

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINE

From Hogg's Edinburgh Instructor.

SOUNDS FROM WITHOUT.

BY E. G. ADAMS.

I sit apart in my still retreat;
I hear the sound of tramping feet,
And the rattle of wheels, and the voice's hum
Of the busy crowds that go and come;
And I thank my stars, that I am here
In a pure and tranquil atmosphere,
With the green grass spread before my sight,
And the green leaves steep'd in the golden
light,
That flutters and dance, with a sound, that
seems
Like a whisper soft that one hears in dreams,
When the heart lies listening in the watch.
The tones of an angel choir to catch.

I sit apart in my still retreat,
And the sounds that come from the busy
street,
Though sometimes loud, and harsh, and
rude,
Do but enhance my solitude;
They tell of joy, they tell of wo,
They tell of life with its ceaseless flow—
Of the stream that sweeps still on and on,
Till the goal of eternity be won.
Alas! how many a wreck it bears,
How many a bark, caught unawares
By the sudden squall, and the hidden rock,
Shatter'd and rent by the whelming shock!

I sit apart in my still retreat,
And I sometimes deem that I hear the feet
Of the spoiler Time, as he steals along,
Crushing the weak, and o'erthrowing the
strong;
And then I think, 'twixt a smile and a sigh,
Of the hopes, and the joys, and the year
gone by;
And I say 'Old Time, thou hast taken much,
But more hast thou left me. Oh, lightly
touch
Those loved and cherish'd ones, who bind
My heart to earth, and all human kind;
And when thou visitest my home,
Come as a welcome friend should come!

I sit apart in my still retreat,
And at times my heart will quicker beat
In sympathy with the sounds without;
When I hear the clangour and the shout
Of triumph or of gladness swell,
Or the wail of grief, and the solemn knell,
As a war steed at the onset cry,
My pulses throb, dilates my eye,
For I know that the battle of life goes on,
And I ain would weep with the vanquish'd
one,
And rejoice with the victor, if his might
Is given to uphold the right.

I sit apart in my still retreat,
And again I list to the hurrying feet,
And I shudder to think of the care and strife,
And the weariness of man's daily life:
And I pray—Oh! thus may there ever be
A calm retreat for mine and me;
Not free from cares, there is no spot
On earth for such a blessed lot;
Not free from grief, lest I become
Forgetful of a heavenly home;
But free from strife, and the jealous rage
That the thoughts of worldly men engage.

I sit apart in my still retreat,
And commune bold—how calm and sweet!
With the spirits that dwell amid my books;
And they bend upon me gracious looks,
And their speech is ever a golden speech,
Inform'd with wisdom, that should teach
My heart, if it be teachable:
But whether 'tis so I cannot tell;
I can only hope, and long, and pray,
That my slothfulness may pass away;
That what is good I yet may learn,
From what is evil ever turn.

I sit apart in my still retreat,
And again I list to the hurrying feet,
And I shudder to think of the care and strife,
And the weariness of man's daily life:
And I pray—Oh! thus may there ever be
A calm retreat for mine and me;
Not free from cares, there is no spot
On earth for such a blessed lot;
Not free from grief, lest I become
Forgetful of a heavenly home;
But free from strife, and the jealous rage
That the thoughts of worldly men engage.

I sit apart in my still retreat,
And commune bold—how calm and sweet!
With the spirits that dwell amid my books;
And they bend upon me gracious looks,
And their speech is ever a golden speech,
Inform'd with wisdom, that should teach
My heart, if it be teachable:
But whether 'tis so I cannot tell;
I can only hope, and long, and pray,
That my slothfulness may pass away;
That what is good I yet may learn,
From what is evil ever turn.

From Godey's Lady's Magazine for March
**MARRYING THROUGH PRU-
DENTIAL MOTIVES.**

BY MARY VALE.

