

Poet's Corner.

LET US BE HAPPY.

BY ELIZA COOK.

Oh! let us be happy when friends gather round us,
However the world may have shadowed our lot,
When the rose-braided links of affection have
bound us,
Let the cold chains of earth be despised and
forgot;
And say not that Friendship is only ideal,
That Truth and Devotion are blessings unknown
For he who believes every heart as unreal,
Has something unsound at the core of his own.
Oh! let us be happy when moments of pleasure
Have brought to our presence the dearest and
best,
For the pulse always beats to most heavenly mea-
sure,
When love and good-will sweep the strings of
the breast.

Oh! let us be happy, when moments of meeting
Bring those to our side who illumine our eyes;
And though Folly, perchance, shake a bell at the
greeting,
He is the dullest of fools who forever is wise.
Let the laughter of Joy echo over our bosoms,
As the hum of the bee o'er the mid-summer
flowers,
For the honey of happiness comes from love's
blossoms,
And is found in the hive of those exquisite
hours.
Then let us be happy when moments of pleasure
Have brought to our presence the dearest and
best,
For the pulse always beats to most heavenly mea-
sure,
When love and good-will sweep the strings of
the breast.

Let us plead not a spirit too sad and too weary,
To yield the kind word, and the mirth-lighted
smile;
The heart, like the tree, must be fearfully dreary,
Where the robin of hope will not warble awhile,
Let us say not in pride, that we care not for
others,
And live in our wealth like an ox in his stall;
'Tis the commerce of love with our sisters and
brothers,
Helps to pay our great debt to the Father of All.
Then let us be happy when moments of pleasure
Have brought to our presence the dearest and
best,
For the pulse ever beats with more heavenly mea-
sure,
When love and good-will sweeps the strings of
the breast.

[From Chambers' Repository.]

THE ROCK REPUBLIC.

A CHRONICLE OF
TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

[CONCLUDED.]

When Michel had ascended the rope, leaving his companions behind, a low murmur from one or two attracted the attention of Pepin, who had been appointed lieutenant by the improvised dictator of the night. He asked in a whisper what was the matter; and hearing that an idea had been set afloat that Michel was perhaps betraying them, burst forth, despite all his caution, in a whole vocabulary of invectives against the coward who dared suspect one greater than them all; he then imposed strict silence. It was a singular scene. Around, rocks and the sea—the first black the second white—with wind howling, and waves roaring; and above, sheer point blank upward, apparently reaching the skies, the vast tower.—The men were pressed together closely, as the base of the castle afforded little space, and the rope ladder even took up a portion. At first they could see Michel, but presently they lost sight of him, his figure mingling with the darkness, except when a flash of lightning revealed his presence; but still the vibration of the rope told that he was ascending, for Pepin and several others held it. Suddenly this ceased, and then an anxious moment of silence followed, all eyes being cast upward toward the summit of the tower.

"It ascends," said Pepin then a low whisper, that went round the whole body like an electric shock. Up it went, quickly at first, then slowly, and at last with so slow a motion as to alarm the daring youths.

"Michel finds it too much for him, I fear," said Pepin with a shudder. "Two should have ascended."

"It goes up again!" exclaimed one, with delight.

From that moment its ascending motion never ceased. But when about twenty rods remained uncoiled, a man who stood on the very edge of

the rock spoke in a startled whisper; "Michel is letting something down."

All drew in their breath and waited; but their suspense was not of long duration, as most of them had guessed Michel's ingenious device for aiding the carrying up of his ladder. Pepin lost not a moment; he cast loose the piece of iron as soon as he could lay hands on it, and set the rope adrift. It went up again with extreme rapidity.—Then an anxious pause ensued, and the clock struck half-past one. All pressed forward; but Pepin was thoughtful and wise.

"Give him one minute's grace, he said, "he may not have been quite ready."

That minute decided the fate of the enterprise. Had Michel not had that one minute, his ladder would have fallen. As it was, it was but ill fastened. Then Pepin, having seen that his horn was safe, put his foot on the ladder, bidding twelve others to follow, and they began their ascent.—They were all bold and resolute youths; but the peril was so extreme, the enterprise so hazardous—a chafed rope might cast all headlong into the sea or on the heads of their companions, a sentry might give the alarm—that not one but felt his heart beat quicker than it had ever done before.—The ladder to the first company was comparatively easy of ascent, but to the last it would be terrible; for then it would hang loosely, and shake at the will of the wind. On they went, then, those thirteen men, their musketoons on their backs, their swords between their teeth, their daggers ready at hand, and every man vowing a wax-candle to our Lady St. Malo, if ever he lived to enter a church again. They climbed with steady and measured steps—a proceeding when they were half-way up of considerable inconvenience, for as the thirteen left feet descended on thirteen ratlins on the left side the ladder swung fearfully from side to side.

