

## Poet's Corner.

For the Sentinel.

## HOME.

Must all the trials that appear:  
In this vain world wherein I roam;  
One place to me is far more dear,  
Then all the rest—that place is home!

There weariness expects repose,  
And grief itself forgets to weep;  
There a pure spring of comfort flows,  
To lull earth's saddest cares to sleep.

But there's a happier home above,  
A sweeter rest beyond the skies;  
Where peace forever dwells, and love  
Forbids one bitter pang to rise.

Why should we mourn though doomed to go,  
Through troubles, to that world of peace?  
Why shrink from sorrow when we know,  
Our home is near where all will cease?

Oh Saviour who has gone before,  
A heavenly mansion to prepare;  
Teach us to seek that happy shore,  
And let our dearest home be there.

MARIE.

HENRI DARVIÈRE;  
OR  
THE HUSBAND OF TWO WIVES.

A TALE OF BARCELONA.

Of all the eminent practitioners belonging to the bar at Colmar, no one was held in greater esteem than Anthony Garain. Not only was he remarkable for good sense, profound knowledge, and that peculiar eloquence that springs from a warm heart—but his incontestable superiority over his brethren of the bar, was due to the scrupulous conscientiousness that guided his every thought and action. Others might equal him in learning or in eloquence, but nobody entertained such lofty notions of the sacred obligation of performing his duty. Indeed many traits were current amongst the people, showing that the old lawyer carried his notions of honesty to a length almost bordering on romance. Thus he was known to have indemnified a client because he fancied he had not pleaded his cause with sufficient skill; another time he had borne the costs of cancelling an agreement, because there was some flaw in the indentures, owing to no fault of his; and in several cases he had paid the costs when he had advised the parties to go to law, and they had lost their suit. In short, he was of those exceptional characters whose refined delicacy leads them to hold themselves responsible not only for their faults but even for their involuntary errors.

The reward of this almost fanatical worship of honor in this worthy man's case had been not only the esteem of his fellow citizens, but that serenity and inward peace without which success is but a vain gratification. Deprived by death of the wife he loved, M. Garain was at least happy in his daughter, whose devoted affection and excellent qualities could alone console him for his loss. Octaire had grown up under her father's eyes, knowing no other happiness but what centered in him, until the day when the father's claims yielded to those of a husband. Beloved by the man she would have chosen before all others, Octaire's marriage completed the old lawyer's earthly happiness.

Henry Darvière, the bridegroom, was indeed one of those rare beings who command one's confidence without making a single profession. Sorely tried as he had been by political persecutions, nothing short of the fascinations of this ardently coveted union could have rendered him capable of once more experiencing happiness which his long exile seemed to have withered forever in his heart. A recent journey to Switzerland with his beloved Octaire had restored his mind to its natural tone, while the charm of the scenery and the bustle of travelling seemed to have imparted a fresh elasticity to his spirits.

At the moment when our tale begins, M. Garain was seated in his study, and in the midst of one of those fits of abstraction that occasionally interrupt the labors of all thinking minds, his eyes wandered toward the portraits of his daughter and son-in-law, which had been hung opposite his writing table but the day before. He was contemplating with quiet emotion those two radiant countenances, and following them even into the regions of the future, when suddenly recollecting that the present claimed his more immediate attention, he forcibly shook his day dreams, and turned his attention towards a mass of papers that lay strewn over his writing-table. After perusing several

of these with an absent air, his attention was riveted by a short note written in Spanish, but which he managed to make out, thanks to having studied Don Quixote in his youth.

The note ran as follows:—

"A stranger who can scarcely speak two words of French, is desirous of entrusting an important cause to a lawyer of known probity and activity. She was advised to apply to M. Garain, who it was said understands a little Spanish. She entreats him to receive her without a moment's delay. The matter at stake is one of life or death to her.

"INEZ"

This note had been penned in one of the hotels of the town, and bore the date of that day. M. Garain was just taking up his pen to indite a reply when he heard the sound of voices, in the next moment the door was opened abruptly, and a young woman dressed in black stood on the threshold.

The Junior clerk who was following her with a half-frightened look, now stammered forth—"Donna Inez Cordova."

The old lawyer rose and bowed, saying:—"Madame, I was about to write to you," and he showed the paper he held in his hand.

"You—Senor Garain?" asked the Spanish lady, trying to find words to express her meaning.

He bowed his head affirmatively.

"Then you—ready to listen?" said she in an animated tone. "I speak bad—but you listen all the better. You speak Spanish?"

"I used formerly to understand a few words," said the old man, but I have forgotten nearly all I once knew."

"Never mind—me speak if you patient."

He had offered the stranger a chair, and she had sank into it, and now seemed intent on composing her ideas. The lawyer took advantage of this pause to examine the lady's countenance.