'My dear Mrs. Elmer,' said I, taking my
seat at her feet, as her visitor, a sentimental
young lady of the first water, left the room,
did I not hear you express a disbelief in first
love?

'I suspect it was the name of a favorite
author attracted your attention, rather than
any remark of mine. I merely read the fol-
lowing extract from one of his letters: "As-
sure yourself that scarce one person out of
twenty marries his first love, and scarce one
out of twenty of the remainder has cause to
rejoice at having done so. What we love in
those early days is generally rather a fanciful
creation of our own than a reality. We
build statues of snow, and weep when they
melt." In my opinion, this consummate read-
er of human nature never penned a truer
paragraph than this."

'I do not understand you,' said I, puzzled.
Like most young ladies, I had formed a grand
theory of 'first, unchangeable, eternal love,'
and did not quite relish its destruction. 'I
believe that many, after being disappointed in
their first affection, marry through pruden-
tial motives; but I cannot believe that such
unions can be happy.'

'You display a romantic contempt for pruden-
tial motives.' I should be sorry were you
to marry with any other, I hope that they
alone influenced me.'

My astonishment increased tenfold. I had
always regarded Mrs. Elmer as a pattern of
conjugal affection, and had inwardly resolved
that, if I ever married, I would strive to
select a husband who should resemble hers in
manly devotion, goodness, and intelligence,
only he should be far handsomer. My mind
instantly seized upon this want of beauty as
the cause which, at the time of her marriage,
had prevented love from mingling with the
motives which had induced her to accept
him.

'You are bewildered, I see,' she said, with
an amused look at my face. 'I have shock-
ed your refined notions of matrimony most
terribly, and, to get myself into favor again,
shall have to tell you a real love story—of
first love, too.'

'When I was about your age—and, if you
will excuse me, I will add, in some respects
quite as nonsensical; even more perhaps,
since I was an only and petted child—I resid-
ed in a small inland town in the interior of
the State. The society of B— was better
and more select than is generally to be found
in so retired a place; and, although at a dis-
tance from the metropolis, a tri-weekly stage,
which brought us the newspapers, and the
arrival of 'Godey' once a month, kept us from
falling entirely behind the times and the fash-
ions. The entry of the mail coach was, as it
always is in a village, an event of great impor-
tance, even if it were empty; but one day the
interest of the public was raised to the high-
est pitch by the appearance of a passenger,
who alighted at the hotel and ordered his
baggage to be removed. In the course of half
an hour's conversation with the landlord, he
announced his intention to become a citizen
of B—. He had just been admitted to the
bar, and had heard that there was a good
opening there for such an one, the principal
lawyer of the place having died a short time
before.

'For several days nothing was talked of but
the late arrival. Lawton's puns were quoted
by the young men, his opinion of trade by the
papas, his respectful and deferential demeanor
praised by the mammas, while the daughters
exhausted their stock of superlatives in de-
scribing his bright eyes, sweet smile, and
enchanting whiskers. In short, Mr. Lawton
became at once the great man of our 'little
Utica'; and, like most other lions, paid dearly
for his honors by lending a patient ear to all
quarrels, domestic and public, and, no matter
how pressing his business engagements might
be, holding himself in readiness to play the
part of chief guest at every pleasure party and
merry making.

'It was at one of these last that I first met
him. I had pictured him as conceited and
foppish, and was resolved to show the good
people of B— that they had been making
fools of themselves only to gratify his self
love. He should see, too, that one of them at
least was not to be blinded by high flown
speeches and outside show. Accordingly, I
did not look towards the end of the room,
where I knew he was stationed, for nearly an
hour after I entered. I had been indisposed
for a week or two previous, and therefore had
never met him even at church. At length, I
was led to the piano by one who had been
our Adonis until recently, and whom I now
treated with more affability than I had ever
before shown. I had played several pieces,
and sung divers songs, which were named by
the company; there was a pause in the de-
mand, and I took advantage of it to sing my
favorite, and what I intended should be the
last before quitting the music stool. It was
'Moore's farewell.' In the thoughts inspired
by the exquisitely mournful words and music,
I had almost forgotten the presence of others,
when, chancing to raise my eyes, I encounter-
ed a gaze which startled and confused me: I
could not tell why. Standing at one corner of
the instrument, almost facing me, and bending
slightly forward, as if to drink in every note,
was a young man, a stranger, and handsome
enough to satisfy even your fastidious taste.
You like portraits, and I will describe him as
he then appeared to me.