"Stop!" said Pepin suddenly to the next man; and then, as the word passed down, he bade them step one on one side, and one on the other. They found this remedy, in a great measure, the evil complained of.

"Ave-Maria, God rest our souls!" exclaimed Pepin suddenly in a frantic tone, as he felt the ladder give way, and already saw himself, with his unfortunate companions, cast upon the heads of his friends below.

At the same instant a terrific jerk, sufficiently proclaiming that for a moment the danger was over, nearly cast them from their holding; but then the rope remained steady again, and all breathed. There was not a face at that moment, could it have been seen, but was blanched with terror. Their hearts had almost ceased to beat, their wrists were wrenched, and their hands, though clutching the thick rope convulsively, seemed to be about to refuse their office. Then, muttering a hurried prayer, the adventurers continued their ascent, and soon arrived at the summit, with the feeling of men snatched from certain death.

Their first act was to examine the fastening of the ladder. A hastily tied knot had become unfastened, and the loosened cord had given the ladder two feet additional length. Nothing had saved them from destruction, but that the top ratlin of the ladder caught in two projecting stones of sufficient strength to bear them. They took care now to make the whole so firm that those below had nothing to fear.

When those who were anxiously awaiting their turn felt the ladder fall, for one second of time, loose in their hands, and become two feet longer, their first impulse was flight, and some dashed into the sea up to their necks, to save themselves from destruction; but two held on, and the panic which lasted little more than a second, being over, the whole again congregated fearfully at the foot of the tower in whispered conference.—There were one or two brave men and true, who afterwards were not ashamed to own they would but for very terror of the others have retreated.—All understood that the ladder had partially given way, and even now it was possible every minute that the whole might come down about their ears.

They listened, then, with deep anxiety, and kept their eyes fixed upwards. Then came the sound of the horn. It was now one general rush towards the ladder, and the inferior chiefs had some difficulty in preventing the whole from ascending at once. As it was, persuaded that those above would now see to their safety, twenty-three ventured to ascend.

At half-past two, all were safely up, having performed one of the most daring feats on record, and in a cause far more justifiable than usual in those days, or even in any days of heroism, men being too apt to judge the manner of a deed less

than its object. The pirates of the Gulf performed many acts almost as bold, but they, actuated by cupidity, are not to be compared with those ardent youths whose sole object was the freedom of their native town.

CHAPTER VII.

The Count de Fontaines had not retired to rest, nor had his daughter; they believed it to be their duty to await the king's descent from the tower; but they were up under the influence of very different feelings. The count believed the bluff monarch's fears chimerical. He had so long seen the Malouines quiet, that although he knew their aspirations after liberty and independence to be real and serious, yet he did not think them capable of asserting them by force of arms. But Isabella knew that something was about to be done, and she therefore remained as much to protect him in case of danger, as to await the hour which should signal the outbreak. Her position was difficult; her sympathies were with Michael.—She understood that a free city, proud of its liberties, should wish to possess its own citadel, free from what it considered foreign troops; she comprehended its desire for self-taxation; and able as it was to defend itself, she believed it entitled to continue as it had existed for centuries. But then her own father headed these foreign soldiers, and there might be danger to him. She hoped and believed there was none; but she remained up to be ready in case of any serious events, resolved to die herself, if necessary for him.

The Count then sat calmly in an arm-chair, softly cushioned, and covered with Genoa velvet; while Isabella leaned her elbows on a table, to appearance reading a huge folio, but really wrapped in her own thoughts. Suddenly she heard the horn sound from the summit of La Generale, and started to her feet, her volume falling on the ground in her haste.

"What is it? who calls?" exclaimed the Count, rubbing his eyes.

Isabella listened, but replied not, while the governor rose and harkened, not yet sufficiently awake to understand what had occurred. Two minutes later, the roar of artillery, then the cries of sentries, the sound of trumpet and the beat of drums, told him some event of alarming import was going on.

"In the name of God, what means this?" said he about to rush out. "Have the mad Leaguers learned the king's presence here, and came to break their heads against stone walls?"

"Stay, my dear father, stay," cried Isabella passionately; "there is danger without, and I should die if you go."

"Nay, child, I must go. What is it, Choppau?" he added, as a soldier entered in haste.

"My lord, a revolt of the citizens. They fire cannon on the castle gates, and are at least ten thousand," said the alarmed soldier.

"Tush, tush!" exclaimed Henry entering; "talk not so big, my man. Go to the ramparts and command that they cease all firing. Bid your officer ask ten minutes truce, and say that Henry of Navarre will himself treat with them."

"Sire!" cried the astonished Count, while the soldier rushed out to obey his sovereign's command.

"De Fontaines," continued the king calmly,

"there is no time to be lost; answer my questions quickly."

