She was Marianna Torello, a distant relative and a protegee of the Duke of Modena. She was acknowledged the queen of beauty in the city, and most people who knew her declared that her equal was not to be found in the whole dukedom. She was of noble birth, but an orphan.

The Duke Antonio had engaged Zanello to make him a statue of the Virgin, and the whim had seized him to have the face copied from the lovely features of Marianna; nor was the whim very wild, either, for it were hard for an artist to create a countenance better adapted to express the soul of the Christian Mother. The duke entertained no less in thus trusting his protegee at the artist's studio, but as a guard against scandal, he always sent her in company with Dorina, one of his wife's trusty serving-women. Once, Jullian Pazzi, an acknowledged suitor for Marianna's hand, who was a count, and favorite of the Duke, expressed a dislike to having the maiden go to the studio of the handsome artist, but the duke only laughed at him, and assured him that Marianna's heart was not open to such danger. But we shall see how the count looked upon it.

"Come, signor," said Marianna, in a very low tone, as she raised her eyes tremblingly to the artist's face, "you are slow with your work. The duke will not grant you many more sittings from me."

Zanello raised his chisel to the marble face, but he did not set about his work. He looked upon the living face he was to copy, and again his arm dropped to his side.

"Signora," he said, in a tone as deep and rich as the breathing of an organ, "'tis a hopeless task. Go, tell the noble duke that I cannot do his bidding."

"Cannot?"

"That was my word. I would if I could, but I cannot."

"But Antonio will be angry."

"Then so be it."

"And can you not finish the statue?"

"I said not so. If he will send me another face, or leave me to fashion one from my own creation, I will do the work, but I cannot put your face upon my marble."

Again Marianna's eyes dropped to the floor, and she turned strangely pale. She trembled too, till her dark ringlets shook as though the wind were playing with them.

"Then you will not want me to come here again," she said, without raising her eyes.

The sculptor started. A wild commotion moved his features for a moment, but when he spoke he was calm again.

"No; there is no need that you should come here more. I cannot do the work for which you are sent."

"I fear the duke will be very angry," said the maiden, slowly raising her eyes.

"Then let him be so," said Zanello, speaking more slowly, and in a very low, calm tone. "I will tell the truth to you, but you need not tell it to him. I would rather brave his anger than to have my own heart crushed and broken. He ought not to have sent you here."

"I am sure he meant no harm, signor; nor can I see where there is any."

"Cannot you understand me? I will speak more plainly, then. Instead of transferring your face to this senseless marble, I have allowed it to become imaged in my own soul. I dare not see you smile again."

The sculptor ceased speaking, and sank into a chair. At the end of a few moments he cast his eyes again upon his lovely companion, but he found her head was bowed.

"Signora," he continued, with a strange sadness in his tone, "long years ago I laid my mother in the cold grave, and then I was without a friend in the world. Since then I have been a solitary child of fortune, seeking no love, and returning none. I have loved my art, and I had thought my heart could learn to love nothing more on earth; but I have been mistaken. You come to me like a spirit from heaven. I saw you smile, heard you speak, and read the pure thoughts that dwelt in your soul. Already I love you with a passion that must henceforth leave its touch of pain upon my heart; but I dare not venture further. Go back to the duke and tell him that I will finish the work without a model. I hope I need not ask your pardon for thus telling the truth."

Zanello drew a screen over the statue, and then turned towards the outer studio. He had moved but a few steps, however, ere he heard his name pronounced. He stopped and turned, and Marianna was looking full upon him. She was pale, and tears glistened in her eyes, but she did not tremble.

"Zanello," she said, "I, too, lost my mother long years ago, and since then I have seen little to love in the gaudy throng that has surrounded me. Few have known the feelings of my orphaned heart. Perhaps the duke ought not to have sent me here; but it cannot be helped now. I have come—and—and you must not drive me away."

Marianna's eyes dropped again as she ceased speaking, and she now began to tremble. Zanello was not a man to resist the intoxicating flood that came pouring upon him. This drop had made his cup overrun, and without a word he clasped the maiden to his bosom. She looked up and smiled through her tears, and then laid her head upon his shoulder.