Senorita Cordova had evidently been handsome but her emaciated features and drooping form gave token of long mental suffering. There was an expression half violent, half wild, that occasionally flashed from her dark eyes, and betrayed the restless nature of a woman who had not the slightest command over her passions.

After a short silence, she looked full at her host, as if she would fain have read his inmost thoughts, and then began a long story, partly in Spanish and partly in broken French, which M. Garain was at first totally unable to understand. By degrees, however, and from the frequent repetition of the same words, aided by his fair client's tone and gestures, her meaning became more intelligible, and by dint of a number of questions and no small amount of trouble, the old lawyer began to understand half of what she said, and to guess the remainder.

The Spanish lady's confessions formed a very sad and somewhat romantic tale. She had fallen violently in love with a young man who had been taken ill by chance at her mother's, and she had inveigled him into a marriage, contracted on his part, less by choice than from gratitude. The results of such a union might have been easily foreseen. Inez's headlong passions could not put up with the young man's quiet affection; her exaggerated sentiments were perpetually bursting forth into reproaches and jealous ravings, and, unable to bear such continual agitations, she at length determined to rid herself of them by putting an end to her existence. She wrote a letter to her husband, informing him that he was free, and having thus broken the last tie that bound her to the earth, the unhappy woman fled from home, resolved to take the first opportunity of embracing death. But even in the midst of her insane projects, the love of life had prevailed in spite of herself. At the moment of starting for "that bourne whence no traveller returns," she had held back, and preferred exile to death.—Having sailed for South America with some pious nuns who had taken pity on her, she remained buried in their convent for a couple of years, endeavouring to submit to the self-imposed condition of being dead to the outer world. But the effort proved vain. The same flame was still smouldering beneath the ashes. Unable to attain to a state of resignation, she had suddenly left her sepulchre and sailed for Spain—but he whom she had left behind was no longer there. More than ever bent on pursuing him, she had spent a whole year in tracing his steps from the Tagus to the Pyrenees, and from the Alps to the Adriatic. At length she had traced him to the Rhine. He whom she was seeking for was now in France, to her certain knowledge—only how to find him was the difficulty—and it was for this that she had come to claim the assistance of M. Garain.

She had brought with her all the documents that could assist him by proving the truth of her story. Moved by the sight of her tears, the old lawyer promised to help her—indeed the very excess of the unfortunate woman's passion was in itself well calculated to touch even a more stubborn heart than his. And when he gazed on her withered features, he felt grateful that his daughter had undergone no such trials, and shook the stranger's hand with paternal kindness, while he said, in a gentle tone.

"Be calm Senora—with the help of Providence we shall, I trust, find him whom you ought never to have left. But in order that your return may give him unalloyed happiness, you must endeavour to meet him in a calmer and more indulgent spirit. An affection that only brings uneasiness to its object instead of bestowing happiness, is not a wholesome affection. Try and cool down this feverish state of effervescence—receive thankfully what heaven sends you, and do not crave for more. A heart that is insatiable is at the same time ungrateful to Providence."

"Me understand," said the Spanish lady, in her broken language, while she pressed the hand of her kind adviser; "he happy first, me happy afterwards."

M. Garain smiled his approval; and after a few encouraging words, and the promise to examine the papers she entrusted him with that same evening, he conducted her across the garden to the outer gate of his residence.

The day was now waning, and the last beams of the setting sun were now gilding the window panes and sparkling amongst the leaves, while the evening breeze wafted a delightful smell of hyacinths and narcissuses as it swept across the flower beds. M. Garain involuntarily slackened his pace as he returned, and his feet seemed to carry him to the avenue of lime trees that formed his favorite promenade. Just as he reached it, the sound of a silver laugh rang in his ears, while a slight figure bounded from the honeysuckle arbor that closed the avenue, and another moment Octaire, who, together with her husband, was lying in wait to surprise him, had rushed into her father's arms.

Each of his children now took hold of a hand and all three walked up and down the avenue.—They had a great deal to say to each other—the young folks related the details of their charming trip, while the father multiplied his questions, till night had completely set in, and M. Garain remembered that a parent's affection must not render him forgetful of a lawyer's duties, and he proposed returning in-doors.

"By the bye, Henri," said he "you have arrived just in time to be of great assistance to me. You know Spanish extremely well?"

"About as well as Frenchmen ever know a foreign language," replied Henri.

"Well, that will do," continued the lawyer.—"All I want of you is to help me to make out the meaning of some papers that have just been brought to me. It is now some thirty years since I translated Cervantes, and I am afraid I am but a poor Spaniard. But you will throw light upon the subject, I am convinced."

