

Literature, &c.

From the Christian World.

THE SUMMER BIRDS.

Sweet warblers of the sunny hours,
For ever on the wing—
I love them, as I love the flowers,
The sunlight, and the spring.
They come like pleasant memories,
In Summer's joyous time,
And sing their gushing melodies
As I would sing a rhyme.

In the green and quiet places
Where the golden sunlight falls,
We sit with smiling faces,
To list their silver calls;
And when their holy anthems
Come pealing through the air,
Our hearts leap forth to meet them,
With a blessing and a prayer.

Amid the morning's fragrant dew—
Amid the mists of even—
They warble on as if they drew
Their music down from Heaven.
How sweetly sounds each mellow note,
Beneath the moon's pale ray,
When dying zephyrs rise and float,
Like lovers' sighs, away!

Like shadowy spirits seen at eve,
Among the tombs they glide
Where sweet pale forms, for which we grieve
Lie sleeping side by side.
They break with song and solemn hush
Where peace reclines her head,
And link their lays with mournful thoughts
That cluster round the dead.

For never can my soul forget
The loved of other years;
Their memories fill my spirit yet—
I've kept them green with tears;
And their singing greets my heart at times,
As in the days of yore,
Though their music, and their loveliness,
Is o'er—for ever o'er.

And often, when the mournful night
Comes with a slow, sweet tune,
And sets a star on every height,
And one beside the moon—
When not a sound of wind or wave
The holy stillness mars,
I look above, and strive to trace
Their dwellings in the stars.

The birds! the birds of summer hours—
They bring a gush of glee,
To the child among the fragrant flowers—
To the sailor on the sea.
We hear their thrilling voices
In their sweet and airy flight,
And the inmost heart rejoices
With a calm and pure delight.

In the stillness of the starlight hours,
When I am with the dead,
O! may they flutter 'mid the flowers
That blossom o'er my head,
And pour their songs of gladness forth
In one melodious strain,
O'er lips whose broken melody
Shall never sing again.

AMELIA B. WELBY.

A RESCUE.

We take the following highly wrought,
and exciting sketch, from James's new
work of the 'Jacquerie.'

THE waiting for deliverance! It is a terrible thing, wherever we put our trust and hope, if that hope be of earth. Ay, it is a terrible thing, even when our hope is from heaven; for unto all of us, from one end of the world to the other, might be repeated the often repeated reproach of the Redeemer, that we are of but little faith. However strong may be our conviction of God's mercy and tenderness, of his unwillingness to punish, of his readiness to forgive, of the omniscience of his wisdom, and the omnipotence of his power, the weak spirit of man will still tremble, and doubt and fear; will shrink from each painful trial, whatever be the object, and think the deliverance long and tardy, even while he continues to hope that it will come. But how often is it with us that hope itself goes out; that looking round and calculating all the chances and probabilities of human aid, we see none on any side; that all assistance from any being on the earth seems impossible, and blasphemous fear even whispers a doubt that God himself can help us?

The situation of those within the market place of Meux might well produce in their minds the utmost pitch of despair; when, on the night after Albert Denyn had left them, and heard the houts of the wild and furious multitude that poured down to the banks of the Marne, and when they saw rising up through the country round the flames of houses, and cottages, and hamlets, mingling with the watch fires and the glare of torches. It was by these terrible signs they first learned that the Jacquerie were under the walls of Meux.

Little sleep had any one that night, though many there present needed it

greatly; and by those on the walls could be heard till a late hour. The shrieks and cries, as well as the sounds of revelry and rude merriment, which rose up from the fields around the city. Many was the anxious consultation; many the fruitless inquiry, as to when the message could reach the dauphin, and as to how long the place could hold out; many the bitter murmurings and keen reproaches with which they loaded the name of Soulas, the treacherous mayor of Meux, and the faithless citizens, to whose courage and truth the ladies of France had been committed. Often, too, during the night, some timid girl, who at any other time, would have feared to have set her foot at that hour beyond the precincts of her paternal dwelling, stole up in the unguarded battlements to listen to the sounds she dreaded to hear, and scan the darkness with an eager eye, lest the ruffians by whom she was surrounded should take advantage of the obscurity to steal upon them unperceived.

But of all within those walls there was none so sad, there was none so apprehensive as Adela de Mauvinet: for she had not alone to ask herself what might be the condition of her beloved father at that very time. Would the multitude of Jacquerie have quitted Beaumont, she asked herself, without having taken the castle; and as her heart replied to the question but too sadly, tears as for the dead rolled over her fair cheeks.