At this moment the lovers heard a movement in the outer room, and soon afterwards Dorina looked in.

"Come, signora, it is time we should go," she said.

"I will be with you in a moment."

Marianna was quickly prepared, and having wiped all the tears away from her face, she turned towards the door, but before she reached it she stopped.

"I shall come again," she said.

"Yes; I will go on with the work," replied the artist.

It was towards the middle of the afternoon when Zanello was left alone. The emotions that had come to his soul were too powerful for calm thought. He did not think of Marianna's noble blood, nor of the barrier that the laws placed between them. He only knew that she loved him—that she had reclined upon his bosom, and that she had received his avowal of love with a smile. If there was a tangible form to any of his thoughts, it was the thought of another land where there was no stern duke to interpose between him and his love, and where he could fashion him a home beneath the sunshine of peace and safety. And so for an hour he lived in the realm of his own wild dreams, sometimes sitting by the statue, and sometimes walking up and down his studio.

At length the sculptor prepared himself for a walk in the open air.

He had put on his cap, and hung his light rapier to his girdle, and was upon the point of going out, when he suddenly stopped in front of the statue. He gazed upon the marble face, the features of which were just beginning to spring into life, and a new idea burst upon him. His dark eyes glowed with a deeper fire, his pale face was lighted up with a glow of new enthusiasm, and his whole frame set to the strange thought that had come upon him. For a while he forgot the love-light that had found its way into his soul, for Genius was overleaping everything that belonged not to its legitimate train.

The face of Marianna Torello had passed away from that marble, and another had taken its place. Up from his own soul the sculptor had drawn a form that was to live in the white stone. Perhaps he feared that he could not copy the features of the maiden he loved, but be that as it may, the outer form had come unbidden to him, and he was resolved to use it.

Having dwelt for a long while in the thought that had so strangely come to him, Zanello started up from his deep study and prepared once more to go out. He locked the door of his studio, and having gained the street, he turned his steps towards the Secchia. He had passed on through several squares, when his attention was attracted by a party of young noblemen, who were coming towards him. He noticed that Count Pazzi was among the number, and also that their attention was directed towards himself. He would have crossed over and avoided them, but Pazzi interrupted him.

(To be Continued.)

A LITTLE VOICE FROM THE BALTIC.—A midshipman, 13 years old, on one of the vessels in Admiral Napier's squadron, writes home the following letter. It blends war and home, blood and the sports of innocent childhood, in a strange way:

"WINGOW SOUND, GOTTENBURGH,
H. M. S.—, March, 22 1854.

"Dear Mamma and Papa: I am going to send you a few lines about our own division of the Baltic fleet. You, of course, have heard about our parading at Spithead, were the Queen came down upon us, and then we made the Nore, Sheerness, and after came on to the Sound of Wingow. A great many people come down from Gottenburgh to see us, and call us the deliverers of our country and such things, and make presents and other things to us. I hope, if all goes well, to get a month's leave when I come back to England, after the war. I have got one of the most dangerous and best posts for myself for chances of taking prizes in the ship, as I am captain's aid-de-camp and I shall go with him in his gig. I am trying to get a pistol, as everybody else has one, and mean to get one to, if possible. We are allowed them. I can get one easily, as I have lots of tin supplied by kind auntie. I mean, if possible, to get some prize money. I am in the first division of boarders, and am nearly sure, if any work is going on to be in the midst. I am happy to say I have got a very good sword indeed, and am very happy. I should like to see you before I go to the forts—very much indeed, but it is impossible, so I must hurry. Write to me soon, as once more I mean to send love to all, and a fond farewell. I am very much obliged to Marty and Henny, tell them, for their kind letters to me during the short time I was at Portsmouth, though not able to go on shore. When the men practice at firing, we do also. It is so cold. I have some very nice thick things, so I do not mind it much. The packet goes this afternoon so I must hurry. Good by, dear mama and papa, and brother and sisters;

"I remain, dear all of you, E. C. H.

"How is child, and all brothers and sisters, and Charley, [a pet fox] and Bounce, and the dogs, and the short-tailed nony?"