It was only on her father's assurance of the pressing nature of the business, that Octaire was willing to consent to Henri's being pressed into legal service on the very night of their arrival.—Mr. Garain promised, however, he would not detain him long; and the father and son-in-law repaired to the study, while Octaire went up-stair to unpack her trunks.

At the sight of the voluminous bundle of papers left by the stranger, Darvière could scarcely repress an exclamation.

"Do not be alarmed," said M. Garain, smiling. "We will only glance at the papers—only, first of all, I must explain the case."

"I am all attention," said Henri, somewhat listlessly, like one trying to perform a tiresome duty with a tolerably good grace.

M. Garain then proceeded to a somewhat lengthy opening of the case, after which he described the foreign lady, and added all the details of her story.

Henri listened at first with a degree of coldness that ill-concealed his impatience to "throw law to the dogs," and return to Octaire; but by degrees his attention became awakened, and certain particulars seemed to startle him. With eyes intently fixed on M. Garain, he hung on every word with increasing agitation, until the name of the Spanish lady seemed the climax that made him utter an exclamation of horror.

"What is the matter?" asked M. Garain.

"Inez Cordova!" repeated the young man, gasping for breath; "did you say Inez Cordova?"

"That is her name."

"And you have seen her?" asked Henri.

"But a few hours ago."

"And living?"

"It was she who gave me these papers."

Darvière seized the documents with a convulsive grasp, and, after turning over the leaves with a trembling hand he perceived one deed covered with Spanish stamps, when he started back with so agonizing a cry, that M. Garain's blood ran cold. He hastily took up the deed in turn, when he found it to be the marriage certificate, headed by the names of Inez Cordova and Henri Darvière.

There was a momentary pause, during which these two men appeared thunderstruck, and insensible to each other's presence. The old lawyer was the first to recover his composure, and his mind soon became clear enough to grasp the whole state of the case.

When exiled from France, Henri Darvière on taking refuge in Spain, had nearly fallen a victim to that frightful epidemic that had ravaged Barcelona but a short time previously. Abandoned in a dying state; he owed his life to the devoted care of a woman whom he had married out of gratitude, but who had subsequently died. This much had been related by Henri to Octaire's father before the marriage, but the old lawyer had never inquired into any further particulars, as all recollections of the past seemed painful to his son-in-law. He now saw at a glance, that Henri had believed Inez to be dead, and that he had been perfectly justified in contracting a second marriage.

When their looks at length met, M. Garain opened his arms and embraced the young man affectionately.

"Thank you—thank you father," stammered forth the distracted Henri; at least you do not doubt my honour, and you see that my error was not a crime."

"No," said the lawyer, mournfully, "but a misfortune—an irreparable misfortune."

"Why so?"

"Our whole existence will be changed, Henri, and the knowledge of the truth will impose new duties upon us."

"My duty," cried the young man, "is to remain your son."

"But here is a wife who has prior claims to your heart."

"Then we must escape from her—your daughter and I will fly from hence, and seek some secure retreat, where no man will know of the chain I leave behind me."

"But you will drag that chain with you—since your conscience will know of its existence," observed the old man; "and however far you may fly, you cannot deceive yourself into forgetting there exists in the world a being who has a right to your protection, whom you vowed to cherish, and whom you have despoiled of her lawful claims. Hitherto you were innocent, because you were ignorant—but henceforward you would become guilty."

"What? sacrifice my happiness to those hated ties?" exclaimed Henri, half beside himself; "no, do not hope any such thing. I will not exchange the calm delights of mutual affection for the stormy life I used to lead. If the dead arise from their graves to claim my peace and happiness, I cry avant! I know not the dead."

M. Garain attempted in vain to reason with him; Henri went on inveighing against all mankind, and even Providence, until, overwhelmed by his anguish, passion gave way to tears. He then appealed to the lawyer's paternal feelings, and entreated him to spare his daughter the pangs of such a separation; hoping that the equity of the judge would be outweighed by the tenderness of the father.

M. Garain felt his firmness giving way, when he rose, agitated and pale as death, saying—

"Enough, Henri, do not tempt me. It would be unworthy of you to profit by my weakness. We both require time to collect our thoughts, and to-morrow we will discuss this dreadful question. Only, I entreat you, let not Octaire suspect anything to-night—let us spare her for a few hours longer." When, seeing Henri was about to protest, he added, "Which God and our prudence may perhaps prolong. You cannot doubt my good will, my dear son, but leave me now to my reflections."

The old lawyer spent a night of anguish. Placed in the dreadful alternative of sacrificing either his affections or his duty, he remained several hours in a state of painful perplexity, which made his very brain reel beneath his contending emotions. At one moment Henri's reasoning seemed sound, and he thought him justified in not giving way to prior claims merely on the score of their priority—but then again he recollected the law, whose devoted high priest he had always proved