

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

FROM THE BOSTON EVENING GAZETTE.

## THE MAINOTE MONASTERY.

BY B. B. THATCHER.

A June evening in a Grecian valley! And a lovely eve it was. The rosy glow of the broad red sun; as it sank beneath the far shining waves of the sea, still lingered on the verdant glade swelling up from the reedy banks of one of these narrow and rapid streams which issue from the highlands of Maina; the laurels along the hill side rustled gently in the welcome ocean-air, now beginning to mingle itself in the sultry atmosphere of the long and fervid day; the birds were starting from the dim covert of noontide, to hail with gay songs the vesper hours; myriads of butterflies filled the fragrant air: and even the humble note of the little circaea, no less than the 'mellow horn' of the honey-bee, grew louder in the fresh coolness which now settled alike in the flower cups, crimson spotted cells and the green aisles of the forest.

And when all nature was rejoicing, could man 're-nounce and be forgiven?' the little hamlet was alive with the festivities of a saint day. A hundred of the inhabitants, at least—and that was nearly all—had assembled under the old pine trees that threw their tall shadows over the play ground around which was clustered the vine-covered cottages of the peasants. The girls and boys danced in noisy circles, and the elder inhabitants were the pleased spectators of the scene. Every thing indicated contentment and delight. Who could conjecture that Greece was at this very time agitated in all its principal sections by a desperate and bloody struggle for its liberties; and that the powerful army of Ibrahim Pacha, after ravaging the country far and wide, was now more quietly established in undisputed possession of Athens and the neighbouring province, only to supply a continual series of foraging expeditions against the remote districts of the country—expeditions that wherever they went, came upon the surprised and defenceless inhabitants like the simoon on the desert traveller, burning and butchering every living and green thing which grew or breathed in their pathway. It was truly a ferocious war. No condition sex, or age, was spared. The Greeks were considered by their fierce enemies, as rebels entitled to no mercy, and as infidels, to no pity; and the former had too much experience of the Moslem character not to have steeled their resolution, long before the date of our present narrative, to the stern alternative of victory or death.

At the period we now speak of, so much had even the remote and mountainous district of Maina, believed by its inhabitants to be well nigh inaccessible to the arms of the foe—nevertheless partaken of the enthusiastic patriotism which seemed at this time to have roused all Greece to a spirit truly congenial with the history of that land of godlike men, and with

—the solemn skies,

And the wide plains around, where patriot blood Had steeped the soil in human sacrifice—  
So much, we say, had even Maina partaken of this noble spirit, that the young men in a body, and not a few of an age less fitted to the toils of war, had deserted their homes and friends, and gone off in their Armatola equipments, in order to meet the enemy in the open field if they were able or more generally to entrench themselves as a flying but most troublesome guerrilla, among the mountains near his camp.

Among these youthful warriors, one of the most distinguished went from the hamlet mentioned above and was believed to have perished in a furious onslaught against the Turkish lines near Athens, early in the war. His wife—now familiarly known as Widow—with her two sons, was among the group celebrating the festival on the village green—or rather in witnessing—for none who noticed the paleness of her cheek and the expression of the dark eye which shone, like a star through lime-leaves, among the tresses that overshadowed her ample forehead, could see in her aught but the mourning mother of the orphan boys whom she led gently by either hand. She spoke but rarely, and never alluded to her own history; but her glance, amid the loudest mirth of those around her, turned fondly and with a 'tender gloom' that told of memory's vain regret, to the home

—that stood

In the flowering depths of a Grecian wood,  
With the soft green light o'er its low roof spread  
As if from the glow of an emerald shed.

Alas! it was a home to Eudora's heart no more!

But she had not long to ponder the mournful past. Why pause that flying circle of gay dangers in mid career? Their voices are hushed—their cheeks pale. It was the fearful note of the trumpet, far-ringing but giving no 'uncertain sound' to a trained or timid ear. It died away—and all was still only the faint murmur of the sleepy bee from the asphodal blossoms, and the

cricet's lonely cry. It came again—swelling talling on the anxious ear of those who that listened as for life like a warning voice from death's ministering angel—and again falling and swelling, till it reached at length a pitch which made mistake impossible. A Turkish band was rapidly approaching, though yet invisible. There was a loud cry of despair among the Greeks. The children shrieked; the women sobbed; and the old men lifted their dim eyes to heaven and crossed themselves. 'We must die!' cried one; 'We must die!' cried another; 'We must die!' echoed all—and they stood motionless, crowded together, and gazing upon each other's pale faces with dumb dismay.