'He was tall, with a figure of the most
graceful proportions, walking and moving as
if he had been the monarch of the universe;
raven hair, not curling, but waving around a
fine, thoughtful brow; eyes that flashed and
glowed at times, until I hardly dared look at
them, and anon seemed melting into tend-
erness; perfect teeth, and a smile which
even now I must acknowledge was singu-
larly sweet. I did not make these observa-
tions at first, for I looked away instantly, but
could feel that his regards were fixed on me
still. He remained motionless until I ceased
singing, and then walked slowly away. In a
few seconds, the lady of the house, bringing
him up to me, introduced Mr. Lawton. This
was done, I know, by special request, since
the worthy hostess had several marriageable
daughters, and never was known to neglect
their interests for the momentary gratification
of a guest, and I was sufficiently well ac-
quainted with her to read chagrin in her
eyes as she presented him. This proof of
admiration, coupled to the one he had al-
ready given me, softened somewhat my determi-
nation to treat him coldly; and had these
failed, his address must have disarmed me.
His voice, when addressing a lady, was 'ever
soft and low, an excellent thing' in man as
well as woman, and his manner on this occa-
sion respectful almost to timidity. He stood
by me for a short time, making remarks and
replying to mine with distinct gravity, until
a rather lively observation from me caused
him to turn his eyes to my face with a smile,
at the same time responding in a gayer tone.
The ice was now broken; he soon drew a
chair to my side, and moved no more during
the remainder of the evening.

'If I had been pleased with his appearance
and manner, I was charmed with the insight
which his conversation gave me into his
mind. I have always cordially detested the
sot nothings and chit-chat with which the
other sex are wont to regale us. I had rat-
her bed all my life upon syllabubs and
whipt creams. Lawton's first approach to
this interesting compound was checked by a
remark similar to this, but couched, I dare
say, in more elegant terms; for, in those
days, I prided myself upon what I conceived
to be the perfect propriety of my language. He
took the hint, and at once led the conversation
into other channels, touching lightly upon
different topics until his quick eye assured
him that he had found one peculiarly inter-
esting to me. He spoke of music, and from
this, by a most natural transition, we wander-
ed to poetry, from poetry to romance and
works of a graver nature. I was now com-
pletely in my element. From my earliest
childhood I had been an indefatigable book-
worm, devouring everything that came with-
in my reach; my brain was filled with a mass
of heterogeneous lore, crowded in without
order; but I could generally find a little
knowledge of almost any subject.

'My love of poetry amounted almost to a
passion, and gave a tone to my whole charac-
ter. I was not in the habit of displaying my
treasures to those whom I considered cold and
prosaic, sordid and heartless; but I had now
met with one who could appreciate me. With
great tact, he drew me, as it were, out of my-
self, and I was not aware how completely en-
gaged I had been, until a movement of depar-
ture throughout the room warned me of the
lateness of the hour. I arose.

'You are not going yet, surely?' said my
companion, in a tone of surprise. It is very
early.

'I held up my watch. He affected great
wonderment, and begged to be allowed the
pleasure of attending me home.

'Do you know,' said I, as he assisted me
to put on my cloak, 'that if our conversation
of the last hour has been overheard, we have
lost, irrevocably lost our reputation as fol-
lowers of the *bon ton*? I am alone to blame,
as you are a comparative stranger, yet I
thought that you had resided here long enough
to know that it is high treason in a gentleman
to speak of literature to a lady. It is regarded
as an insinuation that there are things in the
world worthy of attention beside herself. Do
not think me ill natured. I only say this to
show that my fault was not one of ignorance
of established rules, which is, in such a
case, a more heinous sin than wilful trans-
gression.'