There were but two other beings to whom she was attached on earth, her younger brother and Albert Denyn. That the former was safe, she thanked God, but as she did so, she added in her own mind, 'I shall never behold him more.' It must be owned, however, that to the companion of her childhood, the friend of her youth, her deliverer from danger and from worse than death, her lover, her best beloved, that her thoughts turned most eagerly. What would be his feelings, she asked, when he returned to Meux, and found the place of their refuge in the power of the unsparing, sanguinary, barbarous multitude; what would be his anguish when he learned that she had fallen into the brutal hands of him from whom he had once saved her, and when he could not know to what horrors she might be subjected before death delivered her.

She thought of him, and she grieved for the agony, but Adela judged, and judged rightly, that Albert should not long survive her, and something like hope and joy sprang up again in her mind as she said to herself, 'It was impossible we ever could be united on earth; but now, though our bridal be a bloody one, we shall be united in heaven.'

From time to time the contemplation of her own fate, too, pressed heavily upon her. 'What would she, herself do?' she asked. 'How should she herself act? Was she bound by any religious tie, to suffer dishonor, rather than to seek death?' and she tried to call up again to memory all that she knew of the word of Truth, in order to gain some rule for her conduct, and to justify, if possible, to her own mind, the last terrible act of maiden purity. The legends of her church supplied her with manifold examples of such conduct; but she shrunk from the idea of suicide. 'Would they but kill me,' she thought, 'would they but kill me. Yet surely woman, though she be weak, has a right to defend herself to the last. There are not men enough to guard the walls, or to protect us and ourselves, if the villeins break in. Why should we not take what arms we can get? Why should we not aid to defend ourselves? Why should we not, as a last resource, drive them to slay us by resistance even unto death? Then the whole sin and crime would be theirs: we shall die unpolluted: and the weight of the burden will rest heavy upon them.'

To a night of agitation and fear succeeded a day of terror and dismay. The young Duchess of Normandy and her companions gathered themselves together in the midst of the market place, not to consult as much as to lament; and dark and anxious countenances of the few men that were with them—countenances in which there was no hope—served but to dispirit them the more. Each told the other how she had spent the hours, the sad thought, the fearful visions, the dark imaginations that had possessed them.

There was not a word of courage or energy among them, till Adela related what had been passing in her mind; and it was strange to hear that sweet and gentle voice proposing high deeds to women like herself, in defence of their honor and their purity; and to see the fair and beautiful beings around her

roused into ardor and eagerness by her example, and with renewed courage seeking for those arms which their hands were but little accustomed to wield.

'We can but die,' they exclaimed, 'we can but die; and it is better to die by any other hands than our own.'

A faint, sad smile came over the countenance of the young Lord of Chamble as he heard their determination.

'I never thought to fall,' he said, 'with fair companions in arms; but I fear we can make no resistance, and my fate will be soon decided. If, therefore, you are determined upon your conduct—and I cannot but applaud the purpose—take the lightest weapons that you can get. I saw some crossbows, with which the pages learn to aim their quarrels; these with daggers and short swords, and knives, very weak hands can use: and as what you seek is, alas but death in the end, you may well draw it down upon your heads from the enemy, if you employ such arms with determination.'

While he was yet speaking, a messenger came to call him to the gate tower; and after a few minutes' absence, returned, saying he, 'I know not what these treacherous communes are doing. They are laying out tables in the streets, as if for some great festival.'

The matter was soon explained, however. The sight of the Jacques pouring in soon brought all the men-at-arms to the walls. The pages joined them to make the greater show; and to the honor of those within the market place of Meux, let it be remembered that not the lowest person there present, not the serving man, who never raised his ambition higher than perhaps to groom the horse of the knight, where he before groomed the horse of the squire, who did not now swear to die willingly for the ladies of France, and to spend the last drop of his blood to protect them.

Anxiously the women remained behind, with sinking hearts and trembling limbs, but still resolved and prepared. The suspense, however, proved too much for endurance, and at the end of an hour one of the boldest ventured up to the top of the wall, to ascertain what was taking place.

'They seem to be constructing a machine for battering down the gates,' said the Lord of Chamble, in reply to her questions, 'if so, it must be to-morrow, or the next day, before they begin the attack.'

'Thank God, thank God!' cried the lady: 'then we may yet be saved.'

'Monterrean is far off,' answered the Lord of Chamble, sadly. 'The messenger knew not that the danger was so pressing; the dauphin, I find, had but three hundred men with him; and there are many thousands within sight of this gate. Not only the villein peasants, but men at arms, I see, with banners: probably the commons of Paris. Take not hold of a foolish hope, lady: I feel upon my heart that weight which tells me we are to die here, and soon.'

The Duchess of Normandy had returned to the house she inhabited about an hour, when daylight began to dawn; and looking up, she said to Adela de Mauvinet, who was lying at her feet. 'I wish, dear girl, you would go to the walls, and look out on the road that leads towards Fontenoy. Perhaps the dauphin may be coming. God of heaven! this is very terrible, not to know that one has half an hour to live. Take some one with you, and go, Adela.'