Eudora made her appearance at this moment, moving out from the throng which pressed around, with her boys beside her. Her cheek was white like theirs, but not with fear. Her step faltered not, and she stood erect before them with the glowing eye of a warrior armed for fight. 'Die, my countrymen!' she said; 'die here! die without a blow! No! no! for shame!' 'What can we do then?' asked a white-haired old man, whose lips quivered as he spoke. 'The monastery! make for the monastery—flee for your lives—and God help you—flee!' The Moslem bugle rose fearfully on the evening air. 'The monastery!' shouted one; and 'the monastery!' shrieked another; and then ensued a frantic rush for the bridge which crossed the stream at the bottom of the long, sloping, hamlet-green. They had all barely passed it,—Eudora hastening her children onward in the rear,—and were rapidly mounting the upland on their way to the shelter in question, when the Infidel band of cavalry made their appearance on the summit of the opposite ridge beyond the little village. They were at full speed, with banner streaming; and the leader goaded his foaming charger with a naked sword. It was too late. The Greeks had reached the massy great gates of the monastery. The enemy thundered over the bridge, and rushed up the hill with loud cries of assault, but the villagers were every one of them safe in the convents court, and the old moss-grown portals fast barred and braced against the pursuers. The latter wheeled round about it two or three times, as if to satisfy themselves of its strength, and then, with a slackened pace and a clamor of angry curses, tumultuously descended the hill, repassed the bridge, and scattered themselves in various directions over the village.

An hour or two passed away—devoted to quiet pillage and gluttony—and then a fierce burst of exultation was heard by those who watched from the outer walls of the convent; and presently a sheet of fire broke out upon the starless sky—and another—and another—till at length the whole eastern horizon was lighted with one broad flame. Long ere midnight the last roof of the hamlet was in ashes. Here the Greeks supposed the enemy would rest; but they were mistaken. The conflagration had scarcely subsided, when the infuriated foragers were heard again coming over the bridge, and soon after shouting under the walls—engaged to the highest degree by the obvious security of their appointed victims. Finding the huge gates impracticable, they tried the feint of calling parley with the monks. 'Open to us, worthy fathers!' cried the leader, 'we want nothing but shelter and good fare.'—'Good fare ye shall have, then,' answered a deep voice from a small port-hole—'fire away, my sons!' And a volley of musketry followed, which soon cured the assailants of the most troublesome portion of their familiarity. They retreated hastily, leaving one or two men dead and dying.

Deep silence followed. The monks appointed a watch at all quarters of the large building and assembled villagers in the chapel which formed its centre. Thankfully, although without many tears, they held consultation with each other on the day's transactions; and then, with spirits soothed by the pious fathers' chant of praise for deliverance, stretched themselves out in groups on the floor of the chapel, to be refreshed for new efforts and alarms on the morrow. Only a single lamp, swung from the ceiling, flared dimly over their heads; no sound abroad disturbed them; and they sank quietly to sleep.—All but Eudora. Her eyelids closed not; as she leaped silently on the lower steps of the altar, watching with fixed gaze the calm rest of her beautiful boys, locked fast in each others' arms. The scene went to her soul's depths. The heroine was merged in the mother; and all the passionate tenderness of a heart filled with anxious love, broke forth, the more vehement for its temporary suppression. Tears relieved the overcharged bosom. She embraced her smiling babes and, lifting her eyes and her hands, uttered, with a low voice, amid the solemn gloom of the midnight, a fervent thanksgiving in behalf of these for whom she wept, and a prayer that God, who had remembered her thus in her affliction and danger, would still hold the fatherless and the widow as in the hollow of his hand.

A sound startled her—she looked around on the still forms of the sleepers—but saw no moving thing, and

she attempted to fix her thoughts again on devotion. A sudden flash in the galleries of the chapel caught her eye and she leapt to her feet.—'Arm!—brothers, arm!' she cried, with a shriek that echoed through the house. 'To your arms, or we are lost!' A hoarse exulting laugh rang in the building above, and a moment after, ere the horrorstricken Greeks and the confused monks had scarcely collected together in hasty consternation about the altar, a row of shining musketry was thrust out simultaneously from the edge of the galleries all round, over their heads. The Turks had availed themselves of the weariness of the sentinels, entered the house stealthily, and even possessed themselves of the monks' arms, which they found stacked near the entrance.