'I am not so ignorant as you imagine,' he
answered. 'I flatter myself that I am already
au fait to the court rules of B—. This I
speedily discovered to be one of the most im-
pertinent, and have met with no temptation to
break it until to night. At least,' he continu-
ed, 'I shall have a companion in misfortune;
for, if I am convicted of peontry, you will
not escape the title of "blue."'

'I did not rest well that night; my dreams
were troubled by the picture of a stern school-
master, whose every third word was Greek or
Latin, and myself seated by his side, in so-
lemn state, with an immense black letter
tome in my lap, and my feet covered with a
pair of indigo stockings. But then a voice
murmured, "At least, I have a companion in
misfortune;" and I turned to meet the laugh-
ing glance of my new acquaintance.

'He made his first call a day or two after
wards, and from that time was a constant
visitor. I was, remember, very young, and
new to the world, my knowledge of which
was drawn from romances, all of which as-
sured me that life without love was naught.
I had long treasured in my secret soul an ideal
being, whom I had endowed with every grace
and virtue, and I now found myself repeat-
ing—

'But from that first hour I met thee,
All caught real life from you.'

The more I thought of it, the more firmly con-
vinced was I that this extraordinary windfall,
dropped, as it were, at my very feet, was de-
signed by my good genius for my especial ben-
efit. I can truly say that I made no effort to
attract him. I looked with contemptuous
amusement upon the manœuvres and lures of
young companions, never feeling jealous of
any attention which they might extort. Well
knowing that, although he might linger with
them for a while, he would ere long be found
again by my side. I even delighted to ap-
pear perfectly indifferent when in their pre-
sence, and I have since thought that he was
himself deceived by my manner, and piqued
into an attempt to inspire other feelings.

'Time flew on, and the gossips of the town
began to wonder if we were engaged, and, if
not, why he delayed the declaration. But
none of these things troubled me. I was only
too happy to have him near me, to feel his
eyes fixed on me as if reading my very soul,
to mark how widely his manner to me differ-
ed from his deportment to others, to pour into
an ever attentive ear the thoughts and feelings
that fear of ridicule had hitherto led me to
conceal within my own bosom. Of love we
never spoke; but he wore a gently protecting
air, as if he felt that he had a right to guide
and support me, while I looked up to him
with a confiding tenderness—a little singu-
lar in one by nature so high-spirited and in-
dependent. I heard that he was at times
petulant, even passionate; some called him
a heartless trifler; and all agreed that he
was conceited—except myself. Who had a
better right to know and understand him
than I? Yet I saw nothing of all these faults;
and, if they had existed, I felt that I could
have loved him better perhaps, for the dis-
tance between us would have been lessened.

So I set these remarks down to the score of
envy, and smiled complacently at my keen
discernment of character and motives.

Matters were in this train when, one
day, received a call from Miss Noyes, the
belle as she was called, a distinction by which
she was by no means insensible or indiffer-
ent. She treated me with an unwonted de-
gree of affection and sociability, which I
knew presaged something peculiarly disagree-
able.

'Do you go to Mrs. Henderson's party
to-morrow night?' she inquired presently.

'I expect to attend,' said I.

'No doubt your presence will be very
agreeable to the rest of the company; but I
know a few who would rather you would
remain at home. There are a set of design-
ing misses who can never forgive your mono-
poly of the only decent beau fate has grant-
ed us; or I should say that he monopolises
you, since I have never seen that desire for
attentions which he says you have shown.'

'Half of this speech, smoothly and in-
nocently as it was delivered, would have suffi-
ced to make my blood boil. In a voice chok-
ed with passion, I ejaculated—

'I desire his attentions!'