Kaintuck and the Fiddler.

On board the steamer Indiana, in one of her trips down the Mississippi, were a large number of good-natured passengers. They were seeking to while away the hours, according to their several notions of pleasure, and would have got on very well but for one annoyance. There happened to be on board, a Hoosier from the Wabash, who was going "down to Orleans," and he had provided himself with an old violin, fancying that he could fiddle as well as the best man, and planting himself where he would attract notice, scraped away. The fellow could not fiddle any more than a setting hen, and the horrible noise disturbed his fellow passengers excessively. A Frenchman, of very delicate nerves, and a very fine musical ear, was especially annoyed. He fluttered, fidgetted and swore at the "sacre" fiddle. The passengers tried various expedients, to rid themselves of the Hoosier and his fiddle, it was no go—"he would music just as long as he d—d please." At last, a big Kentuckian sprang from his seat saying, "I reckon I'll fix him," placed himself near the amateur fiddle, and commenced braying with all his might. The effect of the move was beyond description—"Old Kentuck" brayed so loud that he drowned the screeching of the fiddle, and amid the shouts of the passengers, the discomfited Hoosier retreated below, leaving the victory of the unequal contest with the Kentuckian and his singular *impromptu* imitation of Balaam's friend. The delight of the Frenchman knew no bounds: quiet was restored for the day. During the night the Kentuckian left the boat. The next morning, after breakfast, the passengers were startled by the discordant sound of their old tormentor; Hoosier had discovered that the coast was clear, and was bound to revenge himself on the passengers. Loud, and worse than ever screamed the fiddle. The Frenchman, just seated to read his paper, on the first sound, rose, looked anxiously around, shrugged his shoulders and then shouted "Vare is he! vare is he? Queeck—queeck, *Mon Dieu! Vare is Monsieur Kentuck, de man vat play on de jackass!*"

Reflections of a Church-Going Belle.

So Mr. Brown is going to preach to-day—I hoped he would exchange. I suppose he is a good man, but his sermons are dreadfully dull, and so long! If I were a minister, I would not write any sermon over fifteen minutes, and would not average over ten.

I wonder who that stranger is in Squire Bigelow's pew. How interesting he looks with his long curls—I should like to get acquainted with him.

Good gracious! Georgiana Fuller has got a new bonnet! Well, wonders will never cease. It isn't becoming in the least—however, it will do well enough for her. Kate Melvin has a new shawl. How beautiful it is. I've no doubt she got it at Warren's—I saw one there the other day just like it. I'll go to-morrow, and see if I can't get one similar.

Well, never! If there isn't a gentleman in Miss Periwinkle's pew. Wonder whether he is courting the old maid. Don't believe he'd make quite such a fool of himself, for she's thirty-five or more, and sour and crusty enough to turn the sweetest milk. I've no doubt she'd like to get him, if she could, or any one else, for that matter.

Heigh ho, what a long sermon!

"Oh! there's Mrs. Eustace, the bride. How sweetly she is dressed. I'll call on her to-morrow—I hear she's got a brother in the army. I'll manage to get introduced, if, as I hear, he is coming here to pass a vacation of a few weeks.

Wonder whether any body sees my new silk—I hope so, for what's the use of having new things, unless they are seen.

The sermon through—what a relief!

"How do you do, Mrs. Jones? Fine sermon?" Yes, very. I listened to it with much pleasure.

The Intoxicated Monkey.

Jack, as he was called, seeing his master and some companions drinking, with those imitative powers for which his species is remarkable, finding half a glass of whiskey left, took it and drank it off. It flew of course to his head. Amid their loud roars of laughter, he began to skip, hop, and dance. Jack was drunk. Next day, when they went, with the intention of repeating the fun, to take the poor monkey from his box, he was not to be seen. Looking inside, there he lay, crouching in a corner. "Come out," said his master. Afraid to disobey, he came walking on three legs—the fore-paw that was laid on his forehead saying, as plain as words could do, that he had a headache.

Having left him some days to get well, and resume his gaiety, they at length carried him off to the old scene of revel. On entering, he eyed the