The poor villagers saw that all was indeed lost and giving themselves up to despair, they crowded together, embracing each other, and covered their faces with their hands. The monks alone, retained some degree of courage and the Father of the convent stood up, in the midst of them, on the steps of the altar, and called on his fierce enemies for mercy—mercy to the woman and the defenceless. It was a vain request. 'Beggarly infidels!' shouted the Turkish captain—'Dogs! dastards! ye shall die in your sins!' and he brandished his sabre over his head with a frenzied energy, which sufficiently indicated the earnestness of his purpose—'Ready! my sons! let us give the scoundrels their due!' The long line of polished barrels was levelled at command, and the old monk sank upon his knees.—'Aim!' shouted the Turk. Scarcely was this word uttered, when the massy doors by which the Moslems had entered the galleries, burst violently open, and swung back upon the walls on the side with a noise which made the chapel ring again; and a rush of rapid feet was heard and the blast of a Kleft bugle, sounding the battle charge. It was a bond of Armatoli, led on by a young warrior armed to the teeth. No time was lost in words. A desperate struggle ensued, the Greek leader engaged hand to hand with the captain of the Turks. For a brief interval the issue was uncertain, but the victory of the young Greek over his fierce but unbribered and confused antagonist soon decided the contest in favor of the new-comers. The Moslems, having lost about forty of their number, threw down their arms just at day-dawn, submitted to the conqueror's mercy.

Of the scene which ensued on the meeting of the villagers with their gallant deliverers, nothing need be added: it was one of those, which attempts at description must degrade. Let it be only understood, that the Kleft hand proved to be all Mainotes, and their brave commander none else but the long-lost husband of Eudora.

FROM NIGHTS AT MESS, IN BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

## CURIOUS ADVENTURE.

ABOUT thirty years ago, Mr B—, having at that time newly commenced business in Edinburgh, was returning on horseback from the city to a cottage he had near Cramond. It was wild night in November, and though he usually took the seaside as the shortest way home, he resolved this evening, on account of the increasing darkness, to keep on the high road. When he had proceeded about three miles from the town, and had come to the loneliest part of the way, he was suddenly arrested by a man, who sprang out of a small copse at the road side, and seized the bridle of his horse. Mr B. was a man of great calmness and resolution, and asked the man the reason of his behaviour, without betraying the smallest symptoms of agitation. Not so the assailant. He held the bridle in his hand, but Mr B. remarked that it trembled excessively. After remaining some time, as if irresolute what to do, and without uttering a word, he let go his hold of the reign, and said in a trembling voice, 'pass on, sir, pass on;' and then he added, 'thank God I am yet free from crime.' Mr B. was struck with the manner and appearance of the man and said, 'I fear you are in distress is there any thing in which a stranger can assist you?' 'Strangers may, perhaps,' replied the man, in a bitter tone, 'for nothing is to be hoped from Friends.' 'You speak I hope, under some momentary feeling of disappointment.' 'Pass on, pass on, he said impatiently; 'I have no right to utter my complaints to you. Go home and thank God that a better spirit withheld me from my first intention, when I heard you approach—or this might have been'—he suddenly paused. 'Stranger,' said Mr B. in a tone of real kindness, 'you say you have no right to utter your complaints to me; I certainly have no right to pry into your concerns, but I am interested, I confess by your manner and appearance, and I frankly make you an offer of any assistance I can bestow.' 'You know not sir,' replied the stranger, 'the person to whom you make so generous a proposal—a wretch stained with vices—degraded from the station he once held, and on the eve of becoming a robber—aye' he added, with a shudder, 'perhaps a murderer.' 'I care not, I care not for your former crimes—sufficient for me you repent them—tell me wherein I can stand your friend.' 'For myself, I am careless,' replied the man; 'but there is one who looks to me with eyes of quiet and still unchanged affection, though she knows that I have brought her from a home of comfort, to share the fate of an outcast and a beggar. I wished for her sake to become once more respectable, to leave a country where I am known, and to gain character, station,