'I fear not! I will go alone, madam,' replied the young lady of Mauvinet. 'Look how you poor thing is sleeping, quite worn out: it were barbarous to wake her. I will go alone.'

They soon reached the foot of the wall, and mounted the steps, the poor girl following till she was within a few feet of the top. There, however, the young lady left her, and going on, soon obtained a view over the fields around. At that moment a sort of rushing sound, and then a dull heavy noise, as if a violent blow were struck upon some large hollow surface, met her ear, and made her clasp her hands with terror.

'Run, run,' she exclaimed to the girl who was on the steps, 'run and ask what sound that is, and come back and let me know.'

The girl was away, and returned in a minute with a face still paler than before, and her teeth still chattering in her head with fear.

'The attack has begun!' she said; 'the attack has begun! That was a stone, as big as one of these in the wall, cast against the gates by the mangonel they have made.'

'Now were the time to die,' said Adela to herself, looking at a dagger which Albert Denyn had given her. 'Now were the time to die.'

'Oh, look out, look out!' exclaimed the girl, wringing her hands. 'Is there no hope. Is there no help?'

Adela turned her faint eyes over the prospect, toward Fontenoy, and was silent. The next instant she uttered a loud shriek, but it was a shriek of joy.

'Yes, yes,' she cried, 'it is—it must be a banner that is rising over the hill. Yes, there it is, full. A banner, a banner. The Captal de Buch. The Captal de Buch. Another, too, on a pale gules. The Count of Foix, Spears, spears coming up over the hill. Run, tell the princess, girl. Tell the poor Lady of St. Leu, too. Call it up to them upon the gate tower. Bid them fight for their honor. Say help is at hand. Run, girl, run. Who is this first, that comes spurring on like fire? Albert, as I live, my own dear Albert bearing the captal's banner, too.'

'Where are they, were are they,' cried the voice of the Duchess of Normandy, rushing, with her hair all dishevelled, to the battlements, followed by a number of others. 'Where are our deliverers? Alas, they are very few, they must be but the advance. Still, still they will enable us to keep the place till the dauphin comes. But how are they to pass? There is no bridge—there is no boat. How will they pass? oh! how will they pass?'

Adela made no reply. Her eyes, her heart, her soul, were fixed upon the banner of the Captal de Buch and him who bore it. Right onward he rode, like lightning, down the slope toward the spot where the canal was cut from the Marne, and where the current, being somewhat diverted was consequently not so strong. No pause, no hesitation was seen; but waving the banner over his head as he approached the stream, he stuck the rowels of his spurs deep in the horse's sides, and plunged down the bank into the water. Loaded with heavy armor, horse and man for a moment well nigh disappeared in the tide; but the banner still waved in the air, and the next instant charger and rider rose up and came rapidly toward the meadow. The distance was but small; and ere the rest of the horsemen reached the bank, the fore feet of Albert Denyn's steed were striking the firm ground on the other side. No one hesitated to follow his example. The captal and the Count of Foix plunged in first,—then came the banner-bearer of the count, and then man by man, the gentleman of their train.

'Throw open the postern on the meadow!' cried the duchess. 'Run and tell our dear Lady of Orleans. Come, let us greet our deliverers.'

'Look, look!' exclaimed Adela,—'yon poor fellow is off his horse. Help him, good God, he will be drowned. No, no—the gallant captal has got him by the hand. He is safe, he is safe!'

With gladly beating hearts, and brains well nigh bewildered by renewed hope, that bevy of fair girls ran down the steps to meet this noble gentleman and their train, who came to fight in their defence. They found the postern gate open, and the Duchess of Orleans and a number of other ladies already there. The captal had sprung from his horse, and was leading him by the rein, speaking as he came, to Albert Denyn, who had also dismounted, as was likewise the case with the Count of Foix and several others.

'By my honor, Albert,' said the captal, 'These brave fellows may well accuse me of having a favourite now. In letting you lead through that river, I have done for you what I would not do for any other man on earth; and yet you are so ungrateful, that you are going to take from me what I once coveted more than a monarch's crown.'

There was gayety and sadness mixed in the leader's tone, but the voice of Albert Denyn was all sad, as he answered 'My lord, my lord, do not make me remember too bitterly that I was once a serf.'

'Well, well,' replied the captal, 'I will soon give you an opportunity of seeing great deeds, my friends. Martin see that the horses be fed instantly, and if any fresh ones can be had in the place, bring them all forth. Cousin of Foix, is not this our fair princess of Normandy? Lady, by your leave I kiss your sweet hands, and upon this fair book I swear, that although I have but too often drawn my sword against your husband and his friends, it shall this day achieve your deliverance, or John de Greilly, shall sleep this night in death. Lady of Orleans, I know you well. Lo here stands a good knight of Foix, for your defence. Sweet Adela de Mauvinet, I bring you good tidings, your father is quite safe. But who shall I give you for your champion? My young