'Forgive me, my love; I would not
wound or excite your feelings for the world;
but, as a friend, I repeat this that you may
refute the false charge, not by words, but by
actions. The remark I alluded to I heard
myself; and he added, the scandalous fellow,
that he was too old a bird to be caught with
chaff.'

'With a mighty effort, I commanded myself
sufficiently to thank her for her disinterested
kindness, and assure her that, if an opportuni-
ty offered, I should gladly reciprocate the
favor. She took her leave, and I gave way to
my feelings. Disappointed love, mortified
pride, and resentment strove for mastery in
my breast. The latter triumphed; and, with
glowing cheeks, I hastened to my toilet, re-
solving to make him feel to the utmost the
mortification he would have me experience.
Never had I bestowed such pains upon my
person. I carefully laid aside every article of
dress or ornament that he particularly ad-
mired, taking care, however, to replace them by
others equally becoming. My stern determi-
nation was nearly overcome by a very beau-
tiful bouquet which was handed me just as I
was ready to go. The tears rushed to my
eyes; but I drove them back, and, without
looking for the delicate note of compliments
which I knew lay *perdue* among the leaves, I
tossed it into the fire.

'The first person that I saw upon entering
the room was Miss Noyes, who, lapped in
Elysium, was listening to the sugared sen-
tences poured into her white ear by the
'scandalous fellow' whose conduct she had
deprecated. His face lighted up instantly, but
I affected not to see him. Half an hour more
saw me engaged in a rattling flirtation with a
young naval officer now on a visit to B—. We
promenaded, and I swept past Lawton
hanging on the middy's arm, apparently in
the finest humor, with myself and my new
conquest. The conversation, of my compa-
nion was the flattest of small talk; but I
listened as to the wisdom of a Solon. I ven-
tured one look at Lawton as we passed him
for the twentieth time. He had left Miss
Noyes, and had leaned against the wall, si-
lent and moody. I declined walking any
longer when we reached the other end of the
room, and threw myself upon a sofa. The
middy pouted and I recollected that his fine
figure and bright buttons could not be seen to
much advantage in this retired corner, and
sent him to borrow a fan from a lady at some
distance off. He requested it in his own name,
and, of course, did not resign it without a
little coquetish trifling, which occupied some
time.

'You are enjoying yourself much to-night
said a voice at my elbow.

'I bowed assentingly, gazing with much
interest at the gold lace upon the officer's
collar.

'I am not,' he said, in a lower tone.
'I dared not trust myself to speak, but
looked as frigid as an iceberg.

'I cannot be happy when I have alienat-
ed a friend,' he continued, with a perseve-
rance that surprised me; 'and it is very evi-
dent that such is the case with you. I know
you too well to suspect you of caprice, and
therefore blame myself, although unconsci-
ous of my offence. You were wont to be
frankness itself. Will you not explain the
cause of your changed manner? I am ready
to make any apology or reparation that will
place us upon our former friendly footing.'

'My gallant tar returned with the fan, and,
like a booby as he was, handed it to Lawton,
supposing that he had usurped his place, and
steered off in search of another prize. A *tes-
ta-tete* was unavoidable. I felt my inability to
hold out much longer, and abruptly answer-
ed.

'Do not trouble yourself to render apolo-
gies; from such a source, and under such
circumstances, they would be even more
worthless than chaff; and, to use your own
elegant phrase, "old birds cannot be caught
with that."

'My own phrase! You surprise me. I
do not understand, said he in such genuine
wonderment that I could not doubt his words.
'Ellen, there is something wrong here.'

'It was the first time he had ever addressed
me by this name.

'I will know what it is,' he pursued
planting himself firmly before me; and the
rigid cross-examination that ensued, indeed,
elicited the truth, all except the name of my
informant. 'Answer me but one question:
Was it a man?' he demanded, fiercely.

'It was not.'