"I await your majesty's commands," replied the other, bewildered beyond all possibility of description at what was going on around him.

"How many men have you?"

"One hundred and thirty-six, sire."

"For how long have you ammunition, supposing the powder magazine in their hands?"

"Not for one moment. It is all kept there, sire, for safety," said De Fontaines, still more astounded.

"How long could you hold out, supposing the Generale in the enemy's power, the powder magazine captured, and fifty-seven devils of Malouines raging within?"

"Not five minutes, sire; the men would also fear—"

"The blowing up of the magazine?"

"Your majesty! I am lost in amazement; explain yourself, sire," continued the stupefied soldier.

"De Fontaines, the Generale is in their hands; the powder magazine is theirs; their chief threatens to blow it up if we do not surrender; and I am a prisoner on parole!" said the king, half-amused at the other's alarm.

De Fontaines sank on a chair, overwhelmed with confusion, shame and astonishment.

"But—how—in—the—holy—name, did they get there?"

"Your Malouines are good sailors—they climbed up the tower from the sea, deceiving the sentry, by name Henry the Fourth of France, and taking him prisoner," said the king bitterly.

"The foul fiend," exclaimed De Fontaines, "must be at the bottom of this."

"No; but one as clever," said Bearnais, looking fixedly at Isabella, who was pale and red alternately, as various emotions affected her.

"Who, sire?"

"Master Secretary Michel, my wise governor!" replied the king sarcastically.

"Sire," said De Fontaines, rising with dignity, "let me go seek death. I have deserved it."

"My father! Your majesty, stop him! he is desperate!" cried Isabella passionately.

"Remain, De Fontaines. You are a brave soldier, but one deeper than you has overcome you—We must surrender. I cannot risk my life for one town, and my peculiar position in regard to the League commands me to be on friendly terms with St. Malo, though defeated. They will take the castle; let them have it quietly," and he took up a sheet of paper. "Send this safe-conduct to Michel, and let him come here and treat with us for the capitulation."

De Fontaines turned round to his daughter in despair. "Isabella, am I awake! Do I dream!"

"No time is to be lost. Lady Isabella, do you bear this to Master Secretary; give him our royal word that it shall be respected."

Blushing, trembling, and yet proud of her mission Isabella went forth. She found the court full of soldiers, some with torches, some with arms, while women and children sat sobbing and screaming in corners. She passed through the whole party, all making way, and stood at the barred gate of the Generale.

"Who comes?" said a stern voice, while the clank of arms was heard.

"I bear a message to General Michel," replied the young girl in a firm voice.

"Ah! Isabella, is that you! Why here at this hour?" exclaimed the clear voice of the young leader of the audacious band within.

"I bear in my hand a safe-conduct for Michel de la Bardeliere, signed by the hand of Henry of Navarre, king of France, who demands to treat with General Michel for the capitulation of the fortress of St. Malo."

It was now first known that the Generale and the powder magazine were in the hands of the enemy. The mass of soldiers dispersed to look after their private effects, and to prepare for a movement which all felt to be inevitable. Michel opened the door, and came forth boldly. His first step—Isabella had fled—was to seek the ramparts. All was still. The citizens had understood at once the meaning of a truce.

"Citizens," he exclaimed in a loud voice, "let not a gun be fired until firing recommences from within. The castle is ours, and before daylight the gates will be opened."

A terrific shout of "Long live Michel! Long live St. Malo!" and then the young man directed his steps toward the apartment where Henry IV. and the Governor awaited him. His face was pale, but his brow was firm, and lips compressed. There was a flash of triumph in his eye, that showed the joy he felt at his certain victory. When he entered the council-chamber he found himself in presence of the king, the Count de Fontaines and his daughter.

The king arose, which showed that he meant to treat with Michel as an equal for the moment, and seated himself only when the other was seated also.

"Sir Michel," said he graciously, for he could assume gentleness, though in reality furious at his defeat and the loss of such a town, "I had hoped to have won over the Malouines to our royal selves. It seems they prefer independence. Far be it from me to wish to force them to comply. I prefer hoping that time may bring them to wiser councils. The castle, then, I willingly place in your hands, and only ask for my men an honorable capitulation."

"Such is my wish, sire—arms and baggage, but the treasure and ammunition must be ours," replied Michel gravely. "We have supported the garrison long enough, and as men who know the value of money, we consider what the treasury contains to be our due."

"God have mercy on me!" cried De Fontaines, turning very pale, for the king knew nothing of his funds.

"How much is there?" inquired the king, almost inclined to smile.

"I cannot say," replied the Count; "ask my secretary. He knows far better than I do."

"Nothing of consequence," said Michel quietly.

"It is, however, understood that the garrison march out with arms and baggage; and no hostilities